

Originally designed as part of the Great Brits minis (along with David Bowie's chromed mini, Natasha Caine's bullion mini, Kate Moss's Spider Web mini and the 'Design a mini' competition winner Mark Ward's clock cogs mini), the 84 striped, 24 colour car (I believe 2 were made) appeared at the 1997 Tokyo Motor Show, and inspired a run of limited edition minis. 300 UK cars were made, with a total of 1800 worldwide. The Paul Smith mini is one of the best equipped limited edition minis, and in the UK, was only available in Paul Smith Blue. This colour is reputed to be the colour of the shirt that Paul Smith was wearing at the meeting with the Rover designers, and when asked what colour he wanted the car, he tore a section off his shirt!! (How true this story is is unknown, but is one we have heard for years in the mini community, and we like it!!) The Japanese spec cars were also available in Old English White, and Anthracite Black, together with air conditioning. The Paul Smith Mini was designed to mimic a Paul Smith Suit. It had a conservative appearance, but had a bright twist! Several parts were given the 'Paul Smith' treatment and were coloured in bright Citrus Green. These parts were the rocker cover, HT leads, inside the glove box, the petrol tank and the boot board.

The Paul Smith Mini was available from May 1998 at a cost of £10225 on the road. Although the Paul Smith was one of the most luxurious production minis ever made, initially sales were, allegedly, not very good, and rumour has it that after the 300 UK cars were made, only a few hundred of the remaining 1500 export models were ever made, although this has never been proven.