

12 Reasons to be Excited About the New Liquid-Cooled BMW R1200GS

Written by Paul Guillien

Tuesday, 29 January 2013 11:59



The liquid-cooled version of the R1200GS has been years in the making, and Touratech is pleased to see that the bike has not only retained its off-road capabilities, but actually raised the bar. With 170,000 units of the R1200GS motorcycle sold world-wide, BMW has demonstrated it understands what the adventure touring enthusiast wants. They didn't just tweak a few things with this update; it's a completely new machine from tip to tail.

Shortly after the liquid-cooled GS was unveiled, we spoke with a few people on the development team to learn more about the character of BMW's latest GS motorcycle, and have since put together this list highlighting twelve reasons we're excited about this bike.

Better Traction

By having a more compact engine and transmission, the engineers were able to lengthen the swing arm to improve traction, especially off-road, while keeping the wheel-base the same.

Wet Clutch

We're happy to have the smooth and easy shifting action offered up by the wet clutch design on the six-speed transmission. Clutch service will be much easier as it's now accessed from the

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front of the bike, a big improvement over the previous models that required splitting the bike in two pieces to access dry clutch.

One hand adjustable windscreen

Finally, a windscreen you can adjust with one hand! This innovative design allows you to turn a knob with just one hand to change the position of the windscreen to maximize protection from the weather and minimize buffeting.

Exhaust moved to the right side

We recently spoke with Hans Blesse, who is currently the head of BMW Motorrad North America, about his previous post as the head of sales & marketing at BMW Motorrad, where he oversaw the liquid-cooled R1200GS project. He told us about a time their product team noticed burn marks on their trousers after a day of riding the previous version of the GS. They noted that most people stand on the left side of the motorcycle when maneuvering the bike. This is the same side the exhaust pipe was on, which burned many a pair of expensive riding pants. From that point on, the team decided to put the exhaust on the other side of the bike and the rest of the bike was designed around that criteria.

Price

The base price for the new R1200GS is actually less than the previous model, however many of the best features will only be found on premium package versions of the new GS.

Electronic Cruise Control

Great for touring, the electronic cruise control is a convenience that long-distance riders want.

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LED Head light

This is the world's first production motorcycle with a LED main headlight, which also features an integrated daytime running light. Once again BMW has introduced cutting edge technology, plus the LED day light just looks cool!

Semi-Active Suspension

Borrowing technology from the BMW HP4 superbike, the new R1200GS gets a semi-active suspension package. This Dynamic ESA (electronic suspension adjustment) not only allows the user to select riding profiles, but also monitors the movement of the front and rear wheels 100 times per second making automatic adjustments to optimize the suspension performance to fit the riding conditions.

More Power

The new liquid-cooled engine produces 123hp and 92 ft-lbs of torque at 6,500 rpm, making this bike more exciting to ride on the tarmac. Additionally, the new liquid-cooled motor achieves 6% better fuel economy over last year's model. The new power plant also has a richer exhaust sound when you crack the throttle.

Push-button profiles

The 2013 BMW R1200GS has five riding modes (Rain, Road, Dynamic, Enduro & Enduro Pro), which optimize the Automatic Stability Control (ASC), Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) and Dynamic Damping Control (DDC) semi-active suspension. This allows the rider to change the traction control, brakes and suspension with one button to optimize the bike for different riding environments. The Enduro Pro setting gives you full rear brake for sliding the rear of the bike around, while retaining a bit of anti-lock for the front. Perfect for play time!

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Narrow where it matters

A bike that is narrow in the middle is more comfortable to ride and easier to handle. The designers at BMW spent many nights agonizing over small details to get the bike as narrow as possible in the middle. The result is a huge improvement in how the bike feels - while seated or standing.

Feels Light

By lowering the center of gravity and using dynamic dampening control, BMW has created a bike that feels lighter than the previous version even though the scale suggests no reduction in weight. Touratech CEO, Herbert Schwarz, rode the new liquid-cooled R1200GS on a 4,000 kilometer trip through Madagascar. Upon returning from the trip he said, "The new bike feels 100lbs lighter than the previous model even though the actual weight is the same."

[Paul Guillien is the General Manager of Touratech USA, visit them on the web here. \[link\]](#)

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