

# Funky, hip and



# Happening

Ian Lamming test drives the Smart forfour prime 71hp

**F**UNKY, hip and happening, now there are three words you can't often use to describe the family car.

But that's the latest Smart for you; not quite unique, because there's also the Renault Twingo, but not far from it.

The latest forfour – and that's with lower case fs – is a family run around with four seats, four doors and plenty of foresight. Inside is a veritable tablet of design, all modern and touch screen, bright and avant garde. It is different and as such is very very appealing. The variety of shapes and textures is a feast for the eye and it makes you smile.

Despite diminutive proportions it is relatively spacious and comfortable. It takes people and their possessions and transports them in fine fashion with decent ride and low levels of noise.

All the functions are there for modern man, woman and child with auxiliary and USB ports for the electronics and trip computer for relevant information.

From the outside forfour looks chunky and stable and surprisingly tall. The alloys are large the overhangs short so the proportions are good and the aesthetics

appealing. The diddy three cylinder motor is in the rear, under the boot floor and drive then goes to the rear wheels, which will be nostalgic to those who remember driving in yesteryear.

It needs to be buzzed as power is understandably limited but the forfour issues minimal CO2 and stretches to the maximum the miles from each gallon of petrol. So expect to pay no tax on this motor.

The Smart is absolutely fine on the motorways, mainly because the high-set driving position leaves you thinking you are in a much larger car than you are. It's not bad cross-country either as you are encouraged to work the little engine, which is fun, and it handles well with rear-bias dynamics.

But it revels in town and city conditions because it is so agile and easy to park.

The boot floor is flat and high so you won't put your back out stooping over with the bags.

Smart has always been a clever brand, different and thoroughly appealing. The latest forfour carries over all the traits of the original but brings them right up to date.

## Fact File

- Smart forfour prime
- Engine: 1.0 litre three cylinder
- Power: 71HP
- 0-62mph: 16.9secs
- Top speed: 94mph
- Combined miles per gallon: 67.3
- Transmission: five-speed manual
- CO2 g/km: 97