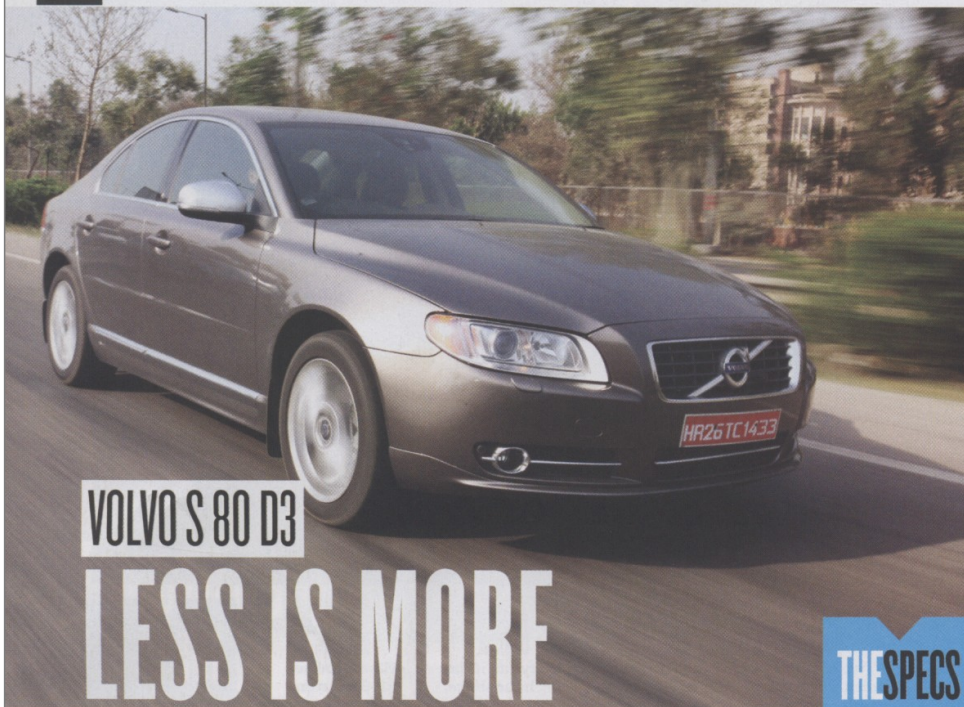


News monitored for: Volvo Auto India

Top Gear

FIRST DRIVES



VOLVO S80 D3

LESS IS MORE

Usually, luxury comes at a price. But then, we're not talking about the usual suspects here

Words ASHISH MASHI

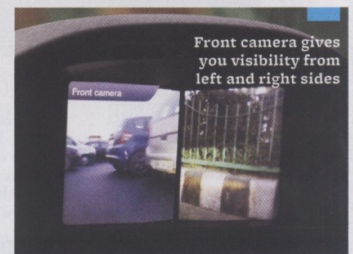
Class and value rarely make good bedfellows. Volvo wants to change all that with the new S80, which now comes with the smaller 2.0-litre D3 engine. At ₹31.99 lakh (ex-showroom, Delhi), it's not exactly cheap but when you look at the price-to-size ratio (compared to its better-known rivals), things start adding up nicely in its favour.

You have to be objective though. The S80 is never going to be one of our favourite drivers' cars and Volvo doesn't want that anyway. What it's aiming at is the chauffeur-driven buyer who probably ends up driving once a month and prefers luxury over all-out sportscar dynamics.

And there the S80 excels. The D3's

163bhp and 400Nm, on paper, are just enough for a car this size. It feels refined and relaxed at most speeds and though the diesel gets a bit gruff near the redline, it never reaches a point where the rear passengers know it's a diesel.

In fact, over long stretches of highway, there's barely any engine noise or vibration apparent at the 120-130kph cruising speed, making the cabin a peaceful place to be in. The cossetting ride at high speed is another plus. The S80 grips and handles well enough, but the steering is a bit vague and the car doesn't feel as agile as an A6 or an E. The ride can be a bit jittery at low speeds, especially over poor road surfaces but again, it never reaches a point where it



Front camera gives you visibility from left and right sides

THE SPECS

VOLVO S80 D3

THE NUMBERS

1984cc, 5 cyl
FWD, 163bhp
400Nm, 17.8kpl*,
0-100kph -
9.7secs*, 6A
1609kg

THE COST

₹32 lakh
(ex-showroom,
Delhi)

THE VERDICT

Volvo's biggest sedan offers class, comfort and safety, priced well. A viable alternative to established rivals if you want something different.

7/10

* Claimed

becomes uncomfortable.

The cabin is a very nice place to be in. First-rate materials, hugely comfortable seats all-round, and ingress and egress never become workouts. The stereo trumpets out high-quality stuff and the automatic AC works well in our kind of weather. You get leather seats even on the base version, and safety tech like adaptive headlamps and multiple airbags are, typically Volvo, standard fare.

In D3 spec, the S80 is capable of returning a claimed overall 17.8kpl, which for a car this size is phenomenal. Yes, the Volvo may not be an instantly recognisable figure to the masses, unlike its German counterparts, but it does manage to evoke a sense of class and sophistication. As a car, the S80 is right up there and in D3 spec, ready to hit the mainstream like never before.

PHOTOGRAPHS: NITIN ROSE