

THE ROAD RAT

A THING FOR CARS

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THE TRANSCENDENTAL TALE OF
George Harrison
and the mystical McLaren F1



Fragrance 'journeys' are a far cry from the dangling pine trees of Uber

GEAR

Scents and sensibility

Inhale a bygone age of motoring with the Charabanc pomander

WHERE ONCE THE WHIFF OF UNBURNED fuel or the pungency of leather was a staple of driving life, the hermetic world of modern motoring is markedly more sterile. For decades the only practicable solution to your car smelling at best of warm plastic, at worst of you, has been a cardboard Christmas tree,

dangling dangerously from the rearview mirror. But a British start-up called Charabanc is taking this dilemma off the petrol-station forecourt and into the boutique world of 'fragrance'.

It might seem like the answer to a question no one had asked, but the Charabanc pomander makes a compelling case for itself. Made from hand-spun steel – a traditional process that forms sheet metal around a jig – a cylindrical cup is then stencil cut into a finely-spoked wheel pattern. The ceramic pomander itself sits in this cup, which then slots into a handmade leather cap, finished in black, tan or green hide. The Spanish-sourced vegetable-tanned leather is also hand shaped on a mould, deploying a traditional Italian technique in an East London workshop – the very synthesis of the modern British artisan.

The pomanders come in a wide variety of

fragrances, all concocted to evoke a sense of automotive adventure – so much so that they are described by Charabanc as 'journeys'. From the quintessentially British 'Across Penine Fells', containing the scents of cut grass, pine and cedarwood, to the exotic 'Golden Road to Samargand' with its pink pepper, green coffee and Arabian oud smoke, each aims to convey what is wistfully referred to as 'the golden age of the automobile'.

Designed to fit easily into the recess of a cupholder, clip to an airvent or, should you wish to persist with the whole minicab aesthetic, dangle directly in line of sight, the Charabanc pomander is subtle and sophisticated enough to complement the finest contemporary interior, yet blessed with enough traditional craftsmanship to slot into a classic. Time to inject a little old-world glamour into your 21st-century commute.