

2016 VOLT Whole New Ballgame



Oh what a difference a day makes is an old fashioned expression not heard often in 2016. However, after spending some extended time in the 2016 Chevrolet Volt, “Oh what a difference an update new generation Volt makes for this automotive journalist”

Volt 2.0 as I call it is country mile better than the first generation that I drove in Boston a few years back. It is not so much major changes but the sum of the whole package. In all honesty I never much cared for the first generation Volt in anyway. The 2016 Volt is a whole different story.

The next-generation @016 Volt improves, with a better all-electric range 53 miles total and thanks to its range extender designed to deliver 420 miles of total range thanks to a more fuel-efficient engine. The Volt is better to look at, spend time in and when the rubber hits the road better to drive, with a nicely done suspension system. The Volt Brings standard good steering and decent power from its unique drivetrain. It can seat five people as a matter of fact I had five people on board as the in laws were in town the week the Volt was my test driver. With a starting price of about \$34,000 before federal and state EV credits, the Volt is going to give Prius and other EV buyers something to think about.

The improvements in the 2016 Chevy Volt's driving dynamics are apparent from the moment you pull away from a stop. The new Chevy Volt is quicker, giving drivers a satisfying shove in the back when they mash the accelerator. But it goes beyond just managing the prodigious torque an electric motor creates. Bend the Volt into a curve, and its flat stance and firm suspension combine with accurate steering to make it an athletic ride. Brakes are satisfying, partly because of their strength, but also because of the lack of weirdness between mechanical and regenerative braking. On the latter, the new Volt features a Regen On Demand paddle on the left side of the steering wheel. Hold it down and the electric motor's regenerative braking is enhanced, slowing the car dramatically. Get good at it, and you'll find yourself hardly ever using the actual brake pedal.

The new Chevy Volt's interior looks and works great, ditching the former generations capacitive touch buttons and shiny plastic in favor of a conventional design. The multifunction steering wheel is also your gateway to the multi-info display, which shows speed, battery use and myriad other functions. I enjoyed the new touch screen system, and there's good head- and legroom for the two front passengers.

This is good looking sharp small car that happens to be an EV. The sleek lines borrow some elements from the previous Volt, like the grille inserts, for example, and the lightning bolt through the "V" in Volt on the badge. However, the new Volt doesn't look like some sort of a sci-fi car of tomorrow. The proportions are right-on, the headlights and taillights are distinctive without being weird, and the profile is modern and spot-on.

For 2016 the Volt LT comes standard with luxury-grade features like push-button start, automatic climate control, remote start, keyless entry, and 4G LTE OnStar with a built-in Wi-Fi hotspot. It also comes standard with an 8-inch LCD touch-screen infotainment system that includes Apple CarPlay. There's a rearview camera, cruise control, tilt-and-telescope steering wheel with multiple controls for the various audio and infotainment systems. Standard safety equipment includes multiple airbags, including a knee airbag to prevent sliding under the steering wheel in a collision.

My test Volt was the Chevy Volt Premier which in my opinion is the way to go. You get Comfort package, Heated leather seats and steering wheel plus a very good Bose Audio system.

Lots of high tech is standard as well such as blind-spot, forward-collision and lane-keep assist technology. My loaded model came in at a little over 39K. But don't forget all the Federal rebates and more.

The 2016 Volt has a gasoline engine, displacing 1.5 liters and putting out 101 horsepower. However, it's a generator, there to supply electricity to the drivetrain when the 18.4 kWh battery runs out after about 50 miles. Moving the Volt falls to a pair of electric motors with an output of 149 horsepower and a nice 294 lb-ft of torque. A 50-mile range may not sound like much, but Chevrolet notes that about 90 percent of car trips fall within that range, and that unlike a pure electric vehicle, you have the capability of driving up to 420 miles before refueling the Volt; good news, it now takes regular unleaded. A full recharge takes about 4.5 hours on a 240-volt charger or roughly 13 hours on a standard 120-volt plug.

I like the Volt a lot more than expected and you will as well. Chevrolet is in the EV game with a great alternative.

Front Engine-EV Range Extender/FWD

Highlights

Handling

Styling

Standard and Available Equipment

Bose Audio System

Lowlights

Pricey without Government Rebates

The Long Drive Ratings

Scale 1 low-10 High

Exterior Styling 8

Interior styling and quality 7

Handling 7

Braking 7

Fuel Economy 10

Stereo System 8

Navigation System 6 Performance and Accuracy 10

Performance 5

Trunk-Cargo Capacity 6

