

# CARGAZING



With its sleek profile and rugged Cross Country touches, the V90 stands out in a sea of cookie-cutter SUVs, proving that wagons can be both practical and stylish.

## Making SUVs Redundant

### Sleek Volvo Wagon Makes Utility Vehicles Seem Old-Fashioned

By Derek Price  
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When I pulled up in the 2024 Volvo V90 Cross Country, my kids' reaction was priceless.

"Woah, did somebody squish it?" they exclaimed, their young eyes unaccustomed to the sleek silhouette of a station wagon in our SUV-dominated world.

Their surprise perfectly encapsulates why the V90 Cross Country is such a refreshing presence on American roads. It's a rare breed that challenges our preconceptions about what a family vehicle should be.

The V90 Cross Country is, quite simply, a spectacular car to drive. It strikes that elusive balance between luxury and practicality, offering the utility of an SUV with the driving dynamics of a sedan.

The 2.0-liter turbocharged and electricaly supercharged four-cylinder engine, producing 295 horsepower and 310 lb-ft of torque, provides ample motivation. While not blistering quick, it offers smooth, confident acceleration that's more than adequate for both city driving and highway cruising.

Where the V90 truly shines is in its road manners. The low-slung body, compared to typical SUVs, results in a lower center of gravity that translates to superior handling and stability.

The optional adaptive air suspension in our tester (\$1,200) further enhanced the ride quality, soaking up bumps while maintaining composure through corners.

It's a reminder of why wagons were once the family vehicle of choice. They simply drive better than their taller SUV counterparts.

The interior is a masterclass in



The V90's cabin exemplifies Scandinavian luxury, with premium materials, class-leading comfort, and a thoughtful design that prioritizes both form and function.

Scandinavian design. Clean lines, premium materials and thoughtful ergonomics create an atmosphere of understated luxury.

Volvo's seats deserve special mention because they're among the best in the business, offering superb support and comfort. The optional massage function elevates long drives from tolerable to genuinely enjoyable.

Practicality is where the V90 Cross Country truly excels. The cargo area is cavernous, easily swallowing luggage, sports equipment or the spoils of an IKEA shopping spree.

The low load floor makes loading and unloading a breeze compared to taller SUVs.

With 25.2 cubic feet of space behind the rear seats — expanding to 69 cubic feet with seats folded — it rivals many midsize SUVs for cargo capacity.

Technology is well-represented, with a 9-inch portrait-oriented touchscreen running Volvo's Google-based infotainment system. It's intuitive and responsive, though some may find the reliance on touch controls for climate functions a bit fiddly.

The optional Bowers & Wilkins sound system (\$3,200) is an audiophile's dream, delivering crisp, immersive sound.

Safety, as expected from Volvo, is comprehensive. The V90 Cross Country comes standard with a suite of advanced driver

aids, including adaptive cruise control, lane-keeping assist and automatic emergency braking that can detect pedestrians, cyclists and even large animals.

The Cross Country treatment gives the V90 some mild off-road capability, with increased ground clearance and standard all-wheel drive. While it won't tackle serious trails, it's more than capable of handling snowy roads or the occasional gravel path to a campsite.

However, the V90 Cross Country isn't without its quirks. The optional 21-inch wheels (\$800) on our tester, while visually striking, compromised ride quality and seemed at odds with the car's adventurous pretensions. Buyers would be wise to stick with smaller wheels for a better balance of looks and comfort.

At \$73,380 as tested, the V90 Cross Country commands a premium price. However, for buyers seeking a unique blend of luxury, practicality, and driving enjoyment, it offers a compelling alternative to the ubiquitous luxury SUV. It's a vehicle for those who appreciate the finer things but don't feel the need to tower over other cars on the road.

The V90 is a testament to the enduring appeal of the wagon body style. It offers SUV-like utility without the compromises in driving dynamics or efficiency.

In a world where crossovers and SUVs dominate, the V90 Cross Country stands out as a refreshing reminder that sometimes, the old ways are still the best ways.

It's a car that makes you question why we ever abandoned wagons in the first place — and might just convince you to join the wagon renaissance.

#### A CLOSER LOOK



#### AT A GLANCE

FACTS, FIGURES AND RATINGS

##### WHAT WAS TESTED?

2024 Volvo V90 Cross Country B6 AWD (\$64,750). Options: Climate package (\$750), side scuff plate (\$1,005), luggage cover (\$380), power tailgate (\$200), Bowers & Wilkins premium sound (\$3,200), active chassis with rear air suspension (\$1,200), 21-inch wheels (\$800). Price as tested (including \$1,095 destination charge): \$73,380

##### BY THE NUMBERS

Wheelbase: 115.8 in.  
Length: 195.2 in.  
Width: 74.9 in.  
Height: 60.7 in.  
Engine: 2.0-liter turbo- and e-charged four cylinder (295 hp, 310 ft. lbs.)  
Transmission: Eight-speed automatic  
MPG: 23 city, 29 highway

##### RATINGS

Style: 10  
Performance: 9  
Price: 5  
Handling: 8  
Ride: 7  
Comfort: 8  
Quality: 9  
Overall: 8

##### WHY BUY IT?

The V90 offers a rare combination of luxury, practicality and driving pleasure, making it an ideal choice for discerning buyers who want SUV utility without sacrificing sedan-like handling and efficiency.

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The optional adaptive air



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