

Touratech High End Comfort Seat for '05-'13 BMW R1200RT

By Moshe K. Levy #108259

TOURATECH'S LINE OF "HIGH END Comfort" seats for the Hexhead/Camhead BMW R1200RT offers riders an easy way to achieve an off-the-shelf seat height modification, available in both lower or higher than the stock standard saddle. Standard height is also available at a slightly lower cost. Since most RT riders we spoke to opted for the low version, that's what we tested here.

These seats are designed and manufactured by Kahedo in the Black Forest region of Bisingen, Germany. The pan is completely stock, so it fits exactly as does an OEM RT seat. Likewise, the stock wiring plug for the heating elements is utilized, ensuring a 30-second plug-and-play swap from the stock seat to this model.

The seating area of the saddle consists of a very grippy bi-elastic, tear-resistant material, with lightly textured plain vinyl at the nose and flank sections, both stapled to the underside of the seat pan. Beneath this outer layer, a proprietary dual-density foam is used to hand-build the seat into a "bucket" type shape, as opposed to the flat bench surface of the stock model. Sealed seams are true and intelligently located in areas which don't support any serious weight, reducing the chances for long distance hot spots. Overall fit and finish are excellent.

This low-version Touratech seat results in a lower seat height of 30.5 inches vs. the stock seat's 32.5 inches (measurements taken on a stock 2009 ESA R1200RT with suspension and seat completely unladen.) However, it's approximately one inch wider than stock as well, so the overall flatfooting effect is roughly the same as with the stock seat, at least for my 5'8"/30"-inseam frame.

Obviously, seat comfort is a very subjective issue, but BMW fans are overflowing with complaints about the substandard stock RT seats, which have a very soft foam and often feel like sitting on a bare wooden plank within two hours. By contrast, the first thing one notices about the Touratech seat is its unyielding firmness. Although initially rigid, our Touratech tester "broke in" as the miles wore on, and the foam seemingly contoured itself to my specific proportions. The end result was quite comfortable on long distance trips, without any of the sore points, hot spots or general discomfort associated with the stock seat – a marked improvement! Further, the heating elements



The Touratech seat cuts a much sleeker profile than stock, shown in the background.



Touratech seat installed on R1200RT test mule.

worked at least as well as stock. In addition, the seat material wears like iron – there is no doubt that this seat will last the life of the motorcycle.

Our only complaint about the Touratech seat is its price, which for the low, heated version we tested is a whopping \$711.10 plus shipping. Putting that into perspective, a custom-built RT seat from Bill Mayer Saddles (as reviewed in ON March 2014) costs a mere \$444 in vinyl. The cost impact is even more dramatic if the pillion is swapped out along with the rider's seat. Touratech's matching pillion is \$682.90, bringing the grand total to \$1,394.00 plus shipping. A custom Mayer driver/pillion combo in vinyl, by contrast, is \$559 plus shipping. Even in full leather, a full Mayer setup is half the price of the Touratech, and so are many other reputable aftermarket saddles.

Essentially, the Touratech seat is definitely a massive functional improvement over stock and is built with substantially better quality, but in this case the off-the-rack suit costs considerably more than a proven custom-tailored one.

Touratech High End Comfort Seat (Low & Heated Version P/N 047-0321) for BMW R1200RT 2005-2013

MSRP \$711.10

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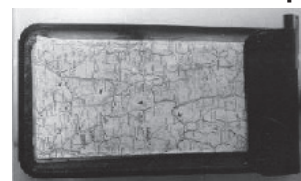
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