

It is not quite the 374kW beast that we drove in Sweden a few years ago, but it's a Volvo S60 nevertheless.

These days that means a rather sedate 180kW executive sedan that doesn't use much fuel because it's a hybrid.

Remember too that two V8-powered, rear-drive S60s competed in the V8 Supercars series between 2014 and 2016.

The S60 remains a practical alternative to the Audi A4, BMW 3 Series and Mercedes-Benz C-Class for those not keen on German fare.

Interestingly, it's now built in the United States.

There's just the one model, the S60 B5 Inscription, priced from \$62,490 (or about \$69,000 driveaway in Sydney).

Inscription is Volvo's mid-spec grade in terms of equipment, sitting between the Momentum and sporty R-Design grades.

It features a unique radiator grille, chrome themed exterior detailing, follow the road LED headlights with high pressure cleaners, plus colour-coordinated door handles that are illuminated and provide puddle lights at night.

Standard equipment includes 19-inch alloys, four-zone climate air, with humidity sensor and CleanZone air quality system, plus Driftwood inlays, light-coloured headlining, leather-accented upholstery, with front seats that are heated, have power adjustment, position memory, four-way lumbar support and power cushion extension.

There's also keyless entry and start, head-up display, auto lights and wipers, auto dimming inside and outside mirrors, 360-degree camera, auto parking, and front and rear park sensors.

There are eight colours to choose from, all a no cost option.

Our test vehicle was optioned with Lifestyle Pack: Panoramic Sunroof, Tinted Rear Windows, Bowers and Wilkins Premium Sound (\$5700), Perforated Nappa Leather Accented Charcoal/Charcoal Interior (\$3000); Advanced Air Cleaner (\$500), and Metallic Paint (no cost option).

It brings the total price to \$74,190, before on-road costs.

Standard infotainment consists of 10-speaker 'High Performance' audio, 9 inch vertically mounted touchscreen, Bluetooth (including audio streaming), DAB digital radio, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, wireless device charging, 2 x USB ports, plus satellite navigation with road sign recognition.

A large, central volume control knob sits below the screen for quick adjustment, but most features are controlled with a prod or swipe of the touchscreen, which is easy to use.

Safety comprises dual front, side, and curtain airbags, Autonomous emergency braking (City, Interurban & Vulnerable Road User), and lane keep assist (LKA) with lane departure warning (LDW).

Adaptive cruise control includes Pilot Assist, Driver Alert, Lane Keeping Aid, Adjustable Speed Limiter function, Oncoming Lane Mitigation, Blind Spot Information (BLIS) with Cross Traffic Alert (CTA), Front and Rear Collision Warning with mitigation support, and Run-off road Mitigation.

Pilot Assist supports the driver with steering, acceleration and braking on well-marked roads up to 130km/h.

S60 is covered by a 5-year/unlimited kilometre warranty (8 years for battery).

Servicing is every 15,000km or 12 months, and two prepaid service plans are available: three years/45,000km for \$1500, or five years/75,000km for \$2500.

S60 is powered by a 2-litre mild hybrid, four-cylinder turbocharged petrol engine.

The combination delivers a handy 183kW of power and 350Nm of torque, with power to all-four wheels via an eight-speed traditional style automatic.

Dynamic, Eco, and Comfort drive modes are accessed via the touchscreen, and you can adjust the level of steering assistance to suit your taste.

The dash from 0 to 100km/h takes 6.5 seconds, while top speed is limited to 180km/h (it's a Volvo safety thing).

Suspension is double wishbones at the front and integral axle rear suspension at the rear, with what Volvo describes as Dynamic Chassis.

Switching to Dynamic mode sharpens the way the car responds and handles, but to be frank, it was a little too busy for our liking, so we reverted to Normal.

There's no gear change paddles on the steering wheel either, but you can change gears using the transmission shifter.

The thing is it's a little stiff and awkward to use. In fact, the positioning in relation to the seating position and fall of your hand feels all wrong.

In a stint hustling across the countryside along some backroads, we spent most of the time shifting between 3rd, 4th and 5th gears, which keeps engine revs in the desired zone.

The ride feels crisp and sporty and there's plenty of grip thanks to all-wheel drive and Michelin Sport Pilot tyres.

Ultimately, however, the suspension is a little soft to really get into it.

At one point the seatbelt suddenly cinched tight when the car bounced over an undulation and the suspension unloaded at speed.

At the same time, it's satisfying to drive.

S60 is a standout design with clean, athletic lines, a short rear deck, and longish bonnet.

It manages to be understated while retaining a personality.

Inside it's classic Scandinavian, a mix of charcoal, lighter shades, metal finishes and the grey driftwood inlays.

With seating for five, it's shorter than a Toyota Camry, but has a longer wheelbase which means more legroom, but a smaller boot.

Cleverly the back seat back folds to accommodate longer loads, with a hidden storage compartment under the floor of the boot and space saver spare.

It's perhaps timely to point out S60 doesn't get the latest Google operating system (yet), but it does have iPhone support as well as speed camera warnings, which nanny G confiscates.

The Lifestyle pack - if you can afford it - includes the impressive Bowers & Wilkins audio system.

With 15 speakers and 1100 watts of power, it features brushed metal speaker grilles as well as a cute tweeter which sits snugly atop the dash.

Four room modes including 'Concert Hall' and 'Jazz Club', allow you to recreate the acoustics of a specific room inside the car.

If you spend most of your time listening to music in the car, it's well worth the investment.

Private locking allows you to keep the luggage and glove compartment locked when you lend out your remote key.

This stops both compartments from being unlocked with the remote, but the central locking and ignition can be used as normal.

Additionally, the boot lid overlaps the hidden storage compartment under the load floor, making it impossible to open from the inside.

Fuel consumption from the 60-litre tank is a claimed 7.2L/100km.

We were getting 8.4L/100km after 400km.

What we like?

- Sleek, uncluttered looks
- Easy and enjoyable to drive
- Doesn't use much fuel
- Big fans of the vertical touchscreen

What we don't like?

- Shallow door pockets
- No gear change paddles
- Doesn't recognise electronic speed signs
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Sedans are a dying breed, as buyers gravitate towards utes and SUVs.

Hats off to Volvo for keeping the faith, even if there's just the one S60 model.

As such it represents a stylish, practical package at a relatively affordable price, but unless it chalks up some sales, it won't stick around for long.