

REVIEW: HARLEY DAVIDSON FAT BOB

REVIEW BY HEIN JONKER

I don't get to ride Harleys often but when I saw the Fat Bob my heart almost stopped in saying; I just have to ride you ... NOW!!

The 2008 Fat Bob is brand new bike tearing away from the normal cruiser style with features like the dual headlights, low-down seat and fat tyres. With a family like the Super Glide, Street Bob, Low Rider, Super Glide Custom, Wide Glide Anniversary Edition the Fat Bob had nothing to be ashamed of. Stocked with an air-cooled, rubber-mounted Twin Cam 96 V-twin, Electronic Fuel Injection 1584cc engine and a 6-speed Cruise Drive Transmission all sitting on a chassis that was redesigned in 2006 to improve handling.



Seating is nice and low and underneath the bobtail fender sits a 180mm wide rear tyre and a 130mm wide front both wrapped around slotted disc rims, which amplifies the butchness of this ride along with the staggered chrome exhaust with a "Tommy Gun" perforated pattern.

Other stand-out facials are the v-shaped drag type handlebars, the small front fender, the matt-black finish, the huge tank and the black rear-view mirrors. Tuned to give you huge amounts of low-end power ending up doing what you don't do on a sports bike, short-shifting, yeah baby. The Cruise Drive Transmission provides smooth shifting even with the clutch being non-hydraulic. Braking is very effective considering the weight of the Fat Bob.

With all of these goodies, how does the bike ride?

The first thing you'll probably notice on a Fat Bob is that you sit in the bike, not on it. A comfortable seat tucks you in neatly behind the tank, something I can not say for the pillion which has to endure a much smaller area. Rider foot pegs are way forward but you can order the mid-mount pegs should you be one of those who were cut-off by the knees. The tank-mounted speedometer gives you a quick glance at all you need to know while out there riding.

At low speeds the Fat Bob handles well, that is if you are used to this type of ride, but once you get going at cruising speeds taking bends becomes a breeze thanks to the two fat wheels and a not-so-long wheelbase. Getting on the "dog's ear" gives you a very satisfying and distinctive growl from its belly, something I've come to love very much.

Because you sit in the bike on not on it the wind is not a huge factor as you might think of a "no-faring" cruiser and typical "V-twin" shake smoothes out once you get to cruising speeds, on a Harley like this you want to know your riding a bike and not some 4-cylinder smoothy. Ground clearance is more than sufficient but peg scrapping can be achieved if you get too over ambitious in turns.

Harley Davidson truly goes out of their way when introducing a new bike and the Fat Bob most certainly fits the profile of modern style cruising combined with pure grunt and comfort. This is a Harley with serious attitude and will return the favour in the way it's ridden.

Who needs it?

The rider who wants a ride which matches his ego, growling at everyone around him; "Excuse me, Fat Bob coming through!"

Price

R161500.00 Incl. VAT



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