

Forge

MOTORSPORT

ENGINEERED FOR PERFORMANCE



Redline

AT A GLANCE...

Tuned Fiat Abarth with a wild induction roar that looks great and is just as much fun to drive as it looks.

Spec: Forge Motorsport tuning goodies including front mount intercooler, carbon cold-air induction kit, and uprated adjustable wastegate actuator

Power: Was: 135bhp Now: 190bhp

Torque: Was: 132 lb/ft Now: 220 lb/ft

We like: A tuned car that doesn't take itself too seriously – it's all about fun.



SURPRISE Package

Words: Stav
Photos: Michael Whitestone

A car that doesn't sound like it looks, or feel like it goes; Stav drives the 190bhp Forge 500 Abarth...

Fiat, like many other manufacturers have realised the benefits of small, forced induction engines. Their 1.4ltr turbo unit is found in the hot Punto, but also in the funky little 500 Abarth. Question is, can the stylish Fiat offer more than just a pretty package? And, more importantly, how does it respond to performance tuning? One way to find out!

The stock Abarth is a fiesty little car out of the box. The wheel at each corner layout, pokey 135bhp lump and capable suspension make it fast and fun on any roads. What may surprise you is the fact it feels so grown up. Before I drove one, I imagined it would be quick, but feel faster due to being so small.

I expected a lot of wheelspin and torque steer, and being such a new car I expected it to be relatively plain sounding. But it's not like that at all. And in the case of this Forge Motorsport-tuned version, it's a very different beast.

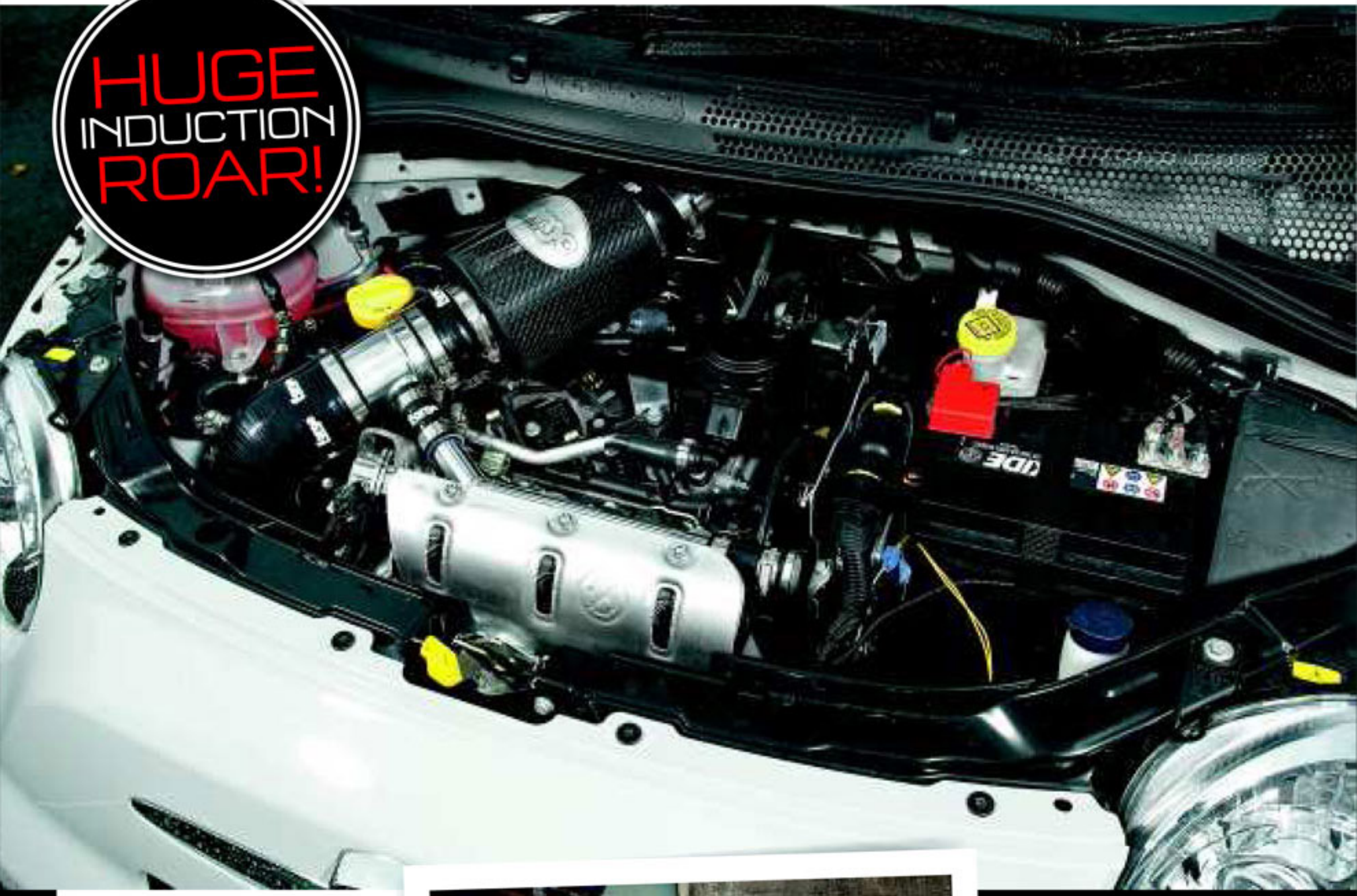
Forge Motorsport are one of the UK's top alloy fabrication companies. They regularly buy brand new cars to develop their tuning parts, and this Fiat 500 Abarth is their latest to get the Forge treatment. The plan for this car, as with all Forge's development and demo cars, was to show how their parts not only improve the performance, but look great and enhance the character of the car while doing so.

The cold-air induction kit is a perfect example of this. Not only

does it increase performance, but because it takes air from a vent in the scuttle panel in front of the windscreen, it gives the car huge induction roar inside the cabin, leaving you in no doubt you're behind the wheel of a turbocharged hot hatch.

This is no gimmick either, as even the awesome Fiat 500 Abarth Assetto Corse race cars have a very similar setup, albeit with the air inducted through a rather ugly carbon bonnet vent. To be honest though, even without the induction roar it's clear you're driving a turbo thanks to the huge, funky looking boost gauge sitting on the dash next to the steering wheel. And thanks to the upgrades – in particular the Forge remapped ECU – the boost 

**HUGE
INDUCTION
ROAR!**



gauge shows the boost coming in sooner than standard and peaking higher too, making for a much more responsive and torquey car to drive; perfect for a nippy around-town hot hatch like this.

On the face of it this Abarth has all the attributes of an old-school 80's hot hatches: a cool looking little car with a big boosting, small capacity turbo engine. So you may expect the average build quality and the exaggerated sensation of speed that comes with it...

The reality is actually the complete opposite. As the guys at Forge state with a smile, "It's a real licence loser." Oddly for a little hot hatch (especially a tuned one with a screaming 190bhp turbo), you only realise quite how fast you're going when you look down at the speedo. The car doesn't have the wheelspin or torque steer you'd expect. It handles great and also feels very stable at high speed. It's also quite refined, which is a welcome surprise.

Away from performance for a moment, the Abarth is one of the few road cars that doesn't look out of



place with extra graphics added, and that's because, even from the factory, they're far from subtle. Straight from the dealer these cars have Abarth graphics, contrasting red mirrors and so on. So the extra Abarth scorpion and Forge logos look right at home on the car, and work well with the Campovolo Grey paintwork.

To complete the look and make sure nobody thinks you're in a stickered up standard 500, the big Forge front mount intercooler is clearly visible behind the front bumper, showing this little Fiat is

Above From the front the 500 is very close to the original 50's version

Right Wet or dry, the tuned Abarth holds the road brilliantly





Left Obligatory vent to atmosphere alloy dump valve turns heads



Right Up-rated wastegate actuator allows boost pressure to be tweaked

ENGINE

With a small capacity turbocharged engine, the Fiat 500 Abarth follows on the classic hot hatch engine spec used by cars like the Uno Turbo and Renault 5 GT Turbo and. And just like the others, this little turbo lump looks like it has bags of potential, with the Assetto Corse race cars pushing out over 200bhp with a larger turbo and a few tweaks basic over standard. The upgrades on this car have improved power and drivability without breaking the bank or needing to swap to a larger turbo. The standard twin intercoolers have been replaced by a big single front mount, a stronger wastegate actuator and dump valve have been fitted, and a custom cold air feed with carbon airbox supplied the small standard turbo. The car has also been remapped to optimise these upgrades, and with a larger turbo power would likely to jump to over 230bhp.



something out of the ordinary.

The interior hasn't been changed, but that's a good thing, as you should be tuning a car to improve it, not go down the old 'change it for the sake of it route'. The standard Fiat 500 Abarth interior is fantastic, with sports seats, black and red leather trim, a funky dash complete with boost gauge, and plenty more.

With this car being so good from the factory you don't have to change everything to make it enjoyable. You just need to take a leaf out of Forge's book by making some well chosen performance upgrades and get out there and enjoy it. **Redline**



“This car is all about fun, and delivers that in spades. It's a fast fun daily driver”

Above The large boost gauge is actually standard equipment

Right The standard 500 Abarth seats look great and hold you in well



Spec Fiat 500 Abarth

- Engine**
 1.4ltr 16V turbo, Forge front mount intercooler, Forge alloy adjustable wastegate actuator, Forge cold-air induction kit, Forge remap, Forge silicone hoses, Forge dump valve
- Transmission**
 Six-speed manual
- Suspension**
 Factory
- Brakes**
 Factory
- Wheels & Tyres**
 Standard Abarth 16in alloys and 195/45x16 tyres
- Interior**
 Standard Abarth interior with black and red leather trim, Abarth steering wheel, alloy gearknob, and combined boost gauge and shift light
- Exterior**
 Abarth side stripes, Abarth scorpion logos on bonnet, Forge Motorsport decals, painted in Campovolo Grey

Contact
www.forgemotorsport.co.uk

“As Forge rightly state, this little Fiat Abarth is a real licence loser”

