

# Best of the Bunch

**Ian Lamming** explores the depths of the new Renault Scenic

**M**UST be good then? You might not have seen the new Renault Scenic and Grand Scenic yet, you probably haven't driven one, but even as they arrive in showrooms, they have been voted the best of the bunch.

Being top dog in the UK Car of the Year Awards 2017 is quite an accolade and I can believe it as Renault seems to be cooking with gas at the moment.

At a glance the Scénics look like Capturs, stretched and tweaked from SUV to MPV, and there is nothing wrong with that since the latter remains one of my favourites.

As you would imagine Scénic comes with five-seats with seven in the Grand Scénic, with the emphasis on style and fun. The standard-fit 20-inch wheels are a stroke of genius making the all the difference and transposing concept drawings straight to the road going vehicles.

If you are in the business of transporting people, as most of us are – the kids, their friends, their aged relatives, their friends, people from bus queues – then mum and dad normally have to trade in style for practicality.

Renault recognizes there is no longer any need for these key elements to be mutually exclusive – hurrray.

Scénics also bristle with the latest in innovative high-end safety, convenience and connectivity; you dare asking kids to go on a journey without it nowadays. My brother and I used to spend our time slapping each other but life has moved on...

Judges claimed the Scénics were an antidote for parental depression, which has to be a good thing as the world goes steadily crazy around them.

So to be sure Scénics become the only vehicles in class to provide Active Emergency Braking System (AEBS) with Pedestrian Detection as standard across the range, as well as being available with a range of active and passive safety features such as Lane Keeping Assist, Fatigue Alert, Blind Spot Warning, Safe Distance Warning and Traffic Sign Recognition.

High-end technologies associated with the segment above, such as an 8.7-inch portrait

touchscreen and the Multi-Sense driving mode selector, are also available on the compact MPVs for the first time.

Other technologies, such as Hands Free parking, 360-degree parking sensors, full LED headlights and BOSE seven-speaker sound system are just Renault's way of showing off.

Unusually for a seven seater, Grand Scénic keeps a decent sized boot even with all the seats in place, a real boon for modern family life. Scénic has a best-in-class boot volume of 572-litres with all seats in the upright position.

Other ingenious storage solutions, including four underfloor compartments, extend total cabin storage capacity putting Scénics at the top of the class with twice as much space as competitors.

As the buying public becomes ever more fickle and demanding the fact that Renault has completely renewed its range must also be a good thing. The fact Scénics look so good but remain as practical is even better.

