

# 4WD BUYERS GUIDE

## VW TOUAREG

### MEDIUM WAGONS



**The latest generation VW Touareg was released in mid-2011. The new model received a much-needed boost in interior space, but there's only one model with low-range gearing.**

The Touareg has struggled to match the success of other European luxury 4WDs in the Australian market and that's partly due to persistence with low-range gearing that made RRP's uncompetitive with less-specified BMW, Benz and Audi competitors. In the 2012 lineup there's now only one Touareg model with low-range gearing – at a five grand premium.

It seems that VW originally thought it could compete with the Discovery 3, Range Rover Sport and LandCruiser 200 Series in the true off-road stakes, but has accepted a more realistic luxury-SUV role.

Despite being lower, the new Touareg is larger than the previous model. It is almost 50mm longer in wheelbase and overall length has increased by 144mm, yet it weighs up to 90kg less and is said to be up to 20 percent more fuel-efficient.

This efficiency is aided to a large extent by the standard fitment of an eight-speed automatic transmission.

New options include an advanced Driver Assistance Package which incorporates a range of features such as Lane Assist, Side Assist and ProActive Occupant Protection System.



All new Touaregs feature BlueMotion technologies including brake energy recuperation and Start/Stop functionality.

Standard equipment across the range includes nine airbags, ABS, EBD, Brake Assist, Auto Hold and Hill Hold Assist, ASR, EDL and ESP with active rollover protection function, EBC and Off-road Function with Anti-lock Braking System (ABSplus) and Hill Decent Assist.

Entertainment and technology equipment fitted as standard includes coloured Multi-function Display and Bluetooth® connectivity.

Pricing in 2011 for the new range started at \$62,990 for the five-cylinder diesel and peaked at \$82,990 for the low-range equipped V6 TDI model.

## Previous Models

The VW Touareg was released in September 2003, with a choice of two petrol engines and one diesel engine. Priced from \$67,600, the Touareg had a choice of 3.2-litre 24-valve V6 and 4.2-litre 40-valve V8 petrol engines and diesel overkill in the form of a V10TDI twin-turbocharged diesel powerplant which, with 230kW and 750Nm, was then the world's most powerful passenger-car diesel engine. However, there was no mid-powered diesel option to let the Touareg compete with other Euro wagons and the Japanese.

There were four Touareg models: V6, V6L, V8 and V10TDI.

V10TDI Touaregs came with standard satellite navigation; an option on other models. Four-zone climate-control air-conditioning was standard on V10TDI models and optional on V8 and V6 models, which came with two-zone as standard).

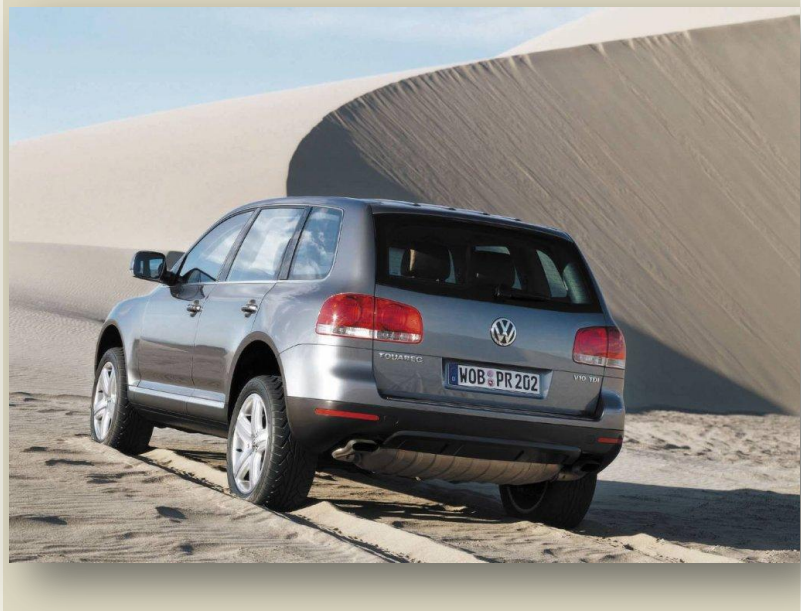


With a 60/40 split rear seat, luggage compartment volume varied from 555 to 1570 litres.

Standard transmission was a six-speed electronic automatic and V8 and V10TDI models had steering column-mounted paddles for manual shifting. Power was transmitted through a transfer gearbox, with switchable off-road low-range gearing, to front, rear and centre differentials.

A centre differential lock was standard and an electronic rear differential lock was optional. In normal conditions, power was split 50:50/front:rear, but up to 100 percent drive could be transferred to either front or rear axle. The driver could also activate the centre diff lock manually, using a rotary switch.

Standard on V10 models and optional on V8s, Volkswagen's Continuous Damping Control (CDC) air suspension increased standard ground clearance from 237mm up to 300mm.



Combined with a three-part door seal system designed to keep water out; waterproof headlights and connectors; a special air intake and sealed drive shafts, the Touareg could ford creek crossings up to 500mm deep (580mm with air suspension).

Body innovations included plastic front mudguards and an aluminium bonnet.

Bi-xenon headlights were standard on V10TDIs and optional on V8s.

Ergonomics were thoughtfully worked: steering column wands were employed for only basic functions (turn signals, headlight flasher and wipers) while all other systems were activated by separate switches.

V8 and V10TDI Touaregs had standard 12-way adjustable electric front seats with a memory system and the steering column also had a memory function.

In addition to front and side airbags, there were curtain airbags that covered the entire window surface between the A and C-pillars. The Touareg also boasted belt tensioners for window passengers, with force limiters for driver and front passenger, five three-point seat belts with height adjustment for front and rear passengers.

Recommended retail prices were: V6 - \$67,600; V6L - \$75,800; V8 - \$99,950 and V10TDI - \$138,500.

In November 2004 the Touareg was awarded a five star collision safety rating after Euro NCAP barrier testing.



For 2005 the long-awaited five-cylinder turbo diesel model, R5 TDI, was released, providing a second diesel option in the lineup.

Volkswagen's 2.5-litre five cylinder turbo-diesel produced a claimed 128kW of power with 400Nm of peak torque.

As with the petrol V6 Touareg, there were two R5 TDI models: the standard (R5 TDI) and luxury (R5 TDI L) variants. With a RRP from \$69,900, the R5 TDI Touareg was no great bargain.

The 2007 model year Touareg represented much better value for money, thanks to the introduction of a 3.0-litre 165kW/500Nm V6 TDI diesel engine.

The V6 petrol FSI and V6 TDI models were fitted with with an alarm system, walnut wood and brushed aluminium inserts in dashboard and doors, leather seats, electrically adjustable front seats with 12-way adjustment, as well as individually heated front seats.

Pricing for the R5 TDI dropped to \$64,990 and the V6 diesel had a RRP of \$74,990, identical to the petrol V6 model.

In mid-2007 The Touareg scored a new frontal appearance that a chrome grille, distinctive headlights and new wheels and colours. In addition, the interior was outfitted with two seating systems.

The V10 diesel was already over the top in our view, but that didn't stop VW giving it the tuning treatment in late 2007. The new Touareg R50 boasted 258kW and 850Nm from the souped-up V10. VW reckoned the R50 accelerated to 100 km/h in just 6.8 seconds, with a top speed of 235 km/h.

### Bush Modifications

Touaregs never sold in sufficient quantities to cause much interest in the after-market, so there's very little in the way of off-road kit available.



"New HELLA LUMINATOR  
LED driving lights.  
Brilliant!"

