

USED BIKE REVIEW: 1994-2009 TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE

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LONGTERM TEST



2009 DUCATI 848

John Zamora: Associate Editor

MILES RIDDEN: 2400 MODIFICATIONS: Exhaust, windscreen, seat cover, grips, bar risers

The B48 is definitely one of those bikes that the more you ride it, the more you like it. It's such a joy actually, that Dave borrowed it and refuses to give back the key. What a dick.

A minor spill on the freeway (on a different bike) kept me cage bound for most of the month, but I'll return to racking up the miles as soon as my leg heals up. While I was injured, I figured it was a good time to send the bike in for a service and have some Ducati accessory parts installed. A taller smoked windscreen was added to help put up a little bit of wind protection for a more comfortable ride, and a matching rear seat cover was also hooked up. The bike is not really ideal for two-up rides anyway, so I figured this would make it official. But most importantly, the bike left the dealership equipped with a set of carbon fiber slip-on Termignoni pipes.

For those that don't know, Termignoni is to Ducati as strippers are to lap dances—they're a natural fit. For only 848 cubic centimeters of muscle it's as loud as a Formula 1 car on the starting grid—but that's a good loud. My neighbors might think differently, but the thing just sounds so badass I don't care. Normally I'm against such abuse of the decibel meter, but I think I'll make an exception this time. Next month I'll have a dyno result, but to be honest, it sounds so cool the cold numbers only marginally matter to me.

In the comfort department, I threw on a set of Heli bars with gel grips. They work with all the stock hardware and went on in about an hour. The bars make the controls about an inch taller and bring them another inch back. Though that doesn't sound like much, every little bit helps and it made for a more comfortable riding position. It's no sport tourer, but it's definitely more tolerable than before. The Pro Grip gel grips also helped to dampen some of the engine vibration, and the combination of the two pays off after about an hour of seat time when fatigue starts to set in.

Sitting on my desk is a set of new sprockets that should take care of the low-rev bogging. Also going on next month is an Adaptive radar detector to hopefully keep my driving record as clean as my Italian stallion looks. While the B48 will never be as comfortable as a VFR, there is something much cooler about saying you ride a Ducati. With only a few mods left to do, I'll be able to brag about enjoying a bike designed for the racetrack on the street.



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