

2005-2006

TRIUMPH SPRINT ST

Whether you're an all weather rolling-stone or an occasional scratcher, the Sprint ST is always up to the job. We asked owners why they love it

DUTCHY SOUTAR

50-year-old Dutchy is an ex-soldier who lives in Tasmania. He's been riding since the '60s and his Sprint ST was a present from his (awesome!) wife.



MARTIN BARRETT

45-year-old Martin is based in Hampshire, works as a baker and bought a Triumph because he wanted a change from his Honda VFR800.



WILLIAM WEIR

53-year-old William works in the vehicle repair business and is based in the North East. He sold his old Sprint for an ST when it came out in 2005.



WHY I HAD TO HAVE ONE...

Dutchy: "Most of the bikes I've had over the last 35 years have been big machines because I like having plenty of torquey power. My biggest bike was a Kawasaki Z1300 which was bored out to 1502cc. In the late '90s I bought a great T595 Triumph triple. I kept that until 2005, when my wife bought me a 50th birthday present in the shape of a new Sprint ST."

Martin: "I bought a new VFR800 in 2001 and covered 38,000 miles on it - it was a superb bike. When the Sprint ST came out I took a demo ride and put a deposit down the same day. The ST feels like the bike the modern VFR800 should be: riding position, power delivery and styling are all spot on."

William: "Back in the '60s I rode British bikes: BSA, Triumph, Ariel, all sorts - although I was always a fan of the Triumph brand. I eventually bought one of the older Sprint models when Hinckley Triumphs got going in the 1990s. The new model appealed to me because of its looks and the extra performance."

PERFORMANCE

Dutchy: "Tasmania isn't a big island, but it's very hilly with plenty of winding roads. The Triumph has the perfect type of performance for this kind of place: loads of mid-range torque and a great spread of power. The ST also has enough grunt to shift two people, plus luggage."

Martin: "The ST feels lots faster and smoother than the VFR800. You can come out of bends at 30mph in fourth gear and the ST will pull away clean and strong. Compared to the VFR800 it also feels torquier, with much more useful poke in the mid-range."

William: "Compared to the old Triumphs from the '60s and '70s, the performance of the old Sprint is out of this world, and the new ST is even faster. But it isn't all progress: somehow I found the old classic Brit bikes were more 'chuckable' in the corners while the modern Triumphs seem to be heavier and carry their weight higher. Even pushing them around in driveways needs a lot more effort than with the old 650 and 750 twins."

RIDING

Dutchy: "I'm still getting used to the bike as it only has 700 miles on the clock. I've already done some mods to make longer trips more comfortable, including fitting a gel seat and panniers. I've also changed the fork oil and raised the handlebars slightly. At the moment I would say I'm riding it pretty hard, but I know the ST has got more to come as the engine loosens up."

Martin: "My ST has the optional ABS braking and I would say it is much better than the linked brake system on my old Honda, which seemed to need a fair bit of pressure at the lever to develop serious stopping power."

William: "I'm keen to take a big trip to mainland Europe on the ST. I have a Givi topbox for the bike, but I'm still waiting for the fitting brackets. One thing I've noticed is that even though I don't ride the bike that hard, the rear tyre is worn after just 3500 miles. I've decided to stay with the standard Bridgestones as they're designed specifically for the Sprint ST."

OWNING

Dutchy: "There's a little old-fashioned Triumph dealership on Tasmania (there are only 120,000 people on the island) and they look after me very well. The underseat exhausts do heat up the grabrails but I don't really think it's a big issue unless you're riding in extreme heat."

Martin: "The ST is very reliable but has some niggling faults. The seat bolts have needed replacing, paint has bubbled on the screen, the mirrors vibrate too much and the pressure of the air at speed seems to prise apart the seams on the top case and panniers. But fair play to Triumph as they are doing a recall on them."

William: "One thing I think Triumph should do is make a wider range of accessories for the ST. For example, I have size 12 feet and the dinky little controls are not ideal for me - it would be good if you could buy bigger brake and gear lever pedals. I actually ended up making my own alloy extension for the old Sprint's brake pedal."

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TRIUMPH'S Sprint ST is on the sportier side of sports-tourer

MCN SAYS

- PROS...**
- ✓ One of the quickest and best-handling sports-tourers on the scene
 - ✓ A truly 21st century Triumph with performance and comfort to boot
- CONS...**
- ✗ Heat from the exhaust can be a problem
 - ✗ There's nowhere to stow stuff beneath the sleek bodywork

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MCN quick guide

THE 2005 Sprint ST's svelte styling is matched by a sporty chassis and a punchy 1050cc three cylinder engine which sets it apart from the four-cylinder competition.

The engine has loads of mid-range power, with a wide spread of poke from 3000-9000rpm. Crucially, Triumph addressed the criticism of the old Sprint's fuel injection and gearbox by working hard to make the '05 ST one of the smoothest sports-tourers on the market. The fuel injection, ECU unit, gearbox and clutch were all brand new.

Factory accessories include hard and soft luggage, ABS, sat nav, rack and topbox, alarm, tank pad, heated grips and gel seat. You can ride in comfort all the way to Germany's Nurburgring and then go on to post some respectable lap times on this versatile machine.

EXPERT OPINION

"For many riders the 2005 ST is the ideal all-rounder. We've found many buyers have been VFR owners who have decided the Triumph looks better and has a simpler long-term service schedule than the Honda. "It's also been successful because Triumph have offered a massive range of accessories from day one so owners don't have to wait to see what aftermarket companies will produce. New buyers often opt for the heated grips, panniers and double-bubble screen. "The fact that Triumph have not changed the ST for 2006 has also inspired confidence about re-sale values as nobody wants to buy a new bike which will be automatically superseded by a newer model in less than a year." Dave Lilley, Sales Manager at Jack Lilley Motorcycles, Ashford, Middlesex

TRIUMPH SPRINT ST

★★★★★
COST NEW: £7800
COST USED: £6750-7500
POWER (claimed): 123bhp
TORQUE (claimed): 77ftlb
WEIGHT: 210kg

Year changes:
2005 - New model
2006 - Sunset red colour scheme introduced

TECHNICAL SPEC
Engine: 1050cc (79 x 71.4mm) dohc 12v four-stroke inline triple
Chassis: Aluminium alloy twin spar
Top speed: 154mph
Insurance group: 16 (of 17)

FUEL: 37mpg, 20 litres, 160 miles

RAKE: 24°
TRAIL: 90mm

SEAT HEIGHT: 805mm



WHEELBASE: 1457mm

OWNERS' TOP TIPS

- Dutchy:** "If you are planning any long-distance trips and you're reasonably tall then go for a bigger screen and raise the handlebars a bit - it makes a huge difference to your riding comfort."
- Martin:** "My favourite upgrades must be the gel seat and aero-screen - they were on the demo model I tested and I don't think I would have gone for the ST in stock trim."
- William:** "I have heard that some Sprints had soggy front brakes due to air getting into the system. Evidently Triumph issued a service bulletin on how to bleed them properly which will sort it. Contact your dealer for more info."

THE BEST BITS

LEFT: Distinctive three-beam headlight echoes the 'triple' theme. **MIDDLE:** Engine is virtually identical to the latest Speed Triple and is grunty, fast and aurally glorious. **RIGHT:** Triple underseat pipes (can you see what they're doing now?) look great but can lightly toast pillion and grabrail.

