



MV AGUSTA BRUTALE 1090RR

This pocket rocket is the cheapest of the bunch, but the only way you can tell is by looking at the price tag. It is the favourite looking bike of at least two of our testers, has a quality finish and is a much more refined bike to ride (as we said back when we first tested it in Vol 61 No 01), and all for \$19,400. Bargain!

The engine surprised all of us in this company. An in-line four that rolls on hard at any revs is rare, and this bike only becomes breathless at the very top – straight off closed throttle it shoves forward with wicked intensity. Its biggest problem is actually keeping the front wheel on the deck when accelerating hard, which isn't a bad problem to have if you're after fun, rather than lap times.

It doesn't have the outright power of the BMW four-cylinder engine, but it doesn't have to cart around the same weight, either. You can lazy-boy the bike through the curves like the BMW if you want, letting the torque do all the talking, or you can rev it like the Aprilia, waiting for the traction control to chime in as

it inevitably pushes the tyre too hard.

It's a very versatile engine, more so than you'd expect looking at the spec sheet, and it's very enjoyable to use.

The throttle response isn't perfect though, being mildly abrupt off a closed throttle compared to the others. But this is a small issue, and we merely commented on it being there, rather than whinging about it during the test. It's also the second best sounding bike after the Aprilia, according to our testers.

Looks-wise, MV Agusta has done the best job of the nose, the hardest part of any naked bike to get right. The nicely-shaped headlight and small instrument cluster make for a well-balanced look across the 1090RR, leaving the engine bulging out of the trellis frame to attract all the attention.

Handling-wise, we weren't happy with the rear shock as supplied, which was way softer than the very competent fork. It wasn't until we maxed-out the shock damping that we got close to the feel we wanted, and some more playing



Straight off a closed throttle it shoves forward with wicked intensity



1. One sexy looking bike – it almost looks all-engine from this angle
2. A cool dash, but not very easy to use thanks to weird button operation techniques
3. S.E.X.
4. The front-end is solid and hot looking, all at the same time

around with high- and low-speed compression damping, as well as rebound, got it close to spot-on. That said, we felt the range of adjustment wasn't quite right, and I suspect the shock had an issue, as the previous testbike (a different unit) was closer to the middle of the damping settings than this one finished.

Nevertheless, the Brutale is a weapon in the twisties, turning almost as precisely as the Aprilia, and with less steering input than the BMW to let you get on the gas and revel in the sweet engine.

It is similar in size to the Ducati and taller riders feel a bit cramped on the MV, however the footpegs are adjustable, giving back some room – the footpegs on the Ducati are significantly lower though. Being small, moving around on the bike is easy, and it's no surprise that the shorter of the testers really gelled with it.

Our last testbike had a clutch lever that sporadically lost pressure, however there was none of that on this bike. The general finish is top notch, with nifty little bits and pieces everywhere, including some remote vacuum line attachments poking out from under the tank to make it easier to balance the throttle bodies. The steering damper is the only adjustable one of the bunch, and very easily done too, and the levers are all adjustable for span.

There's a lot to like on the Brutale, a bike with more charisma and character than any of the others, yet with few compromises.

- A Horn and indicator buttons unconventional in arrangement
- B Dash is neat but extremely hard to adjust
- C Trellis frame bend shows off the engine
Brakes have excellent feel and power
Huge triple-clamp looks tough
Best looking front-end here
Radiator shrouds have a nice curve
Adjustable brake and clutch levers



ITTY BITS

- D Slash-cut exhaust looks trick
- E Adjustable pegs, gear and rear brake foot levers, although still not enough adjustment space
- F Angled valve caps
Indicated mirrors and blinkers can be fragile if bike is dropped
Mirrors are hard to see out of
Compact master-cylinders
Overall finish is very good
Now relatively affordable

106.5kg	208.3kg	101.8kg			
Bar width	Bar height	Bar to seat	Seat height	Seat to peg	Peg height
779mm	1000mm	670mm	823mm	449mm	379mm