

by Dan Lyons • *Special to The Daily Gazette*

2024 Volvo XC40 Single Motor Recharge

MSRP: \$52,450 (Core) As Tested: \$59,995 (Single Motor Ultimate)



This week's test drive is in the Volvo XC40 Recharge. One of four EV's in the company's lineup, this is a small, luxury SUV, with a versatile body style. In addition to a Twin Motor, All Wheel Drive version, for 2024, Volvo is also offering a Single Motor, Rear Wheel Drive model.

The consensus in conventional, gas powered cars has long been that - in matters of traction - a front wheel drive car will have more grip than a rear wheel drive car, because the weight of the engine is sitting on the drive wheels. All wheel drive trumps both FWD and RWD, because power is flowing through all four wheels.

The wrinkle provided by EV's is that the car's weight distribution is more evenly balanced, front to back, because the battery pack is stored more towards the center of the car. Volvo opines that this (along with electronic stability control) make an RWD EV better than a FWD gas powered car, in wintry conditions. My test drive was conducted in a curiously snowless week in late February, so I had no opportunity to test their theory. Sufficed to say, the twin motor, AWD EV version of the XC40 should provide the best grip of all, with evenly distributed battery weight, and power flowing from all four corners.

The Single Motor (RWD) XC40 model I drove generated 248 horsepower and 310 lb.-ft. of torque, good for a 0-60 time of about 6½ seconds, which is plenty quick. With 402 horsepower and 494 lb.-ft. of torque, the Twin Motor (AWD) XC40 figures to be all that and a bag of chips. Provided that you have access to a DC fast charger, Volvo says you can charge the Single Motor's battery at up to 200kW, meaning that it takes about 28 minutes to get your charge from 10-80%. Maximum range is 293 miles (254 in the Twin Motor). The XC40 Recharge's overall drivability draws high marks. Power flows evenly, handling is confident,



Photos are courtesy of the manufacturer.



braking is sure. The suspension's ability to soak up shocks while maintaining a comfortable ride lends the Volvo a sophisticated feel. Drivers can (if they wish) switch to one pedal driving, which uses regenerative braking to recharge the battery pack while you drive. While it's a nice option to have, the XC40's one-pedal system is rather aggressive with its rate of braking (and it isn't adjustable), so it's hard to be smooth.

The interior design is an exercise in Swedish Minimalism: clean lines, form follows function. There is no on/off switch. Car sensors pick up on the key fob that you carry in and out with you. Wool blend upholstery wraps around the comfortably supportive front seats. The keep-it-simple ethos means that there are few cues as to the location and function of system switchgear. Some study time is required to reveal the best way to get to what you want to adjust. Many of the adjustments are channeled through the center touchscreen. Storage spots for pocket items run small, but cargo capacity in back ranges from 34.9 - 65 cu.-ft., depending on how you arrange the seating. Additionally, there's a covered bin below the load floor. Having no engine up front, the XC40 Recharge also has a front trunk ("frunk"), though it's occupied by the EV charging cord.

The XC40 Recharge blends form and function into an appealing package. To me, the Twin Motor version's added, all season traction and significant power advantage would be well worth the added \$1,750, even though they trim 39 miles off your estimated range.