



Changes mean you'll be faster on the track

TECHNICAL EVOLUTION

How Ducati made the rip-snorting superbike more friendly...



2018 211bhp
Panigale V4 introduced. MotoGP-inspired engine with counter-rotating crank and twin-pulse firing order. Chassis changes from V-twin's airbox monocoque to a partial cast alloy beam. Multiple rider modes and lean sensitive electronic aids.



2020 211bhp
A milder-mannered Panigale V4 gets the more angular fairing and wings from the homologation-special Panigale V4 R and suspension tweaks to aid stability. Smoother rider aids make life easier to manage when grip runs out.



2021 211bhp
Another step towards on-track civility. Electronics are polished yet further and the addition of Race A and Race B modes lets you choose how wild, or not, you want your Panigale V4 to be. It also gets Euro5 exhaust and engine mapping upgrades.

2022 213bhp
More power, but gear-by-gear engine mapping gives a more refined delivery. New slotted wings, geometry tweaks, gas forks for the V4 S, WSB gear ratios, larger reshaped tank and longer seat for better ergonomics, revised suspension.



Friendlier firepower!

Ducati's Panigale V4 S is the ultimate in controlled aggression and has been developed into a very fast, but more user-friendly weapon

Michael Neeves,
CHIEF ROAD TESTER

Ducati have always known how to build fast, achingly beautiful bikes, but they haven't always been the easiest to get on with. Their Panigale superbike is a case in point and the story starts way back in 2012 when the V-twin 1199 Panigale replaced the old 1198.

Stiff-framed and pumped full of power, few superbikes felt as dramatic. The Ducati was an animal, despite an array of then new-generation electronics working hard to tame its eagerness to squirm a rear tyre out of corners and wheelie in the first three gears. Bologna boffins refined the Panigale through chassis tweaks and even smoother electronics as it evolved into the 2015 Panigale 1299, but real progress was made with the arrival of the Panigale V4 in 2018.

Two extra cylinders and a more



Aeros aren't just there for race chic

flexi-frame, together with another new generation of electronics, helped calm the beast. It was still slightly unhinged and would take someone as skilled as a Ducati test rider or racer to get the best from it, but a change in the factory's philosophy set the Panigale off into calmer waters in 2020.

Since then, more chassis tweaks, new aero and smoother electronic rider aids have made the V4 easier to ride, but the biggest step has come from sophisticated engine mapping.

The latest-generation Panigale V4



Huge power, but so controllable

arrived last year with power increased from 211bhp to a heady 213bhp, but also with specific engine maps for each gear. They numb the power in the lower gears, even in the Ducati's fruity riding modes, so now it doesn't tie itself in knots out of corners.

With tamer power comes the confidence to start leaning on its foolproof slide control, the huge reserves of grip and astonishing brakes. Longer first and second gear ratios further calm low-gear acceleration and wings pin the front

wheel to the floor. Despite all that power it barely wheelies, even flat-out through first. Being the roomiest of all the superbikes adds to its friendliness, too.

Ducati's Panigale V4 S won MCN Best Sportsbike award in 2022 and does it again for 2023. Its only new challenger for this year is BMW's updated S1000RR. We track tested the two earlier in the year and the Panigale V4 was the calm one and the BMW the aggressor. The Ducati was slightly slower in the hands of the racer who set our lap times, which highlighted how much Ducati have toned down the Panigale V4 to suit us normal folk, while BMW have turned up the wick on the S1000RR. The Panigale V4 is still wickedly fast, of course, but now more flattering and engaging, not to mention the most luxuriously built and equipped, especially in V4 S trim.

And that's why it's still the best superbike money can buy in 2023.