

CFMOTO

800MT Touring

KTM mechanicals in a highly specced comfort package makes for a great tourer with good off-road capability. ►

Action images: Wilkinson Photography



The 800MT coped with both commuting and a not-too-frantic thrashing really well.

CFMOTO 800MT TOURING



CFMOTO – the company specifically requested we wrote it that way – is fairly new to the adventure market, and the 800MT is a pretty damn good first effort. The most eyebrow-raising spec is a 'KTM-sourced' motor – that's quoting from the manufacturer's supplied briefing material – along with ride-by-wire, a TFT screen, slipper clutch, Bluetooth connectivity, cruise control, crash bars, spotlights, centrestand and an adjustable screen.

Our review bike had the standard Maxxis tyres replaced with Mitas E10s, and on top of the high level of the standard equipment, it meant the bike was ready for just about anything... which, as it turned out, was just as well.

Drive

The KTM-supplied motor is a 799cc parallel twin churning out a hefty 95hp and 77Nm of torque. A quickshifter works on both up and down gear changes on the six-speed box, and a slipper clutch helps keep things tidy when the pressure's on.

Above: Power delivery is extremely manageable and a lot of fun to use.
Right: Excellent lighting.

Flying in the face of current market trends, the 800 MT has only two modes: Sport and Rain. That's it. There's no stepping through an intricate menu to get exactly the right angle on the foot-pegs or select the chosen colour of the exhaust headers when they're hot. But aside from that, there's a long list of tech features which deserve a nod of approval. Cruise control is a very welcome inclusion, and a large, 17.7cm (seven-inch) TFT

screen gives heaps of info on just about everything from fuel range through to the time of day, ambient temperature, trip meters, tyre-pressure monitoring, a stack of warnings about various things and heaps more. Bluetoothing to a phone allows the usual navigation, music, answering calls and so forth via the bike's on-board set up.

It's clearly a very well-appointed and high-tech outfit. ▶



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Ride

First impressions after climbing on the 800MT are that it's big and wide in a comfortable way. The seat is firm, but broad enough to accommodate the pastry-and-coffee-fed backsides of motorcycle journos, and the 825mm seat height should have a high percentage of riders able to get one or two feet on the ground. The 'bars sweep back a little as we see on most touring bikes these days, and an adjustable screen looks like it'll give good protection.

Ground clearance, measured at the brochure, is 190mm, which should be adequate for the type of riding this bike is intended to tackle, we figure.

It's difficult to describe the sound of the motor. It doesn't have a throaty roar or a grumble. It's more a collection of sounds of moving metal parts. We only bring it up because we noticed it on the Ducati we

“ Things like pannier racks and a rear rack, crash bars, heated grips and seat, centrestand, a good bashplate...lots. All stock. Awesome.”

rode for this issue as well. Standing behind the pipe gives the expected exhaust growl. Standing beside – or sitting over – the engine seems to leave the rider listening to the engine workings rather than the combustion sound. Maybe it's something to do with new compliance levels.

Whatever.

As we snicked into gear and headed off, the roominess and comfort of the 800MT were the main things we noticed.

Well set up

There's a string of great OEM accessories available for the 800MT.

There's luggage of course, hard and soft panniers and top boxes, and things like radiator and headlight guards,

Left: Throttle response is sharpish in Sport mode.
Top right: We felt as though CFMOTO went a little overboard with the chain cover, but it's certainly safe and effective.
Right: The biggest TFT screen in this class of bike. There's lots of info available.



master-cylinder guards, big footpegs, 'bar risers, a higher seat and a fair bit more, but we were very surprised to see how much of what we thought was optional equipment fitted to our review bike turned out to be standard. Things like pannier racks and a rear rack, crash bars, heated grips and seat, centrestand, a good bashplate...lots. All stock. Awesome.

We did have a couple of bits and pieces from the accessories catalogue, like the master-cylinder guard and headlight protector, but the level of standard equipment on the Touring model is really frigging high. It's ready to go riding, straight off the dealer floor.

Doin' it

We hit the highway, set an appropriate speed on the cruise control, then settled back to take stock, and it was immediately obvious the 800MT was totally at home on the freeway. It rolled along at legal speeds without requiring any input from the rider bar a gentle movement of the wide 'bars to change lanes or flick through the menu screens, just to help pass the time.

When the roads became rougher and asked a little more of the rider a few of the bike's characteristics came to the fore.

Throttle response was interesting.

In Sport mode the throttle is 'touchy'. 'Aggressive' might be another way of saying it.

Very small inputs from the rider get an unexpectedly lively response from the motor. It took some getting used to in traffic, and we settled into it, but it was a little surprising.

In Rain mode everything gets very controlled. Power output



CF MOTO 800MT TOURING

BIKE SPECS

Recommended price: \$14,990 ride-away.
Web: cfmoto.com.au

- Engine type:** Liquid-cooled, fuel-injected, DOHC four-stroke parallel twin
Capacity: 799cc
Bore and Stroke: 88mm x 65.7mm
Fuel system: Bosch EFI with ride-by-wire throttle
Maximum power: 95hp (70kW) at 9000rpm
Maximum torque: 77Nm at 7500rpm
Gearbox: Six-speed with slipper clutch
Final drive: Chain
Ride modes: Two: Sport or Rain
Frame: Tubular steel
Front suspension: 43mm KYB upside-down fork, fully adjustable, 160mm travel
Rear suspension: KYB monoshock, fully adjustable, 150mm travel
Rake: 28 degrees
Front brakes: Twin 320mm discs with JJuan four-piston radial calipers
Rear brakes: 260mm disc with JJuan twin-piston caliper
Coming ABS: Bosch
Wheels: Spoked, 19 x 2.5 front, 17 x 4.25 rear
Tyres: Maxxis tubeless: 110/80 front, 150/70-17 rear
Wheelbase: 1531mm
Length x width x height: 2234mm x 853mm x 1277mm
Seat height: 825mm
Ground clearance: 190mm
Fuel capacity: 19 litres
Claimed fuel consumption: 5.6 litres/100km
Wet weight: 231kg
Cruise control: Yes
Fog lights: Yes
USB and 12-volt charging: Yes
Dashboard: Seven-inch TFT with Bluetooth connectivity and navigation function; complementary app
LED lights: Yes
Tyre-pressure monitoring: Yes
UP/Down quickshifter: Yes
Handguards: Yes
Alloy bashplate: Yes
Steering damper: Yes
Heated grips: Yes
Heated rider seat: Yes
Centrestand: Yes
Warranty: Three years, unlimited kilometres
Service intervals: 10,000km



and throttle response are both reduced, almost to the point where we wondered if it might be too big a step. Riders looking for safe margins in the wet or slippery going will definitely find them in Rain mode on the 800MT, and for those wanting an easy introduction to the size and feel of a big adventure bike, it's a good option.

The other characteristic associated with the response of the throttle was the bike's tendency to push against the rider's intentions on deceleration. In slow going it felt like the bike was constantly trying 'forge on', if you can grasp what we mean. We'd be idling along expecting zero throttle to allow the bike to sit in the very slow traffic, but it kept wanting to go a little faster than we felt it should and required constant, gentle application of the brake to keep it under control. The same when decelerating through roundabouts.

It didn't present us with any problems, but it felt a little different to our expectation.

The KYB suspension also felt nice and firm on the road.

As we pushed the bike along, experimenting with some of the performance parameters, we felt the 800MT coped with both commuting and a gentle thrashing really well. A twist of the throttle had the thing darting about like a good'n, the slipper clutch worked well, the quickshifter wasn't as good as some we'd used, but normal, sensible changes went off without a hitch, and braking – the rear was particularly strong – was really good.

Rash on the gravel

Once we hit the gravel and dirt roads it wasn't difficult to find a few of the bike's limits.

The motor, gearbox and braking all worked really well, but the stock KYB suspension wasn't set for the kind of pace the other mechanicals could deliver in that situation.

As we've written often, finding a bike with stock suspension to suit an individual

Left: In its element. There's a whole lot of enjoyable, comfortable, pleasurable adventure riding on offer from this bike.

Below left: There's some nice gear in the accessories catalogue, but the standard bike is very well equipped.

Below right: Stepped seats aren't our favourite, but this one was comfortable. Heated, too!

rider is an extremely long shot, and in the interests of reviewing the 800MT we asked a lot more of it than most buyers of a bike like this one would.

Both ends are fully adjustable, and for fanging along forestry dirt roads and shitty country backroads everything worked well. That's what we think the bike was designed for. At 230-odd kilos it's no lightweight though, and when we started pointing the bike at hard-edged ruts, logs and rocks we felt things became untidy. We only point it out because, otherwise, the bike seemed busting to go harder. Motor, brakes and handling won't hold back good riders, that's for sure, but both forks and shock could probably use the attention of a tuner if there's rough terrain or a capable off-road rider on the agenda.

There's no traction control on the 800MT, and ABS can't be turned off. The motor is really easy to use and power delivery extremely manageable, so we were very happy without traction control. The ABS allowed some very aggressive braking indeed, and we were generally content with that arrangement, but we didn't tackle any serious loose downhills, and that needs to be kept in mind.

Our bad

In the spirit of full disclosure, we were going to whinge about the crash bars on this bike sticking out so far. They really bug out a long way, and, to make



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things worse, the top and bottom bars meet at a bit of a sharp angle which looks ready to catch on things instead of slide along the deck.

But then we had a moment and decked the bike hard. It wasn't at speed, but it was an ugly setting and the bike slammed down on its side and made its way to the bottom of a small rocky slope in that unfortunate, grinding posture.

When we picked up the bike the crash bar had done the job. We expected to find a seriously ugly result, but the only damage was the crash bar being scratched and moved out of position.

The bike was otherwise unharmed and we continued on our way with no penalty whatsoever.

Above: Creature comforts are high, performance is good, and the CFMOTO 800MT Touring - as opposed to the Sport - offers the kind of comfort and real-world ability which will make on-and-off-road touring a pleasure.

Below left: That gear-selector tip is adjustable. There's lots of nice detail touches around the bike.

Below right: The headlight protector still allows plenty of lumens to hit the road.

So we give the crash bars 10 out of 10.

Value

It's impossible not to take the retail price of the 800MT Touring into consideration.

At \$14,490 ride away the thing is astonishing value. Creature comforts are high, performance is good, and the bike offers real-world ability which will make long-distance touring a pleasure. While it's no 890 or 701 off-road, it's not too shabby either, is available at near half the price, and there's a whole lot of enjoyable, comfortable, pleasurable adventure riding on offer.

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