

REVIEW: Yamaha 1300 Stryker



The Yamaha Stryker is the epitome of a cool cruiser that comes with some serious performance capabilities. We'll touch on the latter in a little bit, but for now, the name of the game is the Stryker's overall design, which, in a word, is downright sexy.

The Stryker's most distinctive attribute is its raised steering head proudly and clearly on display in front of the fuel tank raised skyward. "The muscular, forward-lunging look reinterprets classic custom 'chopper' styling for the 21st century," according to Yamaha-Star.

Continuing the chopper theme is a front end kicked out at a radical 40 degrees thanks to a 6-degree triple-clamp offset. Unlike Star's Raider, which has a similar profile but isn't as lean, the Stryker's double-cradle frame is made from steel rather than aluminium. Its seat has the now-customary low height that showroom riders love, aiding sales conversions. Foot controls are placed relatively close to the rider, and the tubular handlebar connects directly to the upper triple clamp for a clean appearance.

At the heart of the Stryker is the same fuel-injected and liquid-cooled V-Twin seen in the V-Star 1300. Displacing 1304cc and boasting four valves per cylinder, the 60-degree V-twin murmurs through a swoopy new shotgun exhaust system. The Stryker pumps out impressive power and torque numbers for excellent cruising performance. Other high-tech engine features include single overhead cams actuating roller rockers, ceramic coated cylinders and forged connecting rods.

The engine also features a 36mm intake and 32mm exhaust valves with special single coil springs for great power and torque with valves angled at 20 degrees from the centre. Specially designed roller rockers activate the valves, allowing a greater amount of valve lift without causing excessive camshaft wear and friction. The camshafts have also been specially designed for use with roller rockers with a pent roof combustion chamber design and optimized

squish area forces the fuel and air mixture toward the centre of the combustion chamber for more complete combustion and, in the end, improved power and cleaner emissions. The new exhaust system, designed specifically for the Stryker, also adds to the awesome look of the bike while optimizing its engine performance.

Incidentally, the V-Star 1300 is revised for 2011 with a new black frame, extra chrome, and a new handlebar and seat. The rest of Star's line-up remains mostly unchanged. But while the V-Star is tastefully styled, the Stryker screams for attention, its carefree style plays bad boy to the V-Star's nice guy.

In the custom cruiser segment, detail touches can make or break a bike, and the Stryker is successful on many accounts. It has likeable touches like the shorty ducktail front fender (made of steel, not plastic), thin-spoke wheels, and a small round headlight that looks retro with its chrome housing but has a modern multi-reflector lens.

There are also real steel fenders that can be easily customized, covering the wide 210-series rear tyre and chopper-inspired 21-inch front wheel that reinforces the muscular styling of the bike. Merging with the narrow point of the saddle is a 18 litre fuel tank while added accessories, including custom seats, quick-release windscreens and luggage to billet wheels and backrests, all point to a package that's just as imposing as it is powerful.

The Yamaha Stryker delivers the kind of handling that's just unmatched in this mid-size custom cruiser segment. The muscular steering head on this double-cradle steel frame helps give the bike its lean, lightweight image. The 6° yoke and raked triple clamps combine to provide a total of 40° of fork rake, achieving the aggressive raked out styling image and solid straight-line performance that's tried-and-true for Yamaha. It also provides nimble handling characteristics, even at low speeds.

Though it's an unlikely time for a custom-style chopper to hit the market, Star's Stryker is a well-priced and attractively finished bike that makes it more appealing to mainstream riders. Its ergonomics are not quite as extreme as the Honda Fury's, thanks to the easier reach of its handlebars and its more cruiser-like posture, but the Stryker projects a riding style and road presence that's distinct. Impressively, both bikes achieve unexpectedly high levels of functionality for a genre that's known for impracticality. Ultimately, these types of motorcycles exist mostly for their style, so the choice boils down to a matter of taste and price.

Priced at R120 000.00 - Incl. 14% VAT

PERRY YAMAHA

Tel: (031) 566 7411

7 Tetford Circle, Umhlanga Ridge