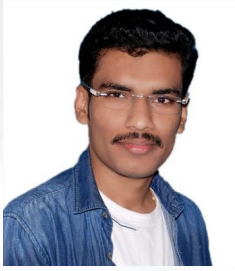


“THE WRONG CAR”



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As the oft-quoted line goes, if you don't look back at your car after you park, you bought the wrong car. My SX4 is my wrong car by this definition. It looks ugly. It does not make you look back after you park it. Well so to speak. (In reality, being passionate about whatever car I get to drive, I did look back at her every single time, but that's just me.)

Before we proceed further, here is a picture of Dusty - the name I gave her after a week-long monsoon drive in 2019 in which she was covered in mud and dust - on Kerala in 2019, in my most memorable drive with SX4 ever!



With this introduction done, let me summarize what I love about this car and why I used 5 SX4s back to back without upgrading to better options available. I have driven 3 lakh km from 2015. I have faced numerous issues and a major accident. Everyone advised me to get rid of the car. But SX4 never put me down.

Back in 2015, I bought this car primarily for its reliability and practicality and wanted a car that can compete Toyota Innova in every aspect which I was using that time. I decided to buy a used SX4 cause didn't find any alternative new car neither in 2015 nor in 2020 for my requirements. I wanted to do highway drives and mainly to travel to hometown from Pune for weekends without having to worry about the car. And that is how this story started. The car was great for going anywhere, anytime, with almost SUV like capabilities.

Of course, by that, I don't mean off-roading, but I mean it could tackle any bad roads without much worry. With every single highway drive, I started liking the car more and more. And without me even realizing it, the car became a part of my college life and became an integral part of all my driving plans too.

I always believe that the bond between a man and his machine grows strong only after a few solo drives. And I did plenty of those in this car. The car became my companion. The car became a part of all my experiences and all my memories.

In the past 6 years, I covered almost half of India including Rajasthan in 2016, Andhra Pradesh in 2017, TamilNadu in 2018, Kerala in 2019 and Goa numerous times and the car shares all those wonderful memories with me. Excluding Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh back in 2018 by Toyota Fortuner which I don't even like to sit.

The one quality that stood out in all these times and all these drives is that it never let me down. And with that trust that got built, it feels like a fortress to me. I feel safe and at home when I sit in this car. The car is sort of my comfort zone. It is my personal space with some very nice memories. It is a feeling hard to explain in words.

In 2017, After a using Volvo XC60, the SX4 got relegated to a beater car role. Several funny things happened with that change. Suddenly realized how slow the SX4 was. I also realized how poor the handling was. And how poor the ride was. It is funny how these subjective opinions change based on circumstances and based on what one's benchmarks for comparison are. (And jokingly, this is one more reason why I called the SX4 the "wrong car".)

However, at the same time, I started appreciating the other qualities even more -The SX4 handles all these situations with a smile, and without breaking a sweat. It does not care about bad roads or potholes, and it is not even a little bit afraid of waterlogged streets or mud-filled potholes. It loves those monsoon downpours. It does not mind getting parked by a valet. While with Volvo XC60 I enjoy the drive, with SX4 I enjoy the journey! The SX4 is an experience beyond the "driving pleasure", which is XC60's forte.

So beater car or not, I still love the SX4 and will continue doing so. I can't believe it has already been 6 years. I can still drive it on the long interstate highway drives, and it is still comfortable and practical enough for all my driving needs.