

> AdrenalineRush





There's a current demand for Supermoto style bikes that can also be used on the road. If you are looking for something that has the looks, but not the price tag, then look no further...

The law is an ass. It always has been, always will be. It was bad enough when I was a youth; I was unlucky enough to drop into the first few years of the 250cc and under law for 16-year-old learner motorcyclists, though plenty of my pals went the way of the 650cc job with third wheel – I was never that brave. Then, of course, the goons in Whitehall dropped the capacity down to 125cc, upped it to 17 and have continued to fiddle around and generally screw up the whole process ever since. Now, the poor 16-year-old is stuck with a dangerous point and squirt, incapable of travelling at general road speeds, and the 17-year-old fares little better, being restricted to a maximum of 15 horses. Having climbed off a 900cc Triumph onto the Pulse Adrenaline 125, I was expecting a considerable performance differential – and I got it!

Now before you hit your keyboards in defence of the tiddler, let me straightaway say I'm not knocking the bike, just the ludicrous law that spawned it. So let's take the Pulse for what it is, rather than for what it's not. Firstly, there's the style and appearance, which I like (I just love the supermoto style), and indeed, when my 14-year-old and his pals cast eyes on it, the adjective most in abundance was 'cool'. So on that score alone, Pulse has a winner.

It's built in China and, to be honest, the build quality is pretty good. Everything fits together well, the finish is good; the bodywork sturdy but flexible enough and the parts are trendy without appearing simply cheap novelties; for example, the front disc brake. The disc itself is a modern styled wavy job of 230mm (nine inches) diameter, gripped by a twin pot caliper, and is one of the bike's best assets – it will stand it on its nose if required. The rear is a 175mm (seven inches) cable-operated single leading drum and it too will lock up the back wheel if necessary.

The forks are upside downers, de rigueur for any

supermoto, and the smart 17in wheels have gunmetal painted hubs and black alloy rims with polished stainless spokes.

I must confess I had never heard of Kingstone tyres before, presumably Chinese, but they look the part and work perfectly satisfactorily, certainly within the power limits of the Adrenaline 125.

There's a single rear shock absorber supporting the black painted box section alloy swinging arm and, in regular supermoto fashion, the seat is long and tall – some 890mm (35in) at its lowest point. The suspension does sag slightly once across the bike and yours truly's 31in legs have no problem planting the feet pretty much flat at a standstill; there again I weigh in at 13 stone. My lad is presently about eight stone but his legs are longer and he is equally at home on it, so it's swings and roundabouts. Bear in mind, though, if your short and light 17-year-old is lusting after the Adrenaline 125, he may struggle a bit.

The exhaust system tucks in very tidily and is capped off with a tasteful chromium plated 'reverse cone' where it pokes out from under the side panel beneath the seat. While inspecting this, I spotted a mysterious, oval-esque container beneath the opposite side panel, with a detachable rubber end cap. Puzzled, I removed the end cap to find a basic tool kit of a screwdriver (double-ended Phillips/standard blade), a plug box spanner and three double open-ended spanners. Mystery solved and a good idea to boot.

The engine is based on the venerable, bullet-proof Suzuki air-cooled SOHC unit, but has been detuned in accordance with the aforementioned UK laws and shoves out about 11bhp. The Mikuni carburettor is tiny and has a manual choke lever for cold starts. It spins up easily and the choke can be knocked off almost instantly on all but the coldest of mornings. A useful safety factor and one

Established engine technology.



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TECH SPEC:

ENGINE TYPE:	Single cylinder four-stroke, air-cooled
DISPLACEMENT:	124cc
BORE X STROKE:	57 x 48.8mm
MAX POWER:	8.3kw/500rpm
TRANSMISSION:	Manual, six-speed
DRIVE TYPE:	Chain
START SYSTEM:	Electric
IGNITION TYPE:	CDI
TANK CAPACITY:	10.6 litres
BRAKE:	Disc (front), Drum (rear)
TYRES:	110/70 17-inch (front), 130/70 17-inch (rear)
SUSPENSION:	Upside down forks (front), Single shock absorber (rear)
WHEELBASE:	1400mm
LENGTH:	2115mm
WIDTH:	830mm
HEIGHT:	1140mm
WEIGHT:	123kg
AVAILABLE COLOURS:	Black
PRICE:	£1399.99
IMPORTER:	Livestor
	(www.chinesemotorcycledealers.co.uk/)



that, despite the glaring sticker on the handlebars, I missed on more than one occasion, is that the bike will not start when the side stand is down.

As expected on a 125, all the controls are featherlight, indeed as is the bike as a whole, weighing in at just 123kg. The gearbox and transmission are faultless; the only thing that lets down the Adrenaline 125 is its enforced performance restriction. The five speeds and neutral are indicated on the digital readout between the natty little speedometer and tachometer, along with the full beam blue indicator light (the headlamp is impressively bright at night too) and the direction indicator. Our model ran a kph clock so the 'mileage' ran up pretty quickly and hence the clock face is graduated in both kph and mph.

The website (www.chinesemotorcycledealers.co.uk/) has a rather optimistic specification performance-wise, revving to 9500 with a top speed of some 65mph. In reality, this is more like 5500 revs and 55mph. With only 11 horses, the Pulse isn't going to break any records, so in order to get away and up to general traffic speeds, the little motor has to be worked hard through the gears, but once up to speed, it will cruise quite happily. What's more, it's very frugal in its fuel consumption, recording well over 125 miles before dropping on to reserve.

So, in conclusion, if I was 17, I would be absolutely delighted if the Pulse Adrenaline was parked in my drive. From the adult perspective, I give it nine out of 10, losing out on the clean sweep purely on the grounds of performance – which, as I said earlier, is not the fault of the bike, just the law.

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ALTERNATIVE CHOICE: Yamaha XT125



Price: £2599

Yamaha's XT range has been around for a while. Over the years they've been redesigned and come in a variety of styles. The XT125R sports a 21in front wheel and an 18in rear whereas the XT125X has supermoto style 17in front and rear. Otherwise, they're pretty much the same, sporting an air-cooled SOHC four-stroke single cylinder engine and a five-speed gearbox. They have disc brakes front and rear and a smart two-tone coloured seat height of a lofty 860mm. Power-wise there are 10 horses available at 8250rpm with 10Nm of torque at 5500rpm, which translates to about 55mph. Spec-wise, the Yamaha comes out on top, but costs a quid short of £2600 – almost double that of the Pulse. If I was 17 and only intended to keep my 125 for a year, I'd have one eye on my wallet and head for the Pulse every time.