

MOTORCYCLING : BMW S 1000 XR



PRICE: R212,045
ENGINE:
In-line 4-cyl;
4-stroke; 999 cc
160 kW @ 11,000 r/min
112 Nm @ 9,250 r/min
TOP SPEED (KM/H): 260
0-100 KM/H (SEC): 3,1
FUEL TANK (L): 20
FUEL RANGE (KM): 320
WET WEIGHT (KG): 228

revs and from even below 6,500 r/min, where the real rush begins, it'll rocket away from just about anything on the road in any gear. The factory claims that the 0-100 km/h dash takes just 3,1 seconds, and top speed is around 260 km/h, taking it close to superbike and supercar territory. Unlike a superbike, though, the XR's very comfortable at lower speeds and, while not ideal for bad terrain, would cope pretty well with the occasional jaunt along a moderately rough dirt road. A non-essential but great fun feature on the XR is the new quick shifter that allows lightning-fast gear changes – up or down – without the intervention of the clutch. Hold the throttle open and bang the gear lever up or down and the electronics take care of the rest in milliseconds.

The biggest recent advances in motorcycle technology have come in the field of electronic rider aids – ten years ago basic ABS braking and possibly primitive traction control were usually about all you'd get. BMW's always been at or near the front in this department, and the XR is as good as the best, with a plethora of technologies including automatic suspension adjustment, multi-mode traction control and four rider modes to adjust engine output and delivery for differing conditions – Rain, Road, Dynamic and the aggressive Dynamic Pro. Rain mode reduces power and torque by about 10% each, as well as smoothing out the way they arrive, while the other three

offer all the grunt, but deliver it less aggressively. The dynamic electronic suspension adjustment automatically matches the damping to riding conditions, while the spring preload can be independently adjusted on the fly by pushing a button. The big Brembo brakes benefit from ABS Pro that allows effective electronic intervention even while the bike is banked over.

Handling and high-speed stability on the 250 km launch route were flawless without any need to fiddle unduly with the electronics, and the bike seems to shed weight as it gathers speed. The Beemer is, surprisingly, lighter than its twin-cylinder rivals from Ducati and KTM and its lower height makes it feel even lighter, but for those who feel intimidated by the lofty seat height, a suspension-lowering kit and lower seat are available as options. The bike comes with numerous comfort and convenience features, including a main stand, heated handgrips, cruise control, a luggage carrier and luggage mounts.

LAST WORD

The BMW S 1000 XR is a winner, providing a fast, safe, and comfortable ride in a classy, user-friendly package. It is extremely quick, is very well appointed and at R212,045 it is competitively priced.