



Movers and Shakers

The season begins at Chelsea Flower Show, making the Royal Hospital grounds the place to be this May. But to arrive in real style, only the Renault Espace will do.

Yes they will all be there: the great, the good and the green fingered. However, only the chosen few will be ferried to and from the event by a chauffeur driven Renault Espace. Yet this is a vehicle that everyone can enjoy. Stylish certainly, the Espace is also utterly practical and supremely comfortable. Why should the celebrities have it all? Indeed when price start at just £21,350 for the latest special edition The Race, joining the movers and shakers has never been more affordable. It is no accident that the Espace is actually called the Espace. On its own though,

space is not enough. You might as well buy a van if you simply want cubic inches. It is how the area is designed and thought out that is important. Renault has always been especially creative when it comes to interiors. Celebrities may crave their own personal space, but in the Espace they won't mind sharing with the rest of us. That is because there is plenty of room, for up to seven thanks to the infinite number of seating combinations. At the back the seats have a choice of anchor points. Getting sociable is not a problem, especially when stationary as the fully adjustable front seats swivel round. All the better to make the most of the central refrigerated locker which after several hours at the show should contain some reviving beverages. Ample front and rear door pockets, storage spaces by the front seats, cup holders and aircraft type tables all help. The Race also has a very useful opening rear tailgate window.

Then again, we all know how demanding celebrities and families can be, which is why the Grand Espace adds another dimension. There is more of



everything, including storage and luggage space, larger rear windows and more leg room for the seven seats. The Grand Espace also delivers exemplary driving and ride comfort with its modified rear suspension.

Travelling Espace class to smell the roses at Chelsea or meet the in-laws in Carlisle means arriving cool, calm and collected. Separate left and right automatic climate control, regulated by a sunshine sensor and six rear sun blinds all mean each passenger can regulate their own temperature. Drivers won't be flustered either thanks to the centrally mounted displays and roof mounted console. Narrow front roof pillars mean a clear view of the road ahead and if the going gets dull or dark, Xenon headlamps deliver 30% more light than a traditional headlamp.

Protection is something that high profile personalities have to pay for, but with the Espace it is part of the package. With a four-star rating at the last Euro NCAP crash tests it is the safest vehicle in its class. ABS with electronic brakeforce distribution is just one key element of the protection system. Four airbags, three-point safety belts with pretensioners in the front and load limiters on all safety belts, adjustable and retractable rear head restraints, plus Isofix child's seat fixing system in the rear make the Espace somewhere to keep your most delicate and precious blooms.

You must power dress to impress at Chelsea, but there is no room for

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cheap power plant puns here. The special edition Race comes with the option of two outstanding engines. The 2.0 16V 140 bhp petrol engine has variable valve timing so that it can deliver the power when it is needed. Also service intervals have been extended to 18,000 miles or two years. When specified with the automatic Proactive gearbox it actually learns the way you drive and adapts to the road conditions. For maximum economy the diesel 2.2 dCi 16V 130bhp: utilises the latest common rail technology, which translates into an impressive 39.8mpg. More than that, this turbo diesel is also powerful, quiet and efficient.

When the awards are handed out at Chelsea, it is the subtle hues and most lovingly nurtured plants and flowers that pick up the prizes. So it is that the small but carefully considered details which set the special edition Espace Race apart from more ordinary modes of transport. The "Magellan" combination velour/cloth upholstery is not only luxurious but incorporates a striking nautical map design. On the outside the crafted "Estoril" alloy wheels are distinctive, stylish and robust.

Clearly the highly specified The Race is ready for any adventure. Created to celebrate a unique non-stop round the world yacht race, cruising across town to Chelsea will be easy. But what a way to arrive at the season's most colourful event.

Inner Beauty

The Espace is striking on the outside and here is proof that inside Renault's designers have thought everything through. Their innovation and attention to detail delivers comfort, convenience and style.

■ Climate control is crucial. The fully automatic system has an air recirculation facility, particulate and pollen filters and is simply controlled by a keypad. Clearing the windscreen, rear screen and door mirrors requires just one touch. Driver and front passenger also enjoy independent heating controls.

■ Creating the perfect travelling environment includes what you can hear. The Radiosat Auditorium is a top of the range system. With a rear mounted 6 CD changer and tuner-amplifier under the passenger seat there is a clear instrument panel display. As well as fingertip controls at the steering wheel an infrared remote control allows each passenger to control the superb sound quality.

■ Swivelling front Captain's Chairs have lumbar adjustment, centre armrests and aircraft type tables on the back. They help to create a wonderfully flexible and practical interior.

■ Setting the Race apart is 'The Race' badging which can be found on the exterior and door sill tread strip. However, it is the Magellan pattern velour and cloth upholstery, which is so distinctive and comfortable.

■ Ensuring that everything stays organised are the many ingeniously located storage compartments, including door pockets, cup holders, aircraft type tables and map pockets. The massive, 33 litres in all, divided central console has a lid that is lockable, whilst inside it is refrigerated and illuminated.

■ Grouping together the essential displays in the middle of the dashboard means that they can be clearly seen and are visible to all passengers. Also the central, easy to access roof console combines many comfort functions. This makes the interior a safe environment for all, with fewer distractions and controls that are easy to operate.



Climate control panel



Dashboard storage



Optional triple sunroofs



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For more information on the Renault Espace please call 0800 525150 or visit www.renault.co.uk