

SPECIAL FEATURE

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THE HIMALAYAN DRIVE IN THE HONDA WR-V



WE TOOK IT UPON
OURSELVES WITH THE
HELP OF HONDA'S
COMPACT SUV TO FIND US
SOME GOOD 'OL
SNOW-FILLED ROADS

The thirst for adventure is often one that is unquenchable. Although the pandemic still lingers on, slowly but surely, human beings across the globe have started to move around their respective lands, in search for greener pastures. Or like in our case, whiter ones. Don't be confused, because our recent journey with Honda's compact SUV took us to the hills of Himachal Pradesh, in search of some pristine snow. On our trip, we encountered wide open highways, narrow hill roads and some good old fashioned snow filled mountain roads. But, we'll come to that a little later.

First, let's talk about the WR-V. In addition to making our journey as quick as possible, we fortunately got the 1.5-litre i-DTEC, turbo-diesel motor which is frugal and fun, all at the same time. Another noteworthy figure which

we encountered was the absolutely smashing fuel efficiency, which always lingered between 18 - 20 kmpl, which in the grander scheme of things, helped us a lot. Not only monetarily, but also in the fact that we never ever felt range anxiety of any kind. With the WR-V, we knew we could whole heartedly enjoy our surroundings, rather than looking for fuel pumps on the way.

We'll return to the performance of the WR-V shortly, but for now it's time to take you through our journey. It all began in New Delhi, where we picked up our trusty companion. Our first stop was near Chandigarh, which is around 300-odd kilometres from the nation's capital. In the wee hours of the morning, we headed off towards our first stop. Initially, we were a little unsure of the WR-V — how would it perform? Can it tackle the tricky snow-covered roads we would eventually encounter? But, there were three points that always gave us confidence.



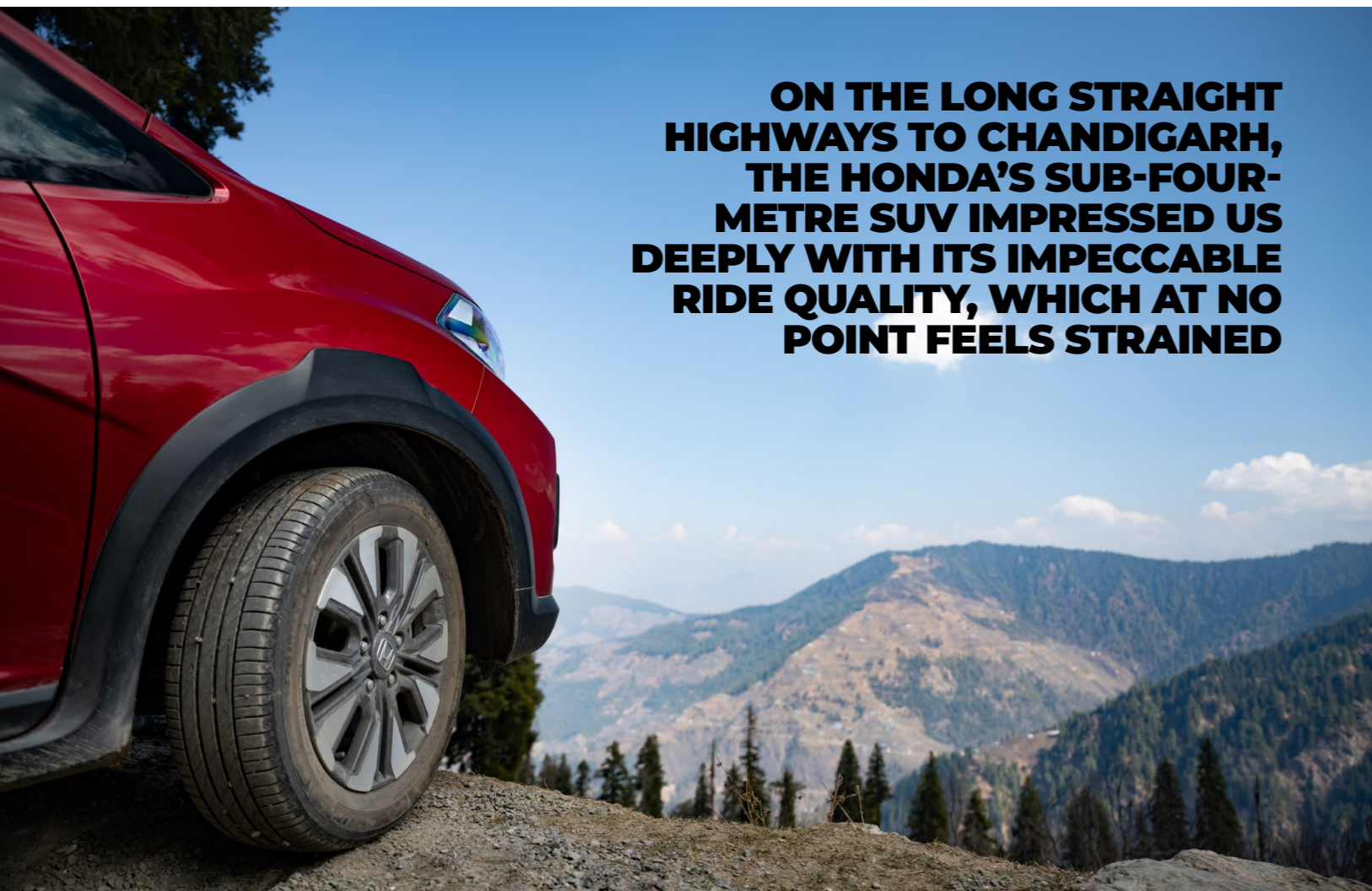
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**ON THE LONG STRAIGHT
HIGHWAYS TO CHANDIGARH,
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METRE SUV IMPRESSED US
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First, the fact that the WR-V has superior ground clearance and advanced safety features. Second, the 100 PS and 200 Nm of torque on tap to get us out of any sticky situation. And last but certainly not least, the fact that the WR-V is a Honda product. You see, Honda for years has perfected the art of creating machines which balance practicality and fun with undeniable grace. Whether its sports cars, sedans, SUVs or even two-wheelers, Honda sits at the pinnacle of engineering brilliance. And in that respect, the WR-V is no different.

On the long straight highways to Chandigarh, the Honda's sub-four-metre SUV impressed us deeply with its impeccable ride quality, which at no point feels strained. There's an underlying smoothness in the way the WR-V tackles bad roads. It doesn't break so much as a sweat when presented with roads that are capable of leaving other vehicles gasping for air, and that says a lot. Another added advantage in that respect is the sublime quality of the seats. At no point in our journey did we feel fatigue, and the WR-V supportive seats and tilt/telescopic adjustable steering wheel made it easy to find a comfortable driving position. And as the first leg of the journey came to a close, all our doubts had quickly been washed away.

The next day, we set the WR-V in-built navigation system towards Shimla, which is approximately 150 kilometres from the city of Chandigarh. But, given that these were mountain roads, the time taken would be at par with what we encountered yesterday. With hope in our eyes, and the morning sun shining down upon the bold exterior of the WR-V, we headed off once again, this time with the hope of seeing what this mighty little SUV can do on the curvy hill roads. And suffice to say, we were not disappointed, by any stretch of the imagination.

The WR-V took the blind turns and long curves in its strides, eating up the miles like we were chomping down on mountain Maggi. The steering feel was precise and more importantly, not artificial. There was a genuine connect between the road and steering wheel, the surface of which we could experience on our fingertips. With every passing corner, our confidence grew larger and larger. It almost seemed like there's nothing the WR-V can't do. Once we stopped to load up on some basic stock for the journey ahead, we realised even the 363-litre boot space is more than enough to cater to any weekend getaway. We're sure it's easy to tell, the WR-V had us more than just pleasantly surprised, this was a revelation! Another quirky feature we really enjoyed was the fact that the cup holder is placed right in front of the AC vent, which can keep your drink cool or warm. Neat.





ALL EYES WERE ON THIS DARK RED COLOURED COMPACT SUV, MAKING ITS WAY UP THE MOUNTAIN WITH CLASS AND SOPHISTICATION, ALL WHILE KEEPING US WARM ON THE INSIDE



As lunch time approached, we decided to spend our day in and around Shimla, to ask around for the best place to experience the snow. Although there were small glimpses of snow in and around the beautiful mountain town, it wasn't nearly enough to whet our appetite. So, after a bit of local recce, we came upon a name - Baghi. This small little town is located approximately 75 kilometres from Shimla, and we decided to head there bright and early the next day, to check out the snow in all its glory. But for now, it was time to take some rest and continue to be astonished with the achievements of the WR-V.

The final leg of our journey was at hand, and the WR-V faced perhaps its toughest assignment yet - the slippery and frankly dangerous snow-covered roads, leading to Baghi. The roads were relatively clear till Narkanda, which is a slightly bigger town but after that it was a difficult road ahead. As soon as the Baghi turn off arrived, the road was covered with a thin sheet of ice. We saw motorcycles, scooters and cars slipping and sliding about, scurrying to break in time, in order to avoid a crash with the oncoming traffic. But, the WR-V, well, that was a different story. We simply slotted it in first, kept it nice and easy and Honda's SUV simply willed itself atop those snow-covered mountain roads.

There wasn't so much as an ounce of slippage, the WR-V simply kept going. All eyes were on this dark red coloured compact SUV, making its way up the mountain with class and sophistication, all while keeping us warm on the inside. Everywhere the eye could see, there was snow, with the beautiful backdrop of the Himalayas in the distance. And when we got the change, we helped out the locals in making the roads a little less 'icy', so to speak. But, this was all in a good day's work. And once we had had our fill with the snow, it was time to look back on the WR-V's achievements.

Our journey may not have been long, but it came with its own set of hurdles. In all honesty, not at any point did the WR-V ever let us down. In fact, it only exceeded our expectations in every single department. Whether it's the slick-shifting six-speed manual gearbox or even the Apple CarPlay/Android Auto compatibility; it all came together in such a harmonious and nonchalant manner, that there was nothing to do except be impressed by Honda's extremely capable compact SUV. In the end, the WR-V was more than just a vessel during our excursion, it became our Noah's ark, one we came to trust and adore, and for us personally, there's no greater praise to give to an automobile. If you think about it, it's in the name really - Wondrous, Ravishing and Versatile.