

Driven and reviewed

Rally bred for the road

Pictures: Suresh Narayanan

We get behind the wheels of the Mitsubishi Evo X, and come out with a silly smirk

My love story with the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution started at the time when I used to watch ace rally driver Tommi Makinen driving an Evolution VI on TV, doing things with it, that I could never believe possible. That was 12 years ago. Naturally, when I found myself at the wheel of the Evolution X, I was more than just excited.

this AWD vehicle and a button on the steering wheel called ASC – Active Steering Control. The latter helps decide how much power should go to which wheel, depending on yaw angle.

Push the button and fire the engine and you are not greeted with any spectacular engine or exhaust note. But rev the 2-litre twin turbo MIVEC engine and you will hear the valves popping off,



Steering wheel is adjustable for both reach and rake, but the Recaro seats are not height adjustable. They only get fore and aft, and seat inclination adjustment

On the inside the car feels quite unremarkable. True, it is well built and finished and there's stitched leather all around and even a Rockford Fosgate music system, but nothing really to make you feel very special. Until you sit in the body hugging Recaro bucket seats. These provide more support, be it lateral, for the lower back or thighs, than you would need on most days. Clearly, these seats are a hint at what this car is capable of doing. The only other hints of the Evo X's true potential are a button behind the gear selector stick for the differential lock on

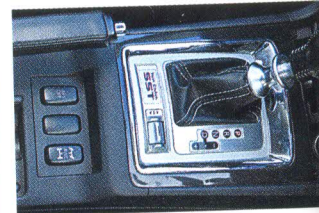
which is quite addictive. I let go of the brakes and the car starts rolling with the speedo needle climbing lazily. Almost on the verge of an anti-climax, I shift down a cog with the paddleshifter and wow! Suddenly I am pushed back into my seat as the car lunges forward ferociously.

The Evo X features a twin clutch transmission, as is gradually becoming the norm in performance cars. The gearbox feels slow in upshifts, even in Sports mode, but downshifts are tremendously quick. Unless the engine is revving too high in which case the transmission senses that a down-



Gearbox (below) has ratios that are well matched with the 2-litre twin turbo 4811 MIVEC engine (above)

Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X	
Engine	4-cyl, 1998cc
Max power	294bhp@6500rpm
Max torque	336Nm@3500rpm
Gearbox	6-speed Twin Clutch SST
Wheelbase (mm)	2650
LxWxH (mm)	4505x1810x1480
Top Speed	250kmph
0-100kmph	6.6 seconds
Price	Rs 49.9 lakh, ex-showroom, Delhi
+	Handling and performance
-	Expensive, lack of comfort features





Active Stability Control (ASC) and Super All-Wheel Control (S-AWC) ensure best traction at all times



Paddleshifters (below) are very conveniently placed and are easy to reach. They are also positive to operate



shift will ensure the engine will hit the redline.

With speeds climbing rather too quickly the corner ahead approaches rapidly. It is here that the Evo X gets into its own. It turns in quickly, all the while the steering wheel talks to me, telling

me exactly what the wheels are upto. The car reacts to changes of load and direction so quickly that one finds oneself making corrections almost intuitively.

And all this, when we're not even a fraction close to the Mitsubishi's limit.

Verdict

Pushan Das

■ With the Evo X Mitsubishi has given us a rally car minus the roll-cage; it is spartan and has few gizmos that one would expect in a car this expensive. Compensation though comes in the form of driving experience. At Rs 50 lakh, this car is meant only for the hardcore enthusiast.

