

Royal Enfield Continental GT

Royal Enfield's Continental GT is India's first retro cool café racer. Does it have what it takes to make a dent in the Indian biking scene?

PRICE Rs 1,89,349 (ex-showroom, Pune) **ON SALE** Now

0-60KPH 4.34sec **TOP SPEED** 128kph **KPL (OVERALL)** 26.6kpl

FOR Brilliantly executed café racer styling • Overall quality a notch up on Royal Enfield siblings

AGAINST Performance could be zippier • Pillion accommodation only optional



PHOTOGRAPHY ASHLEY BAXTER & K2 SHOOTER



• 300mm Brembo disc, with steel braided hose works perfectly.



• Twin-pod analogue instruments are easily legible even on the fly.



• RE crafted mirrors give good visibility despite being small.



• Clip-on bars accommodate typical Royal Enfield switchgear.

Café racers appeared during the 60s and 70s in Britain as stripped down, road-going motorcycles that were built to mimic racing motorcycles of the day. These sporty machines were built for speed and good handling, with comfort ranked towards the tail-end of the list, as commonly accepted on racers.

And now, Indian classic bike maker, Royal Enfield, has rolled out a Café Racer, the Continental GT, shifting from its usual line-up of comfortable, easy riding cruisers. Royal Enfield produces the oldest

'Overall quality, fit-finish and build, all a notch up on other RE bikes.'

surviving production bike on the planet, the Bullet, and commands as loyal a fan following as any bike-maker can hope for. It's a bold move, with Royal Enfield taking a calculated risk, admitting it's treading unknown territory. We've just stepped off the Continental GT, completing a thorough road test of the bike on Indian roads.

DESIGN & ENGINEERING

A glance at the Continental GT tells you the new Royal Enfield is beautiful, with squat proportions and well thought out flowing lines framing the muscular naked bike. Royal Enfield has combined a lustrous flaming red shade (Continental GT to be available in yellow as well shortly) perfectly with hints of chrome. A halogen-

powered headlight works well at night, while clip-on style bars house crisp working switchgear, including a pass-light flasher, and engine-kill switch. Comfortable palm grips and nice looking buffed alloy clutch and brake levers are at hand. Royal Enfield is offering optional, well crafted bar-end mirrors, these working well despite their diminutive size.

Chrome lined twin-pod instruments sit above the headlight, comprising an analogue speedometer and tachometer, plus digital fuel-level display with odometer and trip displays. The →



● 535cc powerplant feels just about adequate for this sporty classic.



● The footpeg setup gives a sporty stance, with decent touring comfort.



● Adjustable gas-charged rear suspension is by Paioli on the GT.



● The slim, sporty single saddle shows off neat body colour stitching.

ROYAL ENFIELD CONTINENTAL GT

WHAT IT COSTS

Rs 1,89,349 (ex-showroom, Pune)

ENGINE

Layout	Single-cylinder, air-cooled, four-stroke
Displacement	535cc
Max power	29.1bhp at 5100rpm
Max torque	4.49kgm at 4000rpm
Specific output	54.4bhp per litre
Power to weight	158.2bhp per tonne
Installation	Inclined from vertical
Construction	Alloy cylinder and head
Bore/stroke	87/90mm
Valve gear	2 per cylinder, OHV
Compression ratio	8.5:1
Ignition and fuel	Electronic fuel injection

GEARBOX

Type	5-speed, 1-down 4-up
Ratios/kph per 1000rpm	
1st	3.063/9.0
2nd	2.013/13.7
3rd	1.522/18.2
4th	1.212/22.8
5th	1.000/27.6
Primary reduction	2.15
Secondary reduction	2.00

SUSPENSION

Front	Telescopic forks
Rear	Gas-charged shocks, elliptical steel swingarm

WHEELS & TYRES

Made of	Alloy rims, spokes
Wheel size (f-r)	18 inches
Tyre size (f-r)	100/90 x 18-130/70 x 18 inches

BRAKES

Front	300mm disc
Rear	240mm disc

BRAKING

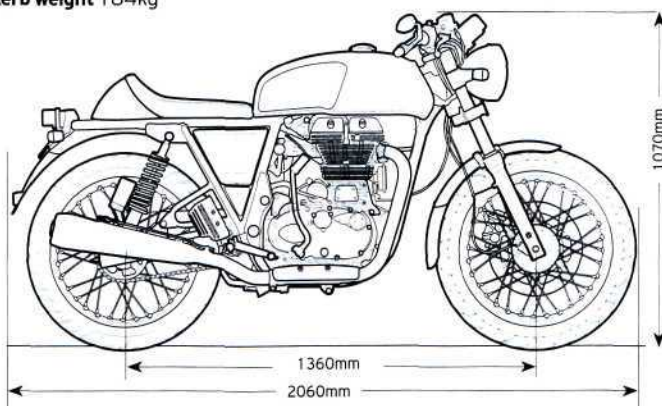
80-0kph	35.15m/3.43s
60-0kph	19.35m/2.34s

SPEEDO ERROR

Speedo kph/True kph	
20/18, 40/37, 60/56,	
80/76, 100/95, 120/112	

TECHNICAL LAYOUT

(L/W/H) 2060/760/1070mm
Wheelbase 1360mm
Ground clearance 140mm
Kerb weight 184kg



POTDAR DESIGN

1070mm

MAXIMUM SPEEDS (KPH/RPM)

5th	128/4600	4th	115/5000
3rd	92/5000	2nd	69/5000
1st	45/5000		

ACCELERATION IN GEAR

	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
30-50kph	2.11	3.17	3.92	7.15
50-70	-	2.92	3.66	4.80
70-100	-	-	6.79	8.60

ECONOMY

City	25.9kpl
Highway	27.3kpl
Overall	26.6kpl
Tank size	13.5 litres
Test range	500 kilometres

ACCELERATION FROM REST (DRY SURFACE)

KPH	TIME (sec)
0-10	0.46
0-20	1.00
0-30	1.60
0-40	2.34
0-50	3.33
0-60	4.34
0-70	5.62
0-80	7.02
0-90	8.96
0-100	11.21
0-110	14.71
0-120	20.41

4.34sec 26.6kpl

Continental GT makes for a fast bike by Royal Enfield's standards.

Overall fuel-economy is acceptable for a 535cc motorcycle.

AUTOCAR ROAD TEST

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← GT comes with an elongated fuel-tank, with the company logo standing out on either side in handsome classic font. And you get a chromed filler lid with a smartly designed flip-to-open lever on top. The GT's alloy-cased engine is finished in machined alloy, with an exposed drive chain.

The GT comes with light alloy rims, held together with spokes. And attention-to-detail is stellar, as seen in golden disc brake rotor carriers, exposed frame section bordering both side panels and a set of smart, compact mudguards.

In typical café racer style, the GT comes standard with a sporty single seat, smart body coloured stitching running its border, to end in a neat, humped tail section. A larger, pillion friendly seat is available as an optional extra, although this isn't as properly styled as expected.

Overall quality, fit-finish and build are all a notch up on other Royal Enfield bikes, however there's still some room for improvement.

ENGINE, GEARBOX & PERFORMANCE

The Continental GT houses a 535cc, four-stroke and single-cylinder engine. It's fuel-injected and air-cooled, brought to life via a button or kick-starter. The GT comes with a lightened flywheel, while Royal Enfield has taken pains to reduce friction within this engine. Maximum power output is 29.1bhp at 5,100rpm, while 4.49kgm of peak torque is made at 4,000rpm.

The GT's five-speed gearbox shifts smoothly in a one-down, four-up shift pattern, however clutch feedback isn't up to the mark, and requires a touch more precise feel at the lever. The long-stroke powerplant teamed up well with the after-market silencer fitted to our test bike, to beat out a soft,



'The GT's engine felt reliable, despite being pushed hard for long hours.'

yet crisp and soul-stirring exhaust bark. The big-single feels punchy and strong when ridden in the meat of its powerband, but runs out of steam when pushed hard up the rev-range, where vibes creep in and force a slower pace.

The GT engine revs quicker in comparison to Royal Enfield stablemates, but fuelling could be better, sometimes calling for an experienced and gentle throttle hand to nurse it through hiccups in the power delivery.

The GT feels brisk enough off the line, and is capable of holding a cruising speed of 100kph comfortably. Our acceleration tests saw the bike pass 60kph from standstill in 4.34 seconds, and 100kph in 11.21sec, which is quick for a Royal Enfield. We managed a true top speed of 128kph, throttle

pinned to the stop on level road, which felt disappointing for a motorcycle of this large capacity.

To its credit, the Continental GT's engine felt reliable despite being pushed hard for prolonged durations, and didn't show any signs of oil seepage at all.

RIDE, HANDLING & BRAKING

The Continental GT weighs 184kg, making it lighter than most Royal Enfield bikes, and comes with a twin downtube cradle type frame, perfected for this bike by Harris Engineering. The frame is supported by telescopic fork suspension and a set of Paioli technology, gas-charged shock absorbers at rear, bolted to an elliptical section steel swingarm.

The Continental GT riding position isn't typical of a Royal

Enfield bike, being sporty, perfect for this bike with a slight lean into its clip-on handlebars. The single seat is long, and allows the rider a roomy feel, but can feel a touch on the slim side, which compromises comfort to some extent when riding long distances. Ride quality feels firm, suitable for a sporty bike like this, the front suspension not providing as good feedback as reached us from the pair of rear shocks.

The Continental GT leans with ample confidence into corners, and provides Royal Enfield typical straight-line stability. Handling is predictable, if a little on the heavy side, when riding through crowded urban conditions.

The GT comes with good quality Pirelli tyres on 18-inch rims, a 100/90 section doing duty in the

front and 130/70 at the rear, and these offered us ample grip through our extensive rides. The café racer is equipped with a Brembo, 300mm disc in front, and 240mm rear disc brake, coupled with steel braided brake lines that work with good feel at their control levers, and offer ample stopping power.

When testing the brakes, we brought the Continental GT to a grinding halt from 60kph in 19.35 metres.

FUEL ECONOMY

The Continental GT returns good fuel-efficiency for a motorcycle with such a large capacity heart. The GT delivered us 25.9kpl when ridden in congested city traffic conditions, this improving to 27.3kpl when cruising on relatively open highways.

