



NEW - Renault Clio Gordini RS

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The latest incarnation of the Clio RS has arrived in SA, sporting Gordini styling tweaks and some serious firepower

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 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.

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.

The braking system is also out of the top drawer, boasting four-piston Brembo callipers controlling large, ventilated 312mm front discs, along with 300mm 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 147.5kW at 7100rpm, and a solid 215Nm of torque produced at 5400rpm, 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 225km/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 400m standing start in just 14.9 sec, and the 1000 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 195g/km.

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.

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.

Pricing

Clio Gordini Renault Sport R279 900