

**MCN** ***Bike***

# DUCATI 2022 AWARD WINNERS

DesertX, Streetfighter V2 and Panigale V4S  
dominate prestigious awards



**PLUS**  
Ducati awarded  
Manufacturer  
of the Year!

# GENERATION X

The Dakar-inspired DesertX is a go-anywhere adventurer that excels on-road

## Motor Cycle News says...

Looking every much an escapee from the Dakar paddock, the DesertX instantly conjured up memories of the Ducati-powered Cagiva Elephant Lucky Strike machines that took on, and conquered, the toughest rally in the world. But in building such a rugged trail-targeted machine – the first Ducati model to be fitted with ‘proper sized’ off-road spoke wheels (21in front, 18in rear) – there was a very real danger of them overstepping the mark with the DesertX. Road manners are just as critical and that’s what makes the DesertX so special and has helped it scoop this award. Yes, it’s a full-on rock-gobbling trail master, however it is also a brilliant middleweight adventure bike that is perfectly at home on tarmac. It rules the roost because it feels by far the most complete overall package.

Take to the road on the DesertX and you are smiling from the moment you turn its key (no keyless ignition here, it’s old-school). The riding position makes you feel all set for Dakar with high bars, low pegs and a very cool TFT dash in the vertical style of a navigation tower. The seat is firm yet not over the top and the screen is even fairly effective. But it is when you get

rolling the real surprises start.

Despite being armed with off-road wheels, long-travel suspension and chunky Pirelli tyres the DesertX handles really well with little or no pitching under hard braking or acceleration and a very planted feel in bends. The engine is more than sprightly enough and happy to perform top-gear roll-on overtakes while the Brembo brakes bite with all the power you could need. It’s a great middleweight road adventurer – and one that is more than happy to take on any kind of off-road trail. And accommodate any level of ability. And it’s a seriously capable off-roader, too.

It is hard to find fault with the DesertX and you have to conclude, Ducati have really hit the nail on the head with this one. It feels like a well-considered and complete package that manages to please both on and off-road riders alike.

Did we mention it also looks stunning?

## ‘Overtakes need little more than a hint of twistgrip’

## Bike magazine says...

Ducati’s new DesertX makes light work of country-hopping rides. Much about this giant off-roader suggests it’ll be tiresome or even entirely unsuited to long road rides – the screen doesn’t adjust, its suspension and wheels were selected for dirty frolicking, and gearing is shorter than on the Multistrada V2 it shares the 937cc desmodromic V-twin with. Ducati have forgotten to fit bungee hooks as well. But the DesertX isn’t just good, it’s fabulous.

Multi-lane miles slide by with bugger-all effort. Despite sharing little other than the engine, on proper roads the DesertX has a similar feel to a Multistrada – only with a plusher ride. The chassis swallows imperfections without fluster, and has a fabulous blend of quick reactions and simple turning with the stable roadholding from the 21-inch front wheel.

Overtakes need little more than a hint of twistgrip. Up into the Welsh hills on that brilliant run to Bala and the Ducati is a joy, romping over the topography, skipping through hairpins and playfully waving its nose skyward out of turns. Its semi-knobbly Pirellis are great, too.

Off-road, from crawling precariously across rocky outcrops to hopping off





boulders, the DesertX not only survives, but laps it all up. It's slim between the knees, with a high handlebar and, a first for Ducati, wide footrests with decent grip. Nothing interferes with your legs and removable pillion footrests give more space and less risk of them bending the subframe in a fall. Importantly the bike carries its weight low and feels easy to manage at slow speed. The 21in/18in wheel set allows for decent mud-friendly tyre choices while that bigger, narrower front wheel compared with a 19in helps out particularly in sand or, more likely for us in the UK, muddy ruts.

The DesertX is modern Ducati's first dedicated off-road adventure bike but you wouldn't think that to ride it. But what impresses most is how a bike this good in the dirt can still be so capable on a twisty road – the hardest thing about owning one will be deciding which tyres to fit.



### QUICK FACTS

**£14,095**  
**Ducati DesertX**

**Engine** Liquid-cooled, 937cc, 8v, V-twin

**Frame** Steel trellis

**Suspension (f)** 46mm upside down KYB forks, fully adj (r) Single KYB shock, fully adjustable

**Brakes (f)** 2x320mm discs, four-piston radial Brembo. Cornering ABS (r) 265mm disc with two-piston Brembo. Cornering ABS

**Seat height** 875mm

**108**  
bhp

**68**  
lb.ft

**223**  
kg (kerb)

**21**  
litres



## NAKED PERFECTION

The Streetfighter V2 mixes style, speed, drama and tech with a lust for corners and cheeky irreverence

### Motor Cycle News says...

Anyone who's spent quality time on a middleweight sportsbike will happily tell you that you don't need big power to have fun on the road, or the track for that matter. It's the same story with sports naked. Big 200bhp-plus hooligans take themselves too seriously, so the thought of something nimbler, revvier and easier to extract the best from is more appealing. Making 151 booming bhps from its racy, 955cc V-twin Superquadro engine the V2 goes like stink and attacks corners like a supersports bike. It's also spacious and kind on your joints, so you can ride it all day without a grimace, or just cruise around town. It's more engaging than the V4 at road speeds and easier to get the best out of on track for normal humans.

Styled to mimic the V4, right down to its single-sided swingarm (wings are extra), the Streetfighter V2 is a full-bloodied Panigale V2 with straight bars and little taken away, aside from its bodywork. The engine is basically the same (minus 2bhp and 2lb-ft of torque) and although it thrives on revs, it's still a twin, so has a wide spread of power and lots of oomph in the midrange. Its straight-line performance, grip and stability through corners is in on another level compared to Ducati's 950 V-twin models, not to mention its Japanese and European rivals.

Like the best middleweight sportsbikes the Streetfighter V2 manages to be fast but doesn't have such an excess of much power it ties itself up in knots. With such a composed, well set-up chassis the harder you push through corners, the better it feels.

It always excites and makes you feel special whether you're pottering around town, carving backroads, hooning on track, or just gawping at it. It's beautifully finished and 2022's best sub-1000cc naked by far.

### QUICK FACTS

**£15,195**  
**Ducati Streetfighter V2**

**Engine** Liquid-cooled, 937cc, 8v, V-twin

**Frame** Steel trellis

**Suspension (f)** 46mm upside down KYB forks, fully adj (r) Single KYB shock, fully adjustable

**Brakes (f)** 2x320mm discs, four-piston radial Brembo. Cornering ABS (r) 265mm disc with two-piston Brembo. Cornering ABS

**Seat height** 875mm

**109**  
bhp

**73**  
lb.ft

**215**  
kg (kerb)

**17**  
litres

