

The Fun to Drive New Renault Twingo

by Ian Lynas

THE original Renault Twingo was in LHD form and it became a firm favourite in its home market, its cheeky simple styling seemed to appeal to the French. While on the western side of the English Channel the Clio was very much the choice.

However Twingo made it to our shores and it is the first model to benefit from the new design thinking that is set to inform a future generation of models from Renault.

There are certainly echoes of the original Twingo when it comes to styling, with an appealing face which has the diamond badge prominent on the bonnet.

However styling is just part of the story, the newcomer remains true to the principles of clever use of interior space, precise handling and affordability that have been fundamental to its enduring success.

Slotting into the range below Clio at last the Twingo has become more of a car; it has at last grown up. Some will argue that the original charm has gone. I can't answer that question I never had the opportunity to try one of the original cars.

Compact dimensions and a surprisingly well packaged interior, complete with four individually sliding seats, the result is class-leading levels of interior space.

The boot is amongst the biggest in the small car class and ranges from 165 to 285 litres with all four seats in place to

a class-leading 959 litres with the rear seats folded flat.

The safety package is comprehensive, four airbags, ABS with EBD, ESC and curtain airbags can be specified as options.

Renault have been wise, there is a single version, the Dynamique 1.2 16V 75 which features cruise control with speed limiter, 15 inch alloy wheels, manual air conditioning, height adjustable driver's seat and steering, a four-speaker audio system, Bluetooth and electrically adjustable door mirrors.

There are options, including a fabric sunroof a feature of the original Twingo (now electric powered), as well as a glass panoramic sunroof, climate control air conditioning and street-smart bi-colour alloys.

Renault has the answer if you desire your Twingo to get noticed, there is a new range of eye-catching decals. Adding further spice, two vibrant new



body colours, Fuchsia and Bermuda Blue metallic.

Power is provided by a 1,149cc naturally aspirated 16 valve engine that delivers 75bhp allowing 62mph in 12.3 seconds and on to a 105mph top speed.

Allied to this eager little power unit is a five-speed manual transmission.

Good news on running costs, the official combined cycle fuel economy is 55.4mpg with a CO2 emissions figure of just 119g/km, which means a zero road tax bill for new car owners in the first year.

The new Twingo has one big plus, it is sheer fun to drive with its kart-like handling.



The MacPherson strut front and compact torsion beam rear suspension set-up is tuned to deliver engaging driving dynamics and a taut ride. It also features a fuel-saving electric power steering system.

I tried the newcomer on Scottish roads on a very wet day on surfaces that were less than inviting, yet this little number rolled out the miles with confidence.

The car I tried was finished in Bermuda Blue, a stark contrast to the dreary weather I encountered.

The on the road price is £10,350; back to options, my example had a number of options raising the final cost to £10,985.