

REVIEW - BMW K1200GT

REVIEW BY WILLIAM MORRIS

To Ian and Shaheen from Auto Umhlanga, thanks for allowing us to add a few much enjoyed km's to your GT, we do appreciate it.

FIRST IMPRESSION

Changes from last year's model are so vast that we are not really looking at an upgrade for 2006, but a replacement, an entirely new machine. Bavarian Motor Works designers have come up with some gorgeous lines that transpose a rather large bike into a streamlined sports-tourer blending both beauty and excitement while allowing comments like luxurious and performance to share the same breath. The Xenon headlights, guaranteeing you are always kept visible, are melded neatly into the frame. Fuel tank design is modish and especially striking in the two-toned silver and blue option we reviewed. But the standout for me is the stylish and sporty tail-end, kept tidy with integrated indicators and well designed colour-coded panniers.



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CONTROLS AND GADGETS

Although possessive of an array of useful settings and conveniences, the instrument panel is uncluttered and appealing, while its illumination self-adjusts to the ambient light. The list of such luxuries includes electronically adjustable windscreen, Electronic Suspension Adjustment (ESA), cruise control, heated grips, and individually adjustable heated seats. An on-board computer is the source of a variety of useful information, such as average speed travelled, fuel consumption, predicted fuel range, outside temperature and oil levels. There is even a warning indicator to let you know when your brake pads are worn.

PERFORMANCE

The K1200GT has been graced, to my delight, with the in-line 4-cylinder found in the K1200S, although slightly de-tuned for more bottom-end torque. The difference in throttle feedback is substantial. There are no rough spots in the extra smooth power curve, but it feels happiest at lower revs, where it pulls like heck! This is a high performance engine allowing for lofty top-end speeds with stability to match. Cornering is surprisingly agile, for a for you would not expect a hefty 249kg tourer to be so easily rolled from side to side. Entering corners too fast and last minute braking seems like something to attempt only on a supersport bike, but this suspension gives so much confidence that it's easy to forget what you're riding until you run out of ground clearance! That clearance is reached long before the GT's ability or grip is compromised. Only on fast downhill swerves did its weight begin to reveal itself with the front end feeling slightly soggy. The linked ABS braking system offers immense stopping power bringing this sizable machine to a standstill in a significantly short distance – and significant is good on our rural roads where cows, goats and who-knows-what may be around the next bend!

COMFORT

The seamless power delivery and impeccably mated suspension deliver an exceptionally smooth ride. Wind protection was every thing you'd expect from a tourer, with good coverage for hands and arms, as well as legs. The electronic windscreen could be adjusted while in motion to offer anywhere from decent coverage to a massive bubble of relatively still air. The height-adjustable handlebars and saddle offer a customized riding position for all shapes and sizes.

OVERALL RATING

Forget shortcuts. The Grand Turismo pleads with you to take the long way home. The K1200GT is the epitome of "Sports Tourer" fulfilling both criteria equally well. And with the proven reliability and sophisticated engineering of a state-of-the-art BMW, how can you go wrong?

PRICE

R144 000.00 Incl. ESA & Xenon headlights



The Ultimate Riding Machine

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