

WHAT'S NEW AND HAS IT WORKED?

Nips, tucks and lowering

FIRST RIDE Ducati's Multistrada V4 S gets tweaked for 2025, but has it made a difference?

Ducati's Multistrada V4 is the Bologna firm's best-selling motorcycle and it's not hard to see why. It's practical, roomy, luxuriously built, goes like stink and is festooned with tech and designer labels. It's been around since 2021, when it took over from the old 1260 V-twin and this is its first proper update since. The detail changes are headed up by Euro 5+ engine tweaks, as per many new models in 2025, which benefit the Multistrada V4, the V4 S we're testing here at its launch in Italy and the V4 Pikes Peak, but not the other Multi V4s in the range.

1 Cleaner and more frugal

Despite its new Euro5+ seal of approval, the V4 Granturismo engine's output remains almost the same. Its claimed 167bhp is just one bhp down and there's no change for its 92lb.ft torque, but both peak 250rpm higher. It's no surprise the new Ducati behaves as before. It can be mild-mannered for cruising, or a rapid, wheelie-toting, MotoGP-sounding hooligan when you're feeling spicy. There's a fruitier sounding new exhaust and following in the footsteps of the Diavel V4 and V4 Rally, the Multi's rear cylinders now deactivate at low speeds, as well as at a standstill. For a 'big bang' V4 that acts like a twin, it's tricky to tell when it's running on two, but there's a 6% mpg improvement (claimed 43mpg).



Now more planet friendly

2 How low can you go?

Ducati introduced a rudimentary lowering device for the Multi V4 in '22 that wound-off the rear preload when you pressed a button at a standstill. New for '25 and undoubtedly its most stand-out upgrade, is a new shock with more preload to give more of a drop (from 15-30mm, depending on the load

on the bike). It seamlessly sinks at speeds below 6mph, which lets a tall rider like me get my feet flat on the floor with bent knees. That should make handling a claimed 232kg machine (plus the extra weight of fuel) that bit easier. The shock jacks back up when you get past 30mph and the device can also be deactivated.



Now even easier to swing a leg over...

3 Clever suspension

For the V4 S model, with its semi-active Marzocchi suspension, the forks now have an internal sensor to measure stroke travel. When the front wheel hits a bump, the forks talk to the shock and tells it how much to brace itself with more, or less damping. As a result, the ride is that bit plusher on rough roads and controlled when you're pushing on. As before the lofty Multi feels slightly wayward at first and not as sharp as

BMW's S1000XR or even the R1300GS, but once you're used to its heft it handles precisely and grips superbly. Ducati have also raised the swingarm pivot by a millimetre to reduce squat under acceleration, and auto rear preload self-levels to take the extra weight of a pillion and/or luggage.



The forks warn the shock



V4 S is lofty but precise

'The front suspension talks to the rear'



Pikes Peak ups the ante

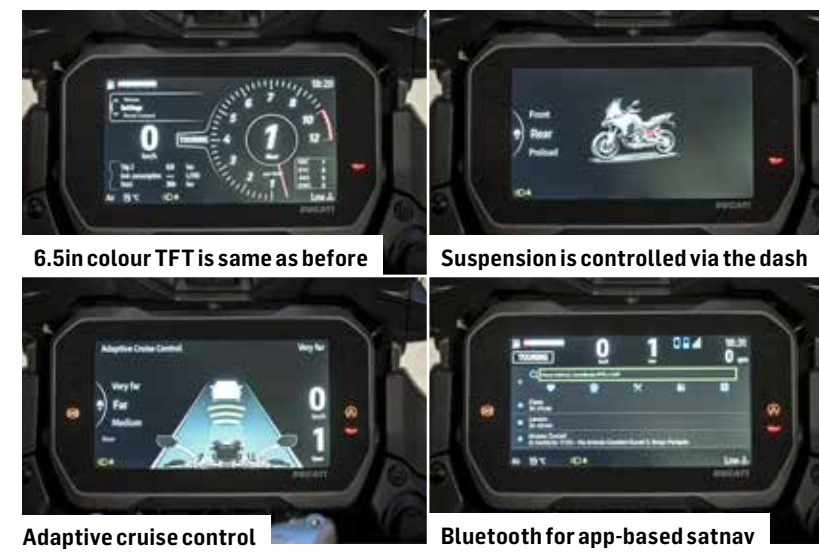
Meet the family

Base £17,695 Multi V4 does without electronic suspension, has lower spec Brembos and 10mm smaller front discs. £27,795 Pikes Peak has Öhlins, forged ali wheels and more. We rode a V4 S with radar and forged wheels (£23,595), and off-road-ready Adventure Travel and Radar pack (£25,625).

4 Electronic helping hand

The Multistrada runs the new 'Ducati Vehicle Observation' (DVO) system. Using sensors, it works out the forces acting on the bike from every direction. For example, it will change the wheelie control settings, or the amount of front-to-back linked braking depending on whether you're riding solo, two-up or with luggage. It also refines all the rider

aids, from traction control to the electronic suspension, mellifluous quickshifter and everything in between. There are also new Enduro and Wet riding modes and a collision warning that flashes up on the dash. The old Multi had an intrusive amount of engine braking, which we criticised it for, but a new three-way adjustable engine brake control solves the problem.



6.5in colour TFT is same as before

Suspension is controlled via the dash

Adaptive cruise control

Bluetooth for app-based satnav

It's like the old bike but better in every way

5 Nips and tucks

There's little change to the Multistrada's looks, other than a slightly reprofiled beak and new colours. The LED headlight internals are revised to give a better spread of illumination and there's now a 'Coming Home' function that keeps the lights on for an adjustable period after you've switched off. The TFT dash has detail changes to the menus, too. A new ABS mode links the brakes rear-to-front, which Ducati say is a benefit around town and two-up. The front brake activates automatically (you feel it through the lever) when you stamp on the rear. It works, but the front comes on too aggressively if you drag the rear brake into corners, which can be unsettling. There's also front-to-rear ABS or front-only for off-road.



New LEDs for a wider spread

MCN VERDICT

MICHAEL NEEVES
CHIEF ROAD TESTER



'Classy tour de force'

It's still every inch a high-performance all-rounder, loaded with practicality and a race-derived motor. The upgrades add safety and even more friendliness, but it's largely the same to ride. It's more sure-footed, but not as sharp handling as some rivals, yet its lowering device will be a benefit to many. Its new rear cylinder deactivation is unobtrusive, and the extra fuel economy will be useful. However, the seat can get uncomfortable after a few hours, it can suffer typical 'tall-rounder' buffeting on motorways, there's a fair stretch to the bars and it's far from cheap – but it's beautifully built and still a classy tour de force.

THE FACTS

£21,495 Ducati Multistrada V4 S

Engine	1158cc liquid-cooled 16v V4
Frame	Castaluminium monocoque
Suspension	50mm USD forks. Semi-active damping and mechanically adjustable preload. Single rear shock. Semi-active damping and electronic preload.
Front brake	2x 330mm discs with Brembo Stylema four-piston radial monobloc calipers. Cornering ABS
Rear brake	280mm disc with two-piston caliper. Cornering ABS
Seat height	840mm/860mm

@10,750rpm
167
bhp

@9000rpm
92
lb.ft

232
kg (wet)

22
litres