

Clio Gordini Renault Sport: Pure performance, undiluted heritage

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- **Bold and distinctive styling with unique Gordini colour scheme and detailing**
- **Renault Sport Cup chassis for ultimate handling performance**
- **Perfect blend of power and control with powerful 2,0-litre 16-valve engine**
- **No compromise in standard luxury and safety equipment terms**
- **Clio Renault Sport and Gordini – legacies of success**

Following last year's launch of Renault Sport's diminutive, yet giant-killing pocket rocket – the Twingo Gordini Renault Sport – Renault South Africa is proudly expanding the Gordini range with the launch of the exceptional new **Clio Gordini Renault Sport** at the 2011 Knysna Hillclimb, sponsored by Renault.

"The Clio Gordini Renault Sport combines the award-winning credentials of the Clio Renault Sport with the proud heritage of the Gordini name to produce a truly segment-defining hot hatch," says Xavier Gobille, managing director of Renault South Africa.

"Accordingly, it will appeal to a growing number of drivers seeking an exclusive yet affordable performance car with a distinctive character and a race-inspired legacy to match."

Indeed, the Clio Gordini Renault Sport benefits from the proven expertise of Renault Sport Technologies in producing a class-leading and extremely successful hot hatchback, bolstered by the exclusivity of the proud racing heritage associated with the Gordini name.

SCINTILLATING STYLING

The Clio Gordini Renault Sport packs the performance and styling punch of the current Renault Sport model, but gains unrivalled exclusivity in eye-catching Gordini guise.

This muscular range-topping model is immediately set apart from the regular Clio Renault Sport by means of its rich colour schemes, comprising Malta Blue, which is unique to the Gordini.

All Gordini variants are further distinguished by the trademark bold twin white stripes that extend from the bonnet, over the roof to the tailgate – a design that pays tribute to Amédée Gordini's legendary racing Renaults of the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

Gloss black highlights embellish the front bumper and rear diffuser, while the use of white for the exterior mirror housings and F1-style aerodynamic front splitter further entrench the motorsport lineage.

Contrasting black and diamond-effect 12-spoke aluminium alloy wheels also enhance the purposeful appearance, while the 'Gordini Series' badge on each flank reaffirms this model's exclusive, racing-derived status.

The racy Gordini spirit is equally obvious in the cabin. In keeping with the distinctive exterior hue, the Gordini-badged and supremely supportive Renault Sport seats are trimmed in black leather with blue accents along the lower and upper side bolsters.

The top section of the leather-trimmed three-spoke sports steering wheel is finished in blue leather, with two white stripes to indicate the straight-ahead position.

Similarly, the gear lever features a blue leather gaiter and a metallic Gordini-branded gear knob, bolstered by a numbered Gordini plaque on the gearlever console, carpet mats with blue edging and Gordini branding.

The instrumentation echoes this performance hatchback's racing disposition, including a rev counter dial with white background, as well as the on-board Renault Sport Telemetry Display that made its debut on the Mégane Renault Sport Cup. The system provides the driver with real-time performance and vehicle data, as well as several options to tailor the throttle and engine response.

DAZZLING PERFORMANCE

The Clio Gordini Renault Sport embodies all of the superlative driving characteristics that have made the Clio Renault Sport a class leader, and one of the most popular hot hatchbacks in the world.

Developed by Renault Sport Technologies, it is renowned for its exceptionally entertaining, fun-to-drive characteristics, achieved through the use of a superb chassis and suspension system, matched to a potent, high-revving naturally aspirated engine.

In this top-spec guise, the Clio Gordini Renault Sport features the bespoke Cup chassis as standard, in place of the more conventional Sport chassis used in the standard Clio Renault Sport. This firmer, more focussed set-up allows the driver to fully exploit the supreme dynamic potential of the Gordini Renault Sport for an even more exhilarating driving experience.

It relies on an independent steering axis front suspension arrangement that guarantees a high degree of traction and steering accuracy in all driving conditions, complemented by wide, low-profile 215/45 R17 tyres for precise, sure-footed handling.

The braking system is also out of the top drawer, boasting four-piston Brembo callipers controlling large, ventilated 312 mm front discs, along with 300 mm solid discs at the rear. ABS with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution is standard.

An active, highly efficient safety net is provided by the Electronic Stability Programme (ESP). The ESP system can be disconnected for particularly spirited driving, such as at track days, for which the Clio Gordini Renault Sport is particularly well suited.

At the heart of the Clio Renault Sport is the much-praised 1 998 cc four-cylinder high-performance fuel-injected engine, which generates an impressive output of 75 kW per litre – a benchmark figure for this class.

With a peak power of 147,5 kW at 7 100 r/min, and a solid 215 Nm of torque produced at 5 400 r/min, outright performance is nothing short of scintillating – evidenced by the 0-100 km/h sprint time of just 6,9 sec and a top speed of 225 km/h.

The slick-shifting six-speed manual gearbox no doubt plays an important role in the Clio's superb acceleration, allowing it to complete the 400 m standing start in just 14,9 sec, and the 1 000 m run in 27,3 sec.

Despite this penchant for thrilling the senses and getting the heart racing – which has made the Clio Renault Sport one of the most enthralling and sought-after performance hatchbacks the world over – it remains remarkably fuel efficient. The hot hatch is capable of a combined cycle fuel consumption of 8,2 l/100 km, and achieves a CO₂ emissions rating of 195 g/km.

PREMIUM EQUIPMENT

As the range-topping variant in the Clio Renault Sport range, the Gordini boasts a premium level of standard features that sets it apart from its rivals. This includes a rain sensor and automatic headlight activation, dedicated cornering lights and electrically folding exterior mirrors.

The prime interior accoutrements comprise cruise control with speed limiter, Renault's hands-free key and ignition card, automatic climate control and dark-tinted rear windows.

On the audio front, the Gordini Renault Sport is equipped with an 80-watt CD receiver with MP3 playback, a separate dashboard-mounted display and steering wheel controls, as well as Bluetooth and multimedia connectivity with USB and iPod connections.

LEGACIES OF SUCCESS

A resounding best-seller since it was first launched internationally in 1990, the Renault Clio has set the class standard for more than 20 years, notching up in excess of 10-million sales.

More specifically, with in excess of 70 000 sales since 2000, the Clio Renault Sport has become the most popular competition car in Europe, where it has been successfully campaigned in both rallying and racing. The Clio is currently the Europe's second best-selling car in its segment.

The launch of the Gordini version of the Clio Renault Sport, with its distinctive looks and performance credentials, will entrench its appeal to the most astute and demanding of enthusiast customers. The Gordini nameplate epitomises the proud sporting heritage that is an integral part of the Renault bloodline – and adds an unmistakable French touch to the successful range of sporting Clios.

The Clio Gordini Renault Sport pays fitting homage to the Gordini Renaults that took the French manufacturer to prominence, and achieved some of the brand's greatest sporting achievements over a 20-year period.

The man behind this success was Amédée Gordini, who was initially approached by Renault to develop its rear-engined Dauphine into a competitive rally car in the late 1950s.

In the wake of the Dauphine's success, Gordini was also tasked with reworking the later Renault 8 into a formidable rally contender from 1964. It too proved very successful, with the famous Renault 8 Gordini (resplendent in its characteristic blue with white stripes) taking victory and four of the top five placings in the 1964 Tour of Corsica Rally.

In all, Gordini tweaked almost 200 000 Renault cars for racing over two decades. The Gordini company was ultimately merged into Renault in 1968, forming the basis for the modern-day Renault Sport Technologies.

Renault Sport Technologies currently produces the various iterations of the highly-rated Twingo Renault Sport, Twingo Gordini Renault Sport, the Clio Renault Sport and the Mégane Renault Sport in Sport and Cup versions.

The new Clio Renault Sport Gordini builds on this proud legacy, and adds an alluring and spirited new variation to the line-up. It offers an unrivalled mix of sporting performance and style with genuine everyday usability.

PRICING

- Clio Gordini Renault Sport R279 900

Prices include a standard three-year/60 000 km Service Plan, as well as Renault's

five-year/150 000 km warranty, now standard across the full range.

This is fully backed up by Renault Confiance, an all-encompassing care package specifically designed to ensure peace-of-mind motoring.

Scheduled services are at 15 000 km intervals.