

# Jump in, it's mine ...for the weekend



Flash: admiring girls snap a pic of Andrew in the Lamborghini

**M**AYBE it's the canary-yellow paintwork. Or perhaps it's the exhaust pipe that looks big enough to crawl into. Whichever detail's caught his eye, the bicycle courier is standing in the middle of the road, mouth open and pointing at the badge on the back of the car. He spells out the word, "Lam-bor-ghi-ni," and says: "Wow, that's a serious car. How much is it?" "About £240,000," I reply, slightly sheepishly. "What, like a quarter of a million pounds?" Clearly the figures are so incomprehensible, it takes time for them to really sink in.

Welcome to the supercar. Here's a vehicle costing the same as a two-bed flat in London. And it only has two seats! Thankfully, you don't have to sell your

BY ANDREW GILLINGWATER

home if you sign up to one of the new breed of clubs, such as the Segrave Club in Knightsbridge. Cough up the £5,000 joining fee and annual membership of £16,000 (not cheap, but still cheaper than owning your own), and you get 1,000 credits and 5,000 miles to play with throughout the year. The longer the loan period or higher the car's list price, the more credits it costs.

## GET INTO A SUPER SPIN

FANCY a spin in a Lamborghini Murciélago next weekend? That's 150 credits for three whole days. Hire the same car in winter and it's just 90. And club membership also gives you advanced driving courses, factory tours, preview evenings and luxury European drives.

So, which car did I pick? That Lamborghini Murciélago LP640 Roadster: so effortlessly Italian — sexy, classy and with immense road presence. I mean, just look at it: low, wide, with a body covered in slashes, scoops and sharp angles. And those scissor doors are epic, not least because you have to limbo-dance your way beneath them to get



Racy: the car draws female attention



Pit stop to refuel: Andrew stops for a quick kerbside espresso at Bar Italia in Soho

in. As a spectacle, I can't think of any car that comes close.

So with the roof off and the 6.5-litre V12 engine burbling away behind my ears, I set off. Would tourists stop and stare? Would the glamorous girls on the King's Road talk to me? "That car is sooooo sexy!" shouts one builder as he hangs off scaffolding trying to get a better view. "Will you swap?" jokes a bus driver. At a set of lights a security guard gives me the nod and cups his ears, begging me to blip the throttle. I oblige and he giggles and does a little jig on the spot.

But there's a point during any run where confidence turns to compla-

gency. Once you've crawled along at 10mph and squeezed through impossible gaps for the umpteenth time, the part of the brain drip-feeding adrenaline into the bloodstream hits hyper-speed and the floodgates open; the pulse quickens and you crave something more hardcore.

## PEDAL TO THE METAL

THAT happens to me on Westminster Bridge. Surprisingly traffic-free, I find myself with an open road. I floor the throttle to unleash a furious, ear-splitting screech, matched with eye-popping acceleration. Officially, this car can zoom from 0 to 62mph in 3.4

seconds — and I reckon that's conservative. The sound is astonishing. Cue lines of gawping teenagers. I double back and do the same again and again.

I get attention from all walks of life. Kids run from their parents for a closer look. Mums with toddlers point appreciatively. Girls want their picture taken next to the scissor doors. Even pensioners can't help but comment: one old lady in New Bond Street is taken aback, not so much by the car but the distance between it and the pavement. "I don't think much of your parking," she says.

## WHAT A GAS!

SO, DID we attract flocks of attractive girls? Women did seem strangely drawn to the car, commenting on its styling with genuine affection. And not one of them thought I was a moneyed-up fraudster.

At the start of the day I was terrified I'd find the experience too intimidating. Supercars can be cramped, hot, difficult to drive, impossible to park and bring the worst out in everyone who sees them. But the Lamborghini is different. Yes it's big, wide and supremely fast but you don't feel you're driving on a knife-edge. It commands respect, too, because it's so exclusive, even more than a Ferrari or a Porsche. A "quarter of a million pounds" experience? You bet.

●The Segrave Club, 47-51 Cheval Place, SW7, [segraveclub.com](http://segraveclub.com); [ecurie25.com](http://ecurie25.com), 250 Old Street, EC1, [ecurie25.co.uk](http://ecurie25.co.uk). Also, P1 Supercar Club, Randalls Way, Surrey, [KT22 p1international.com](http://KT22p1international.com)