

Review: The bold and electric Volvo C40 Recharge



By [Imran Salie](#)

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Electric vehicles are slowly beginning to pique the interest of South Africans if we look at sales reports. While the uptick is not significant, there's an upswing of note. The price just has to be right and then there's the nagging issue of load shedding we have to contend with. These two factors are making progress of adoption slower than it should be, and let's not forget about infrastructure and the lack thereof.





I digress, I spent time driving the lightning-quick Volvo C40 Recharge. As I'm writing this I think of the newly introduced Volvo EX30 to our market, which is said to do 0-100km sprint faster than the C40 Recharge (4.7 seconds), which boggles my mind. How can another all-electric Volvo SUV be quicker than the one I just tested? This seems to be one of the most thrilling things about electric vehicles to me at the moment. The sheer speed and acceleration are admirable and can make a die-hard petrolhead unfamiliar with EVs second-guess their opinion.



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My test with the C40 Recharge wasn't my first rodeo with the Swedish brand's electric SUV. I briefly drove it during its local launch last year and even then I was blown away by its performance. The opinion I formed at that time is largely the same after spending more time with it.



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The C40 Recharge drives smoothly thanks to the suspension setup and a one-speed electric gearbox. Under the metal, you will find twin motors and a high-voltage battery, which together make an impressive 300kW of power and 660Nm of torque to all four wheels.

But what about range? That seems to be the talk of the town when EVs are discussed at the dinner table. The C40 Recharge comes with a healthy 444km of range, and if used in the right driving set-up (in cities and suburbs), one can make the kilometres go a long way. Charging is also not a hassle, because Volvo provides a home charging wall box with the C40 Recharge, and finding a station is not a schlep. And, with DC charging available during my testing period, the C40 Recharge recuperated from 40% to 100% in 40 minutes.

Charging via a DC box seems to be the most ideal for a quick charge. However, with a charging box at home (this method is a lot slower than a DC charger), I imagine it can be charged overnight, which cuts out the idea of having to find a station. Volvo also made an effort to ensure that drivers can find their nearest charging station nearby with a Google-integrated infotainment system.

The C40 Recharge's interior is minimalistic for front passengers and drivers. It also has a nice dual-tone scheme in black and Fjord Blue, which is the same shade of blue as the one I had tested. Materials are of premium quality and the cabin is uber-quiet. A nice touch on the inside is a panel on the dashboard that lights up when it's dark out, creating a nice ambient feel in the cabin. When it comes to space the rear passengers can be cramped for headroom, and this is largely because of the sloping roof line.



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The C40 Recharge's exterior is noticeably different to its Volvo siblings. The reason it looks a bit different is because of the sloping roofline and tailgate, which eliminates the square-shaped rear that adorns many of the Swedish car brand's SUVs. These exterior differences also create a sportier look for the C40 Recharge. On the front end, the closed-off grill is a dead giveaway that it's an EV, which many people noticed during my time with it. The test unit was in Fjord Blue as previously mentioned, which I prefer more over the black one I drove at launch.

The Volvo C40 is available only in one model, and the features include a panoramic sunroof, keyless entry with a remote tag and power-operated tailgate, wireless phone charging, heated steering wheel and front and rear seats, 20" five-spoke black diamond-cut alloy wheels, Harman Kardon sound system, Volvo's Intellisafe Assist, lane keeping assist, road sign information, and 360° camera.

Recharge care package

- Volvo on Call for five years
- Charging cable for public charging stations
- Home charging wallbox

Price, warranty, and maintenance

Price R1,324,000.

Warranty: Five-year/100,000 km vehicle warranty and eight-year 160,000km battery warranty

Maintenance: Five-year/km full maintenance plan

ABOUT IMRAN SALIE

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