

Volkswagen Touareg 3.0 V6 TDI



By [Ilse van den Berg](#)

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If you were hoping to get your hands on the new Volkswagen Touareg, I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news. It turns out they're all sold out already. All 200+ of them. So if you slept too late, better get your name on a waiting list sooner rather than later.

We recently headed up to Port Elizabeth for the launch of the third generation Touareg on a scenic road trip to Plettenberg Bay. Our lodging for the night, Sky Villa, perched atop the hill and overlooking the mesmerising town of Plett.



What's it like?

The new Volkswagen Touareg is big! According to the manufacturer, the increase in length and width in conjunction with the slightly reduced height leads to significantly more dynamic proportions. Its new length and width is 4,878mm (+77mm) and 1,984mm (+44mm) respectively, and its new height is 1,702mm (-7mm). You could easily fit a family of five with luggage and all and be on your merry way on a comfortable, long road trip.



The SUV impressed us from the get-go. The exterior design is much bolder and stronger and what particularly stands out is the sharp lines carried over from the new smaller VW siblings.



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Driving comfort is also noteworthy. For a car this size, it performed steadily and securely on the road but also on curvy gravel roads. It may not look like a car you'd want to get dirty, but if you have to, the Touareg with its offroad feature including snow, gravel and sand, will take you to places you've always dreamed of going. It is actually a great adventure companion.

Not only is it comfortable, but we spent a good deal of our four-hour journey playing around on the car's standout feature - the "Innovision Cockpit". The screen is bigger than my laptop screen. Seriously.

How about engine and safety stuff?

The new Touareg boasts a 3.0 TDI V6 engine - the only engine derivative at launch - which pushes out 190 kW and 600 Nm of torque.

Safety-wise the car boasts a range of advanced technologies and that is what takes safety to another level in this vehicle. Some of the top features include lane assist and side assist with night vision and head-up display, park assist, multicollision brake, active four-wheel steering (makes the Touareg handle like a compact car) and 'IQ.Light Matrix LED headlights' (interactive, camera-based dipped and main beam headlight control).



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These systems are interconnected via a new central control unit working imperceptibly in the background and making travel safer, more convenient and more intuitive. There's also an optional heads-up display which can show the current speed, speed limiter, navigation information, adaptive cruise control, lane assist and side assist.

What else?

The digital instruments (Digital Cockpit with 12-inch display) and the top Discover Premium infotainment system (with 15-inch display) merge to form a digital operating, information, communication and entertainment unit. The layout of the 12-inch display can be personalised via the home screen or using the multifunction steering wheel. It is an optional extra, but, according to Volkswagen, most customers are opting in. You'd miss out if you didn't.



Personal driver settings can be saved and automatically recalled using the personal smart vehicle key. This can be quite useful if more than one person uses the car. A total of seven different driver profiles can be saved in the Touareg - a little bit much if you ask me. Who has seven drivers for one family car?

Night-vision is a really cool feature. We did a little test drive at night in Plett and managed to find a couple of pedestrians along the road. The system uses a thermal imaging camera to detect live humans and animals in the surrounding areas. It lights up the human/animal in a red colour on the screen in front of the driver. So, if your night vision is a bit unreliable, this feature is super valuable.



On the drive back to PE, I also noticed the Touareg has integrated microphones to monitor and compensate for ambient noise levels and road conditions - the faster you drive, the louder the audio goes. And the slower you drive the softer it goes. It seems there is a speed dependent volume adjustment which compensates for noise relative to the vehicle's speed while maintaining the sound volume. What a nifty feature!

How many bucks?

As mentioned, the new Touareg currently only comes with one engine derivative - only the specs differ:

- 3.0 V6 TDI 190kW (Luxury): R999,800
- 3.0 V6 TDI 190kW (Executive): R1,088,200

The new Touareg comes standard with a five-year/100,000km maintenance plan, three- year/120,000km warranty, 12-year anti-corrosion warranty and a space saver spare wheel. Service interval are set at 15,000km.

Conclusion

To me, the new Touareg is understated elegance and that is what makes it so great. Yes, it may be aimed at a very specific, smaller target group, but with what the brand aims to achieve, I think it has succeeded. It might not be cheap, but when you look at the standard features, it certainly is value for money.

You might think it a car too big to handle for a woman, but you'd be mistaken. Handling is smooth and easy.

This is the ideal luxury SUV for the person who doesn't have an affinity for some other premium SUV brands but has always really wanted a fancy SUV. For the person who doesn't necessarily want to brag about the badge on the boot, but would rather have someone hop in with them and go on an adventure and let the car do its thing of subtle persuasion. It's a car that'll get compliments without the owner having to "show and tell"...

ABOUT ILSE VAN DEN BERG

Ilse is a freelance journalist and editor with a passion for people & their stories (check out Passing Stories). She is also the editor of Go & Travel, a platform connecting all the stakeholders in the travel & tourism industry. You can check out her work here and here. Contact Ilse through her website here.

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