

# The pony express

**Tim Barnes-Clay** reviews the Volvo V60 T6 AWD R-Design and finds it comfortable and classy, with enough muscle to tow your pony

**B**ehind the wheel, the new Volvo V60 feels every bit as taut as its design thanks to a chassis that has been tuned to match the expectations of enthusiasts. It is a stylish estate, and no one can deny it's an impressive car.

Unlike some Volvos, the V60 isn't supposed to be a 'wardrobe-on-wheels'—that's why the Swedish car maker markets it as a sports wagon. Basically, all it means is that the boot isn't as big as you might expect, but the latest Volvo is still a very functional motor. It has an extremely comfortable ride and the cabin is classy. There is a liberal amount of equipment as standard and a general feeling of quality throughout.

Six engines are available – two diesels and four petrols. The top spec T6 all-wheel-drive (AWD) R-Design model, on test here, generates 301bhp and 325lb/ft of torque (pulling power) from its 3.0 petrol powerplant. That makes it very fast, but also muscular enough to tow up to 1800kg, which is ideal for caravan and horse-trailer owners.

The R-Design badged V60 model is basically sportier than all the other Volvos with stiffer, lowered suspension and a more menacing appearance. On the outside, the R-Design adds a re-shaped bumper and a modified grille at the front, with a diffuser and fat, twin chromed exhaust tailpipes at the rear. Five-spoke 18-inch alloys, custom-

made for the R-Design, complete the look.

Inside, sports seats, blue instrumentation, a three-spoke steering wheel and branded floor mats are added. Equipment on all Volvo V60 models also includes electronic climate control, cruise control, five-inch colour screen, information centre, steering wheel remote audio controls and a six-speaker audio system. The V60 certainly feels like a premium product in every way.

Behind the wheel, the 300+ horses provide rapid acceleration and the car combines good body control with a decent ride. My T6 test car had the Polestar software upgrade, available from Volvo for just over £600. It lets loose an extra 24bhp of concealed power without compromising CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, fuel economy or your warranty. It's a genuinely exciting car to drive and all that speed and power is guaranteed to put a smile on any driver's face. Of course, Volvo is also renowned for its safety and the V60 is no exception, with an abundance of hi-tech safety gadgetry fitted in and around the cabin.

All in all, Volvo's new offering is an attractive and affordable alternative to German executive estate rivals. The car offers more kit than the average BMW or Audi – so anyone considering a change from their usual 'prestige' motor could do a lot worse than visiting a Volvo dealership and going for the accomplished V60. **V**



## PROS 'N' CONS

- Power ✓
- Handling ✓
- Equipment ✓
- Safety ✓
- Comfort ✓
- Boot isn't the largest X

## FAST FACTS

- Max speed: 155 mph
- 0-60 mph: 5.9 secs
- Combined mpg: 28.5
- Engine layout: 2953cc, 6 cylinders, petrol
- Max. power (bhp): 301 at 5600 rpm
- Max. torque (lb.ft): 325 at 2100-4200 rpm
- Max. towing weight (braked) 1800 kg
- CO<sub>2</sub>: 237 g/km
- Price: £36,285 on the road

