

REVIEW - BAJAJ PULSAR

REVIEW BY WILLIAM MORRIS

Thanks Vishal from Jeff's Bikes for lending us your Bajaj Pulsar for review, I'm convinced that sales of this solid little bike will boom.

Just in case you, the reader, have never heard of "Bajaj" before let me give a brief history. Founded in 1926, the Bajaj Group is amongst the top 10 business houses in India. The group's flagship company, Bajaj Auto, is ranked as the world's fourth largest two and three-wheeler manufacturer. These bikes are created to excel in India – an area known for its poor road surfaces, gross overloading of any means of transportation, etc... And while the Bajaj must be inexpensive to remain competitive, it must not be "cheap" and fall apart after frequent and lengthy usage. In fact, it must not fall apart at all.



FIRST IMPRESSION: The Pulsar is neat and tidy, its rounded edges and curvy bodywork flows beautifully. No copycat design here, the Pulsar is original from top to bottom. Tight dimensions make it look both nippy and manoeuvrable. The paintwork quality is great with mini-fairing and front fender colour coded. And while certain components appear somewhat dated, the materials used look and feel durable. The 17-inch 6-spoke alloy rims are lighter, stronger (for all those potholes) and far better looking than the previous model's spoked rims. A trendy rear-end is accentuated by the aluminium passenger grab-rail and a fatty 100/90 rear tyre presenting impressive width for this displacement.

CONTROLS AND GADGETS: Some useful features are: a warning light displayed when the kickstand is down if the engine is running, a centre stand, and a fuel gauge that presents an honest reading. Side panels are easily removed to reveal an onboard tool bag and direct access to the battery. What stands out to me most is the solidness of the components, the excellence of the parts that make up the whole, and how everything just does exactly what it should – no thrills, no disappointments. This is a bike that won't let you down, and its tolerant mannerism will likely keep you from letting it down too.

PERFORMANCE: Digital Twin Spark ignition (DTS-i) is brand new technology for bikes, and has been patented by Bajaj Auto. What is it? Simply one spark plug at either end of the combustion chamber instead of the conventional single plug per cylinder at one end of the combustion chamber. The claim is that this helps provide faster and better fuel combustion for the purpose of offering peak performance without sacrificing fuel efficiency. What does it feel like? Low down throttle response is perky and strong as the 180 surges forward at each gear change. The Pulsar is very nippy through town and has enough top-end to sit comfortably at freeway speeds. This bike may well put to shame some of the Japanese 125cc race replicas!

SUSPENSION & HANDLING: Rear suspension is a twin gas shock setup that looks a little outmoded in today's world of centralized mono-shocks, the front forks also fail to inspire. But looks do not determine ability, for the 180 possesses stable and predictable handling, even at speed, and impressively nimble mannerisms in corners and through traffic; ideal characteristics for performing the daily commute.

OVERALL RATING: Although this Bajaj carries a "Chinese" price tag, it far exceeds both the build quality and the quality of materials and components used in comparison with its similarly priced competitors. I believe that if more South Africans were aware of the Pulsar as an affordable means of transportation, we would have not only a lot more satisfied two-wheeled customers out there, but also more converts into the real brotherhood of biking.

PRICE: R13 999.00 includes VAT and a 1 year warranty
Colour scheme options are: red, blue, silver and black.



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