

Product report

Clearwater Krista Dimmable LED Light Kit



review by Moshe K. Levy

MCN's MARCH 2011 Innovation of the Month showcased Clearwater's 22mm, 12-Watt Glenda dimmable LED fog light kit. Well, meet Glenda's big sister, Krista!

Krista is the mother of LED lights, measuring a whopping 95mm in diameter and capable of projecting anywhere from 4 Watts to a prodigious 72 Watts of power per pair, via its PWM rheostat controller. This is one serious light kit, suitable if you regularly ride in pitch-black conditions, and its LED bulbs are a huge benefit if your motorcycle has a limited electrical capacity.

Like the Glendas, the American-made Kristas are quality parts, machined from aluminum billet, hard-anodized and powder coated black. Each Krista contains three high-power LEDs that are visible behind the rugged, user-replaceable, clear acrylic lens (amber lenses and protective lens covers are available at extra cost). The included wiring harness features silver-plated wire with Teflon insulation and a weatherproof backlit rocker switch for on/off operation. And, unlike the cheap Chinese-made LED kits prevalent on eBay, the Clearwaters utilize expensive metal-cored circuit boards, substantial heat-sinking elements and thermal feedback circuits in the electronic controls designed to achieve 50,000 hours of life.

The included wiring harness can control one pair or two pairs of Kristas, or a Krista/Glenda combo as shown here (the Glendas are mounted directly under the RT's oil cooler). In addition, optional wiring is included so that owners can tap directly into the



motorcycle's high beam circuit (allowing high-power operation when high beam is activated or flashed,) or alternatively tap into the horn power line, which would flash the lights when the horn is activated.

Installation could not be any easier, because the Krista kit is truly model-specific. The wiring harness, included BMW under-mirror mounts, and all instructions (with color pictorials) provided are for the actual motorcycle for which the kit was ordered, in this case our 2009 BMW R1200RT test mule. There is literally no guesswork here. Everything installs exactly as depicted, held in place with the included beefy stainless steel hardware.

After testing them, we're sure that the Kristas are likely to be favored by off-roaders or those who ride in isolated rural areas at night. Even at the lowest setting of 4 watts per pair as shown here, the Kristas are nearly too bright to aim at oncoming traffic in dark conditions. At full power, a pair of Kristas consumes only 72 Watts, yet blasts out the halogen equivalent of 360 Watts, an absolutely brilliant beam of light. In pitch-black conditions, as we tested them, everything in the rider's forward field of vision is bathed in a broad pattern of cool white 6300K light, and road signs reflect back strongly from well over a half mile away.

At \$719 for our RT application, they're not cheap, but, short of harnessing the sun itself, accessory lighting doesn't get much brighter than the Clearwater Kristas. Wholly recommended!

Clearwater Krista Kit p/n "K5" for BMW R1200RT, \$719—Clearwater Company; 2546 Mercantile Dr, Unit B; Rancho Cordova, CA 95742; 916-852-7029; email: sales@clearwaterlights.com