

*The Skoda Superb has arrived in its 2014 avatar. We drive it to see what all has changed*

By **Kshitij Sharma**

**S**ITTING in the driver's seat, I get a feeling of déjà vu — with the long white bonnet sprawling before me, a steering wheel that feels good to hold and the all too familiar infotainment system. The only thing not so nostalgic is the three-spoke steering wheel rather than the four-spoked one we've come to expect in Skodas. The reason for this déjà vu is that the new Skoda Superb I'm sitting in is a facelift and not an all-new generation model.

The new-generation Superb is yet to be revealed and might be a while away, in the meantime we will have to make do with the refreshed one. Mechanically, the car remains same as its predecessor; there is no change to the dimensions and wheelbase or the engine and gearbox.

The biggest changes to the car are the aesthetics. The front-end sports a wide grille reminiscent of the Octavia and Skoda's new design language. The bonnet dome has been retained, but the badge is now chrome steel. The headlamps have been reworked, which are now flatter and sharper.

**T**he headlamps incorporate LED daytime running lights along with LED indicators. At first, the flatter front-end seems a bit out of place with the rest of the design of the car, but tends to grow steadily on you. At the rear, the bumper has been redesigned as well. The license plate has now moved up on the boot lid instead of the bumper as was on the older car. The bumper, as a result, looks clean in design terms and the tail lamps are all-LED that look smart.

The model we drove was the 2.0 TDI Elegance — the top-of-the-line variant. On the inside, the similarities continue barring the steering wheel, which we have already pointed out is a three-spoke unit with paddle shifts. The interior is bathed in ivory leather and soft-feel plastic and the touchscreen infotainment system is the similar to the one on other Skoda cars. The front seats are comfortable and come with 12-way adjustable settings with memory function for both the driver and co-passenger. The rear seats, on the other hand,



The diesel version of the Superb comes with a six-speed DSG gearbox

# THE NEW CZECH-LIST

## VERDICT

The car certainly looks fresher after the minor tweaks. A bit more power from the diesel engine would have tilted the odds further in its favour, but since Skoda faces very little competition in this segment, it should still manage to rake in the numbers.

could do with a bit more thigh support. However there is plenty of room at the back for three and even has boot access. The split seats increase the boot space even more (as if the boot space wasn't adequate already).

Even though this is just a facelift, an upgrade in power could have worked wonders for the car. The

2.0-litre unit produces only 140bhp of max power and offers 320Nm of peak torque. The diesel version of the Superb comes with a six-speed DSG gearbox. There is a bit of latency in the shifts in drive mode, but that change the moment you put the car in S Plus mode. The paddle shifts add to the driving experience. The torque turns out to be adequate, but the luxury sedan feels a bit sluggish, especially on inclines. Then there is the noise that comes from the engine bay and seeps into the cabin. The TDI unit has a fair bit of engine clatter, which sounds out of place in a luxury sedan of the Superb's stature. It is noisy both at standing still and on the move. There are other problems too, like the lack of a reversing camera, which is useful on narrow roads and helps to dif-

ferentiate between flora and a fairly large stone. In terms of handling, it is not a sports car, but still manages to hold its own in the corners, which gives the driver confidence in the car's ability.

The steering provides good feel and so do the brakes. Though in tighter corners, it feels as if the front-end has turned while the rear is a bit slow to catch up.

But the biggest redeeming quality of the car is its ride, which is simply sublime. There is no pothole that it can't tackle and the perfectly tuned suspension and ESP ensure that the car stays planted at all times even at high speeds. During our drive we encountered sections that would make most sedans shy away, but the Superb was well, superb even on bad stretches.

Price:

**₹26 LAKH**  
(ex-showroom, Delhi)

## SPEC SHEET

### ENGINE

2.0-litre, 4-cyl diesel

### MAX POWER

140bhp@4,200rpm

### GEARBOX

6-speed DSG

### WHEELBASE (mm)

2,761

### LxWxH (mm)

4,838 x1,817x1,482

### Max torque

320Nm@1,750rpm

### Top Speed:

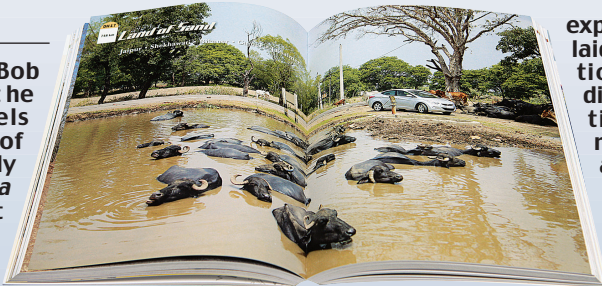
200kmph

## A GUIDEBOOK FOR THOSE ON THE ROAD

By **Vivek Mukherji**

Veteran automotive journalist, Bob Rupani, has once again done what he does best. Known for his travels across the length and breadth of the country, he penned the highly acclaimed *Driving Holidays in India* in 2005. And now, he has come out with a sequel to his bestseller, *More Driving Holidays in India*, which is an essential guidebook for all those who fancy driving around to see and hear the glorious sights and sounds of our magnificent country.

*More Driving Holidays in India*



features 35 driving destinations spread across the length and breadth of the country, which will put the joy of driving back in the hearts of novices and

experienced travelers alike. The well-laid out book features each destination in detail complete with directions, estimated travel time, schematic road maps, places of interest and affordable places to stay. Rupani has embellished the pages with pictures that capture the essence of a particular destination. He has

gone to great lengths to source some of these pictures from his friends. As one would expect from a food lover, Rupani has tucked

away interesting bits about local specialties in the accompanying text, as if he wants the reader to earn his share of a delicious morsel.

One thing that struck me is that Rupani could have done a little more justice to north-east, especially Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Manipur. But that is not to say that he completely forgotten that part of the country. He has touched some of the remotest places in that region like Nathu La and Pelling. This book is certainly a labour of love.

**'More Driving Holidays in India' features 35 driving destinations spread across the length and breadth of the country**