

REVIEW: '08 APRILIA ETV1000

REVIEW BY HEIN JONKER

I recently had the pleasure of riding the Caponord up to Kroonstad and back to attend the CMA National Rally. This is how I experienced this bike and why I think it is a worthy contender in the dual-purpose and tourer market. I don't think it could compete head to head with BMW's new GS, and some of the plastic parts look mighty vulnerable to me, but with a little caution there is much fun to be had on any piece of road you roll out in front of it.



My pillion and I decided to dump most of our stuff in the support vehicle for the group and truly enjoy the scenery up past the Berg and yes, the bit of rain we had to deal with all the way up to Harrysmith.

The bike is incredibly comfortable. That seat is like an armchair and I would be happy to spend several hours with my bum on it. The bars are at the right height and reach, and the fairing certainly does the job.

Angular clocks sit in the equally angular fairing, which is narrower this year, and a one-piece unit holds the three separate gauges. This comprises of an analogue speedometer to the left, an analogue tachometer in the middle and a digital display panel to the right. In low light, or in the dark, the whole panel gives off a soft blue glow, which is extremely chic. The digital display unit features a fuel monitor, water temperature gauge, air temperature reading and a digital clock. The neutral light sits in the middle/bottom of the tachometer, while the fuel and fuel injection warning lights sit above the three gauges. Angular switchgear controls operate conventionally and are very easy to use. Brake and clutch levers remains four way adjustable, but now sit behind new grip guards. While this a great for protecting your hands during trail riding, they don't do much to keep the cold off your digits, and there are no heated grips as standard. Powering the Caponord is a re-worked; liquid cooled 60-degree V-twin from Aprilia's earlier generation Mille series. Detuned to give 98 horsepower at the shaft, it is liquid smooth and makes good useable power all the way to the limiter just past 9000rpm. Coming from the factory with fairly tall gearing, I ran fifth gear on the highway, sixth only dropping the rpm by about 500 at 120km/h, and a couple of extra teeth on the rear sprocket would not have been a bad idea.



The engine is excellent. You would never know that this is a V-twin, it spins up without any hesitation at all, and there are no vibes of any kind. If someone had told me it was an in line four I would have believed them. It pulls from zero revs and keeps pulling all the way to the red line, and the speed is very deceptive. The fairing keeps the wind off and a glance down at 140km/h was a surprise as it felt like a 100. I could cruise at 160km/h all day on this and get off feeling refreshed! The gearbox was faultless, and never gave a hint of anything that I could criticise, likewise the clutch, which was smooth and progressive.

The front end is still not adjustable, but it's nicely damped, the rear shock only needed some extra pre-load for my pillion and I, so after a quick twiddle with the external knob, the Caponord was up to task. In the braking department, the Caponord uses the same 300mm twin rotor system with four piston calipers up front, the older Caponord's front brakes were a little vague, the new ones seemed much sharper as soon as the lever is pulled.



A unique design and extraordinary comfort slim and streamlined, refined and functional, created to express the best possible interaction between machine, rider and passenger, wind tunnel tested to eliminate even the most minimal turbulence - the design of the ETV 1000 Caponord captivates and convinces right from the first glance, as happens only with something born to last and destined to

go a very, very long way.

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Its enveloping lines guarantee an ultra-high coefficient of aerodynamic penetration, even when riding in an upright position, while the large front fairing, built-in hand guards and tank design protect the body from the wind for absolute comfort at all speeds.

And the height of the saddle from the ground has been calculated to enable the feet to be rested steadily on the ground, because the ETV 1000 Caponord represents not just total touring, but also total comfort.

Going around the bike, a huge motorcycle, with a angular bodywork that is both aesthetic and functional. Hats off to the Italians for having the flair to achieve this. That fat seat unit hides a boot that is truly cavernous. It is capable of swallowing the kind of gear that most people pile into a top box on day trips. This is a definite plus point.

The demo bike had 480kms on the clock and I handed it back on 1664km at the end of the easter-weekend.

DESIGN

The Caponord is modern, stylish and refined, free from futuristic excesses. The bike is conceived and built to last in every way.

ENGINE

The Caponord is equipped with Aprilia's muscular 60° V twin, which really demonstrates its incredible versatility in this bike. Powerful and aggressive in the RSV, this engine is tuned for progressive control, smooth power and an exceptionally flat torque curve in the Caponord. In short, here is the perfect engine for relaxed long distance touring.

FRAME

The Caponord is the first and only trail bike with an aluminium perimeter frame. The extruded aluminium alloy, box section Double Wave Aluminium Beams are welded to aluminium-magnesium alloy end castings. This exceptional frame ensures the best torsional rigidity in its class. The special shape of the frame also guarantees a comfortable riding position and eliminates the turbulence and drag normally generated around the knees and legs.

EXHAUST

The exhaust system incorporates two all stainless steel silencers to guarantee long working life without loss of efficiency.

SUSPENSION

The suspension is of the same heavy duty type used on competition enduros, but are calibrated for exceptional comfort under all riding conditions, on and off the road.

Here is a motorcycle that is born to tour. All-round satisfaction is guaranteed by a perfect combination of performance and power, and a high level of riding comfort that even the passenger shares. The performance is there, of course, but in the Caponord it goes hand in hand with aerodynamic protection, ridability, comfort, smooth power and total usability.

Never-ending roads and motorways, or dusty and lonely tracks, stretching to the edge of the world towards unknown landscapes and unknown sensations... with the Caponord, the joy of travelling lasts for ever ... at last you can experience all the emotions, fascination and potential of total touring.

PRICE - R109 995.00 Incl. 14% VAT

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