



Renault Megane Sport Tourer

Beautiful space

Review | A traditional estate car is an extended version of an existing car with some extra boot space. Such a workhorse is as functional as possible; looks and handling come second. A different case is the so-called "lifestyle" estate car. With these cars looks come first, while practicality is less important. Renault now wants to combine the best of both worlds: a beautiful design, sheer driving pleasure and yet, lots of space. Did Renault succeed?

Whether or not Renault met the first part of the promise is easy to check: take a look at the pictures. The Mégane Sport Tourer certainly isn't an existing car which has simply been extended. The wheelbase has been increased by six centimetres and thanks to the sloping roofline the car looks more elegant than other Méganes. The rear is shaped aerodynamically, which looks even more so because of the boomerang-shaped tail lights. So the Sport Tourer certainly deserves the label "life style" estate car.

Space

Open that beautifully designed tailgate and the Mégane Sports Tourer shows a different character. The boot measures 524 litres and that's more than average for a car in this segment.

It takes a lot of work to make even more space, but when the back seat is finally folded down a total of 1,600 litres of luggage space is available. That's not the best value in class, but it is much more than usual for a car this size.



Also the space can be used optimal. The cover that shields the luggage from prying eyes, can be stored in a specially created space near the hinge of the rear seat. This does take some practice, but it makes sure the cover doesn't take up valuable luggage space and it is secure so it doesn't rattle.

The rear lid of the luggage floor can be folded up so that the boot can be divided in two. In that way fragile pieces can be separated from the rest of the luggage.

In front

In front the Sports Tourer is equal to any other Mégane. That means a mixture of a solid German finishing quality and elegant French design. Those who do not feel attracted to an almost sterile German interior, will most likely feel right at home in the Mégane. The space in front is ample, even for tall drivers.



The standard equipment is complete, especially when considering the price of the car. The optional "Carminat TomTom" satnav comes highly recommended. This is not the portable navigation TomTom is known for. It is however a neatly integrated solution but at a TomTom price.



Driving

The driving characteristics can also be best described as a mixture between solid German and comfortable French. The suspension is firm, so the Mégane has excellent roadholding and can take corners at breakneck speeds. At the same time the Mégane offers so much comfort that inside the car hardly anything is noticeable when driving over bad surfaces. This means the Mégane is best suited for covering long distances, but the promised driving pleasure isn't there.

That certainty isn't because of the diesel engine, because that performs very well. The "dCi 160" is so strong that the traction control (fitted as standard) has a lot of work, even when not driving hard at all. On the highway the torque-strong engine (360 Nm) makes it easy to accelerate to highly illegal speeds.



Conclusion

Did Renault manage to build an estate car that is both beautiful and functional? Yes, without a doubt. The Mégane Sport Tourer has the same unique style as the hatchback and coupé. Instead of just extending the roof, Renault turned the rear into a true work of art giving this model its own charm. Thanks to the increased wheelbase the Mégane Sport Tourer does offer lots of space, both in the front and the back.

Handling is excellent, but despite what Renault promises this isn't an exciting or special car to drive. The Mégane Sport Tourer drives, brakes, shifts and steers fine but no better than its rivals.

A fair drive, lots of space and good looks. In other words: beautiful space! ■



Specifications

Renault Megane Sport Tourer dCi 160 Privilege

Size and weight



Length x width x height	456 x 180 x 150 cm
Wheelbase	270 cm
Kerb weight	1.449 kg
Trailer	750 kg
Trailer - braked	1.300 kg
Fuel capacity	60 l
Luggage space	524/1600 l
Tyre size	225/45R17

Engine and performance



Capacity	1995 cc
Cylinders / valves	4/4
Max power	150 PS @ 4000 rpm
Max torque	360 Nm @ 2000 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	9.5 secs
Top speed	210 km/h
Average mileage	6.6 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	8.7 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	5.5 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	175 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 21,785
Price base model	Â£ 15,485