

Ride Your Luck

Ian Lamming assesses the house moving capabilities of the Volvo XC90 T8

THIRTEEN. My lucky number. It was the birthday of my mum, my son and the due date of my daughter, though she was four days late for the party.

My first ever job as a trainee reporter was awarded to me on the 13th after a lot of blood, sweat and tears trying to break into the only occupation I ever wanted.

Finally, and most recently, it was the day a deal was completed on my house, or should I say ancient hall. A good day, a great day, a moving day. And my luck was in once again.

Removals men took the bulk of our possessions whacking them straight into storage, or so I thought.

But no, what was left behind was a lifetime of clutter, a social history, yes, but mainly detritus and destined to be moved on to recycling, landfill and charity shops.

Solicitors being solicitors, the moving date was blurry at best so it was impossible to predict and order the right car. While it could quite easily have been a Smart or an MX-5, it wasn't, it was Volvo's Herculean XC90, this

time a T8, powered by the twin engines. Thanks lucky number 13.

An electric tailgate? Now that's useful when your hands are full. Seven seats that fold cleverly and completely flat, even tucking away the shapely headrests; brilliant. Then there is the sheer size of the beast – it's massive.

So in goes a double wardrobe, a set of drawers and the TV stand, while around the bulky objects fit an incredible amount of smaller items, all slotting together like a 1,000-piece jigsaw.

Then comes the charity offerings of clothing, lamps, toys, computers and TVs. Recycling comes next – metal piping and old taps, cardboard and paper, an old wheelbarrow and timber.

Finally, the rubbish, including a king-size mattress, yes a king-size and it fitted! This thing could swallow a universe.

T8 is a plug-in hybrid so packs a 407HP wallop thanks to a supercharged, turbocharged 2.0 petrol engine and a powerful electric motor.

It's an awesome combination that takes a

gargantuan vehicle to 62mph in just 5.6 seconds. Unbelievable.

Technology is simply startling. The dash is dominated by what looks and operates like a tablet, all touch screen, pinch and swipe. It's intuitive in the extreme and easy to master offering myriad functions with a swish of a digit, including the stunning upmarket surround sound hi-fi. It also transforms into a hi-res rear camera that makes parking a breeze despite the T8's considerable girth.

It looks fabulous too. A more muscular car you would struggle to find thanks to massive grille, Thor-hammer lights and solid flanks. It's incredibly imposing, classy and distinctly Volvo. Something this big and potent could easily return a miserly mpg – 13 perhaps and that would not be lucky. But it doesn't recording a variety of returns in the 20s.

So if your luck's in you'll be able to take a test drive of the stunning T8 and perhaps get one in your driveway.

Fact File

- Volvo XC90 T8
- Engine: 2.0 four-cylinder turbo, petrol/electric hybrid
- Power: 407bhp
- 0-62mph: 5.6 secs
- Top speed: 143mph
- Combined miles per gallon: -
- Transmission: eight-speed automatic
- CO2 g/km: 49

