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## Volvo Experience - Driving West Sweden

There are times when the best way to experience something is to "just do it", and in the case of experiencing the natural rugged beauty of West Sweden, the best way to "just do it" was in the driver's seat of a Volvo XC90 Executive.



Sweden, and especially the Gothenburg area of Sweden, is synonymous with [Volvo](#), as this is where the groundbreaking car, truck and engine manufacturing company is located, and where we began our Volvo experience.

In August 2005, Debra C. Argen and I picked up a new 2006 Volvo XC90 Executive at their Volvo Center. Mr. Peter Carman, and with a name like Carman I knew we were in good-hands, met us at the Volvo Center and introduced us to the XC90.



The XC90 Executive is a luxurious SUV (Sport Utility Vehicle), and along with its plush leather seats, it is a gadget lovers dream, with a state-of-the-art navigation system (more on that later), twin screen and DVD entertainment system including separate headphones for the rear seat passengers, sunroof, refrigerator incorporated in the armrest between the front seats, CD player and a powerful and clear sound system, and many other gems. I tried out as many of the cool gadgets as possible, save trying to drive while watching the rear seat entertainment system. I did have a bit of a tussle to keep Debra in the front seat as my silent navigator now that I had the automated navigation system, but she agreed to "not experience" the rear seat entertainment system, thank God we did not go past a DVD rental store.

Right off, I must tell you that this was my first time, ok I said it, and now I am more at ease; this was my first time driving an SUV, and I loved it. The Volvo XC90 drove like an agile sports sedan with power to spare, which I used extensively on Route 6 traveling north to Sydoster, as on one of the days we were running late trying to catch the last ferry of the day to the Koster Islands. The gas mileage was very good, and with the large tank, I did not fill up until I returned the vehicle 3½ days and 660 km later.



We had just picked up the car, and I had to test the navigation system, so I followed the automated navigation system, much to the chagrin of my standard navigator, Debra, and I found the Volvo Museum without any "discussion" on when to turn, and without having to stop and ask for directions, not that I am

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notorious for doing so. The Volvo Museum was outstanding, and you can read about it in the Destination article &ndash; [Gothenburg, Sweden](#). I really got into the navigation system when I got a bit lost traveling from the Volvo Museum to the Elite Plaza Hotel in Gothenburg. To my rescue, the navigation system recalibrated my incorrect turns, and mapped out a route to get me to my desired destination, and I did not have to ask for directions, what a great gadget for the male gender.



I am not someone who likes to drive long distances, but we would not have been able to experience the mountains, valleys, crystal blue water, and landscape if we had not driven through the countryside. With stops to Nordiska Akvarellmusset (The Nordic Watercolor Museum) in Skärhamn, followed by a short jaunt to Handelsman Flink in the Flatön area, which included our first car ferry ride, as well as our “drive” to Sydkoster to make the last ferry to the Koster Islands, and back south to Gothenburg through Västerlanda, we slowed our travels so we could absorb the unparalleled beauty of Sweden. I followed my new friend, the automated navigation system much as a musician does with a music score.



One spectacularly exciting outcome of the Volvo experience was the opportunity to view the beauty of West Sweden, which we would never have been able to experience as we did, if not for the relaxing comfort of our Volvo XC90 Executive, and my new friend the automated navigation system.

Please read other articles on Sweden in the Destinations, Hotels & Resorts, Chefs' Recipes, Restaurants, Gastronomy, Music Scene, and Liquor Cabinet sections.

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