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THE NEW VOLVO V50: SMART, COMPACT, PREMIUM SPORTSWAGON

Volvo has launched another stylish and desirable all-new model – the V50 Sportswagon.

As its name suggests, the all-new V50 joins Volvo's 'V'-Range – 'V' representing Versatility – and offers the quality of a premium brand with sporty 'driveability' and the flexibility of extra load space to meet the needs of active leisure pursuits or young families.

Better still, being a Volvo, the V50 not only offers the reassurance of an abundance of safety features, but slick Scandinavian design, such as the ultra-modern, thin centre stack, and a higher standard specification and performance at a lower list price than other rivals in the growing, premium, compact sportswagon sector, such as the Audi A4 Avant and BMW 3-series Touring.

Highlights of the All-New Volvo V50:

- Premium compact Sportswagon
- Fun to drive: longer wheelbase, stiffer body and wider track than the V40 it replaces
- Modern Scandinavian interior design with unique, ultra-thin centre control panel
- Engines: Petrol
 - 1.8 (125bhp) four cylinder
 - 2.4i (170bhp) and T5 (220bhp) five cylinderDiesel
 - 2.0D (136bhp) four cylinder
- Haldex All Wheel Drive available with T5

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- 27mm taller, 54mm wider and 2mm shorter than its predecessor, the V40
- Class leading safety and environmental care
- Arriving in UK showrooms in March/April 2004
- On the road prices expected to start at less than £17,500

DESIGN, STYLE AND INNOVATION

The most distinctive and advanced feature of the Volvo V50 is its trendy interior and dashboard featuring a unique, ultra-thin centre stack inspired by the latest premium hi-fi systems, with space behind for storage. For added style, this is available in a variety of distinctive finishes on SE models – transparent 'Iced-Aqua', wood effect or real aluminium.

The V50 clearly demonstrates Volvo's distinctive, modern exterior design with its rounded front profile and V-shaped bonnet swooping down the broad Volvo shoulders to the rear. For added cool, a sports styling body kit will also be available.

The gentle angle of the V50's tailgate puts greater emphasis on 'Sports' than 'wagon', with generous interior space and a more athletic stance. The V70 will maintain its position as Volvo's leader in the large, premium estate sector with the ultimate in load carrying ability thanks to its longer bodyshell and more traditional vertical tailgate to maximise interior space.

Further innovation is provided by Volvo's new 'IDIS' – Intelligent Driver Information System – which uses advanced technology to monitor the driver's level of activity and, if maximum concentration is needed (eg when braking, turning, etc), delays any unnecessary signals and potential distractions, such as incoming telephone calls or non-essential information, until it is safer to do so.

FUN TO DRIVE

The new Volvo V50 has a stable, large car feel, with great handling, thanks to having a wheel virtually at every corner and a 78mm longer wheelbase, up to 63mm

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wider track, and a 34 per cent stiffer bodyshell than the V40 it replaces. For maximum driver confidence, all V50 drivers have the valuable added control and safety of EBA (Emergency Brake Assistance) plus DSTC (Dynamic Stability and Traction Control) as standard.

To add to the fun, a new range of four and five cylinder engines provides plenty of power and performance combined with economy and low emissions. The choice of petrol engines starts with a 125bhp, four-cylinder 1.8, with the added luxury and refinement of two five-cylinder engines – a 170bhp, 2.4i and the range topping 2.5 turbo, T5 with 220bhp, a six-speed gearbox which has the option of electronic Haldex All Wheel Drive.

There will also be a new, four-cylinder, 136bhp, 2.0 turbo diesel engine producing 320Nm of torque with a six-speed manual gearbox. This will be available with a particulate filter during 2004.

AND OF COURSE... REASSURING SAFETY

Safety is not the most important thing at Volvo, it's everything, and this has given Volvo a unique and impressive reputation for safety research and innovation.

The V50 Sportswagon is no exception. Extensive crash testing has produced a new, patented front section cleverly and precisely divided into several zones to deliver large car safety levels.

Inside the Volvo V50, the ignition key has been moved from the steering column to the dashboard for better knee protection in an accident, while the bodyshell is 54mm wider than the V40 it replaces providing valuable extra space for Volvo's SIPS (Side Impact Protection System) to absorb any side deformation. Of course, the V50 Sportswagon offers the same interior protection as Volvo's larger models and shares Volvo's WHIPS (Whiplash Protection System) and SIPS (Side Impact Protection System) with side inflatable curtains and airbags.

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Externally, to help reduce the risk of injury if the Volvo V50 is involved in an accident with pedestrians or cyclists, it has an energy absorbing structure ahead of the front bumper, smooth surfaces and rounded corners. In addition, to help reduce the risk of head injuries, there's a generous 70mm of space between the bonnet and the engine.

CLEAN INSIDE AND OUT

Volvo's 'Clean Inside and Out' programme makes inside the V50 a healthier place to be than outside.

Not many people realise they could be increasing their risk of asthma, eczema, headaches, eye irritation or even a heart attack due to the emissions a car's interior can create – but not in Volvos. Like other Volvos, the V50 Sportswagon's interior conforms to the international Oke-Tex standard which ensures all textiles and leathers are hypo-allergenic and free of emissions from hazardous substances.

In addition, the V50's standard Electronic Climate Control includes Volvo's IAQS (Interior Air Quality System) which through an active carbon filter removes impurities and odours from the incoming air making the interior air cleaner than the air outside the car.

Premair[®] is another Volvo first for the environment. It's a system that uses a catalytic coating on the radiator to convert up to 75 per cent of ozone passing through it into oxygen. In other words, the Volvo V50 helps clean up other cars' emissions!

PRICES, PRODUCTION AND AVAILABILITY

The Volvo V50 makes its world debut at the Bologna motor show in Italy on 4 December, and is then expected to be on show at the Detroit Auto Show, USA in

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January 2004, before being seen for the first time in the UK at the NEC Boat, Caravan and Outdoor Leisure Show in February and then at The Sunday Times British Motor Show Live in May.

The V50 Sportswagon will be produced alongside the S60 and All-New S40 at Volvo's plant in Ghent, Belgium, with first deliveries to UK showrooms expected late March or early April. Volvo plans to sell 74,000 V50 Sportswagons a year globally, including 8,000 in the UK.

On the road prices for the V50 Sportswagon range will be released later this month, but are expected to start from less than £17,500.

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