

REVIEW: KTM 990 Adventure



FIRST GLANCE: Just looking at this bike and its sharp distinctive lines makes you realise that this is one durable piece of machinery. From the almost vertical screen, the bright colour, the slim profile and the rigid frame hidden by the panels just shouts out: "I am as tough as nails, ride me any way you want and I'll get you there!" Doesn't that just scare you a bit knowing this bike might outlast you?

CHASSIS AND SUSPENSION: The fully adjustable WP - PDS shock provides for sufficient reserves in every situation. Thanks to hydraulic spring preload, it is possible to adapt it perfectly to the respective load by means of a flip-out adjustment knob. Suspension travel on the 990 Adventure is impressive at 210mm, whilst the 990 Adventure R offers a whole 55mm extra and sets the standards with an incredible 265mm. The monocoque

space frame made from chrome molybdenum is the most stable and at 11kg, also the lightest construction on the market; insurance for simple handling and outstanding directional stability.

COMFORT: Different to the Yamaha and BMW rivals the KTM provides you with a single seat comfortable enough to take you places you've never been including the odd Iron-Butt or two. This of course is the only one of the three bikes where you could put the bike on the main stand and lie on the seat for a breather comfortably.

HANDLING: The off-road sized rims and heavily-treaded tyres should spell vague handling, but largely they don't. The quality WP suspension is plush and only gets a bit wobbly if you start throwing it around at high-speed. Feedback is enough to inspire confidence, and it rarely gets flustered. The KTM 990 Adventure has sports-bike kicking pace on less than perfect roads, or will trot along enjoying the scenery too. The twin fuel tanks require filling individually, which is a minor inconvenience but helps keep the bike slim-line and the weight down.

COMPARISON:

Power	78kW (106hp) @ 8250rpm
Torque	100Nm @ 6750rpm
Brakes	ABS
Engine	999cc, Twin
Drive	Chain
Dry Weight	209kg
Seat Height	860mm
Tank	20 L
Other	ABS
Price	R142 999
Service	7 500km @ ± R2800
Top Speed	More than 220km/h

PERFORMANCE: I took the Adventure on the freeway so I could get a feel of how it performs under hard acceleration at relatively high speed. Excellent! No matter in what gear I was in, neither the rpm levels, the V-twin delivered the needed grunt that made the KTM feel able to pass cars with no problem whatsoever. Throttle response is great and the bike will amaze you with every twist.

But let's face it, who am I kidding? The off road is where the 990 Adventure belongs and I was in for a rough ride. The trails are a kid's play and I didn't manage to find it lacking the ability to suppress any obstacle that it has encountered. This bike relies on its race-inspired character to save the situation and it does it with success every single time.

CONCLUSION: The KTM 990 Adventure isn't a cheap bike, but for your hefty outlay you get a versatile bike that will tour, long-distance commute and hammer along back roads at an indecent pace. It'll even deal with gentle off-roading in novice hands, and a set of full knobby tyres add enough traction to keep more experienced mud-pluggers happy. From street use to off-road hardcore exploring has never shown a meaner streak than the KTM's 990 Adventure.

BOTTOM LINE: Once you've been on a KTM 990 S or R you will want to ride nothing else; this is for real men.

PRICE: R142 999.00 (S Model) or R146 999 (R Model) - Incl. 14% VAT



Tel: (031) 702 2034
Unit A, 5 Mertle Road
Pinetown