



Volkswagen. Das Auto.



NL **HD-RR-98**

#16
Volkswagen
Vento
(1993)

Schabak
1011

Period: 1992-1998

Built: n/a

Engine: 1.9-l 4-cyl. turbodiesel

Power: 75 PS

Top speed: 165 km/h

Price: fl. 39,365

Predecessor:

Volkswagen Jetta Mk2

Successor:

Volkswagen Bora

Date acquisition:

01/11/1993

Approx. first plate Approx. last plate

DT-TF-13 **TX-FD-78**





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“Who wants a Golf with a boot?”, Autocar asked at its first coverage of the new Volkswagen Vento in its 5 February 1992 issue. Experience with the Jetta – the Mk2 “Golf saloon”, which only managed to account for about 10% of European sales of the broader Golf range – did not bode well. Volkswagen’s design and marketing teams desperately tried to differentiate the new saloon both from its unsuccessful predecessor and from the new Golf Mk3 on which it was based. Volkswagen went even as far as claiming that the Vento was “a totally new model in its own right”. Ultimately, however, a set of square headlamps (just like the Jetta had had to distance itself from the Golf Mk2) and a different steering wheel did little to disguise that the Vento was ultimately simply a booted Golf. And the chunky boot was undoubtedly very practical but made the styling “too safe and unadventurous” at best, if not outright out of proportion. On its first driving impressions, reported in its 30 September 1992 issue, Autocar concluded: “There’s a faint sense of déjà vu about the Vento; an underlying uneasiness over its individuality next to the Golf, just as there was with the Jetta before it”.

Is there nothing positive to say about the Vento, then? Underneath the unsuccessful styling lies a sound product. Autocar judged the Vento “markedly superior” to drive compared to the Ford Sierra and Opel Vectra, essentially cars operating in the class above, applauding the “smooth refinement of the engine, the roomy comfort of its smartly trimmed cabin, the huge boot, the top-notch build quality, the slick gearshift and, of course, the calibre of the chassis”.

This Schabak model is not the most detailed model ever. For instance, I manually added the black window divider in the rear side windows. And the top half of the rear light clusters should be orange rather than red. A particular annoyance on my Vento model is the malformed front bumper strip, which does not wrap around the body as neatly as it should.

That said, the openable bonnet, front doors, and boot are a neat touch, and the model has kept well, given that, at the time of writing, it has been in my collection for over 30 years. The model does not specify engine or trim levels, but the data shown on the other side of this information card refer to the popular base “CL” turbodiesel version.



Volkswagen never really cracked the mid-size saloon. Like the Jetta before it and the Bora afterwards, the Vento was not particularly successful.



The Fiat Tempra was similarly conceived: a saloon based on a more popular hatchback with a different name.



The square headlamps were a point of difference with the Golf, but did little to distance the Vento properly from the car on which it was based.