

Portland Observer Auto Review

News and reviews on new motor vehicles

2008 Volvo XC 70 3.2 AWD The Family Adventure Vehicle

BY KATHLEEN CARR

The XC70 is Volvo's rugged SUV-like wagon that has been redesigned for 2008 with more aggressive styling to go with its reputation as a capable off-road vehicle, while also adding a higher level of luxury. Volvo calls the XC70 a "family adventure vehicle."

The redesigned 2008 Volvo XC70 is offered for the first time with a 3.2-liter inline 6-cylinder engine 235-horsepower and 236 lb-ft of torque combined with a 6-speed "Geartronic" automatic transmission, all-wheel drive with Instant Traction and Volvo's first use of Hill Descent Control.

The 2008 Volvo XC70 touts a stylish yet rugged exterior. Gone is the tacked-on side cladding, re-

placed by a more streamlined treatment covering the molded bumpers and lower door panels. Volvo has also lowered the rear glass beyond that of the side windows for better visibility and integrated the tail-lights into the tailgate to create a wider opening. An aggressive front fascia adds a sporty feel to the XC70's demeanor, while helpful features such as an optional power tailgate confirm the XC70's premium luxury-car status. Cargo space has been increased over the previous generation with an innovative hook and track system in the cargo area to secure loads.

Safety, of course, is one of Volvo's claims to fame. Sounding the cabin are more airbags than you'll find at a Senate hearing, and



Specifications: 3.2-Liter, 235-hp @ 236 lb-ft torque, In-Line 6-Cylinder Engine; 6-Speed automatic transmission; 15-City 22-Highway MPG; \$44,065. MSRP

somewhat smarter ones as well. New safety features include integrated booster seats in the outward rear seats. Integrated into the car's sub-structure is way more high-strength steel than in any previous model adding to the weight and the exceptional crashworthiness. Chassis dynamics the equal of any manufacturer's keep the car going straight and under control no matter what the conditions. Collision

and blind spot warning systems help the driver stay out of trouble.

The competent 6-speed automatic transmission with manual mode makes up for the lack of grunt nicely. Towing capacity is a respectable 3,300 pounds. Volvo's 3.2-liter in-line six is a strong engine, but delivers only acceptable performance in the 4,000-plus pound XC70. Off-the-line acceleration is brisk, but passing power

could be better. On the flip side, fuel economy is good for this class and engine noise and vibration are barely detectable from inside the car.

Every 2008 Volvo XC70 features a six-speed automatic transmission and Instant Traction all-wheel drive. But, again, this is not an SUV designed for serious off-roading. Leave dry pavement, and the XC70's attitude changes. It is, how-

ever, particularly adept at handling rough back roads.

Despite its rugged exterior, the 2008 Volvo XC70's interior is elegant and comfortable. The interior features a good measure of Scandinavian style and finesse. Seats are well bolstered but not overly firm. Controls are intuitive and laid out well. Materials are of good quality and good looking as well. Volvo's new signature open-back center console adds a touch of style not usually associated with the family wagon. Families who have outgrown child safety seats will appreciate the optional two-stage child booster seats (rear outboard seating), which allow young children a higher perch, putting them within coverage of the side-curtain airbags.

Volvo's XC70 wagon occupies a big place in a very small field. Rugged wagons capable of off-road ventures are few and far between most rivals can't match Volvo's luxurious premium-brand panache, nor can it equal the XC70's long list of standard and optional features. If a crossover SUV is more car than you care for, and you don't require three-row seating, the all-new XC70's artful blend of beauty and brawn (not to mention safety) make it ideal for the active family's lifestyle.

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Community Calendar

continued from Metro

Cycle of Life Festivals
Friday, Feb. 29 through Monday, March 3, Portland Japanese Gardens, 611 S.W. Kingston Dr. will host the Hina Matsuri, or the Doll Festival. Call 503-542-0280 to learn more.



Festival of African Films
The Portland Community College's Cascade Festival of African Films takes place all month the PCC Cascade campus in north Portland and at the Hollywood and McMenamins Kennedy School theaters. For a complete schedule, visit the Cascade Festival of African Films website at africanfilmfestival.org.

Learn to Make Recycled Art
Portland Community College is offering the hands-on training to create art from recycled materials; classes will be held at the ReBuilding Center, 3625 N. Mississippi Ave.

Call 503-731-6622 for more information.

Kindergarten, Pre-Kindergarten Roundup
Wednesday, Feb. 27, King School, 4037 N.E. Garfield, will host the annual kindergarten and pre-K roundup at 1:30 p.m., in the school library; both programs are full-day and fully funded programs.

International Fair
Thursday, March 6, from 6 to 8 p.m., PSU Capstone program and King School, 4037 N.E. Garfield, will celebrate the diversity of many different cultures through information booths featuring student art, music, a wide variety of foods and prize drawings.

Helping the Hungry
The Oregon Food Bank desperately needs your donations of nonperishable foods and funds. To find out how you can help, call 503-282-0555.

Literacy Volunteers Needed
The Volunteer Literacy Program at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus needs volunteer tutors to provide free individualized instruction in basic English-language and math skills. For more information, call 503-244-3898 or visit oregonliteracy.org.

African American Council
You're invited on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. when the African American Advisory Council meets at the King Facility, 4815 N.E. Seventh Ave. Call

503-823-0000 for more information.

Bradley-Angle House
The Bradley-Angle House needs volunteers to help its outreach against domestic violence. Women of color and bilingual women are encouraged to call. For more information, call 503-282-9940.

Volunteer for Crisis Line
Want to make a difference in your community? Volunteers and advocates are needed for the Portland Women's Crisis Line. The needs include on-call advocates to respond in person or over the phone, outreach and educational efforts, and fundraising and administrative duties. Call 503-232-4176 for more information.

Women in Community Service
Volunteer female mentors are being sought by Women in Community Service to work with incarcerated women at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. The women provide support and encouragement for inmates transitioning from prison back into the community. For information, call 503-570-6614.

Community Support
The African American Health Coalition, a non-profit that touches the lives of millions of African Americans each year, reminds you to support your community organization. All donations, grants and gifts are tax deductible. For more information, visit aaahc-portland.org.

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