



New Ford Mondeo

The marvellous Mondeo

The fifth generation Mondeo is now available with Ford's range of economical EcoBoost engines and, for the first time in the UK, a hybrid petrol-electric option.

At launch, I tested the Mondeo Titanium Estate 2.0 Duratorq TDCI. With 148bhp and 258 lb ft of max torque, the Ford is able to dig deep at low revs, resulting in proper pulling power.

Certainly, it's easy to be blinded by the kudos of a premium badge but the Mondeo is brilliant whether in estate, five-door hatch or four-door hybrid semblances. It's handsome interior space is excellent, the ride is smooth and the handling is spot on.

The diesel estate in particular excels in every single area. It's fantastic to drive, it has a refined engine and the boot is the perfect shape for carrying a range of everyday items, from a family-sized weekly shop to a stack of suitcases. It's good value and will be less costly to run than many of its competitors.

The car is crammed with entertainment tech and safety gadgetry too. In fact it's the most advanced Ford ever introduced in Europe, and has been awarded the maximum

five-star safety rating by independent crash test authority Euro NCAP.

The Mondeo is the first car from the Blue Oval brand worldwide to offer Pre-Collision Assist with Pedestrian Detection. This is designed to detect people in the road ahead – or that could cross the vehicle's path – and automatically applies the brakes if you don't respond to warnings at the wheel.

Also introduced for the first time in Europe is Ford's ground-breaking Inflatable Rear Seatbelt technology. In the event of an accident, the seatbelts expand to disperse crash forces across a body area five times greater than that achieved by a conventional belt. This offers valuable extra protection to very young or old passengers with weaker chest areas.

On the entertainment front, Ford's SYNC 2 connectivity system boasts an eight-inch colour touchscreen to operate phone, entertainment, climate and navigation systems using voice commands. For example, simply pushing the voice control button and saying "I'm hungry" will display a list of local restaurants, and the Michelin guide can help you choose where to eat. SYNC 2 will then connect you by phone to the restaurant to book a table and guide you there. Groovy, or what?

So this Ford Mondeo is as good, if not better, than many of the eulogized German 'premium' cars. Go on – hop in one and try one out. You may be surprised and have an epiphany.

The all-new Ford Mondeo is now on sale from £20,795.

Tim Barnes-Clay

