

use for graphics, you can use a little polish and rub gently by hand to clean up marks before waxing.

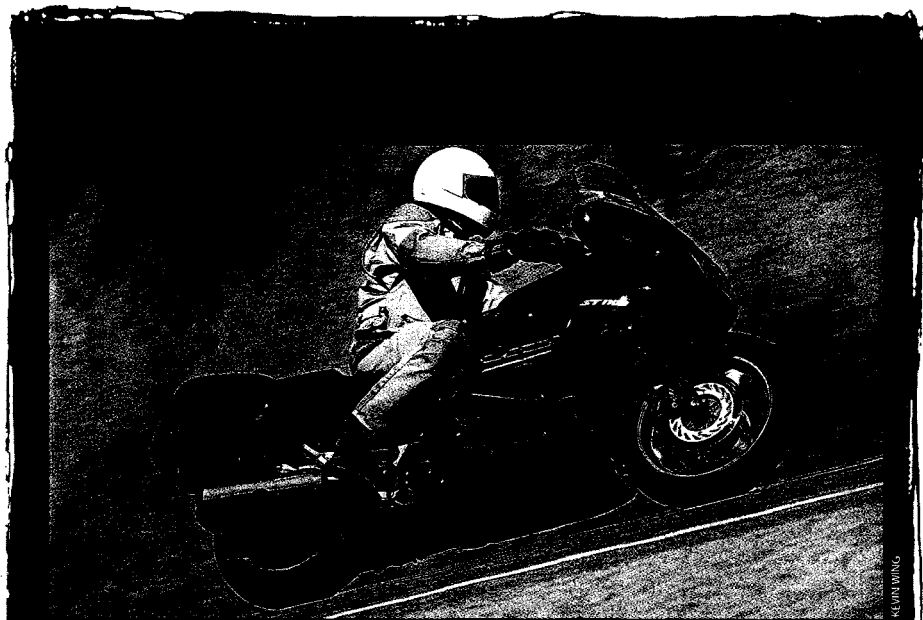
Wax your bike to protect the finish. For wax, riders can use just about anything that's available in stores. Some are better than others so spend a little more and stick with the name brands. Don't use the cleaning waxes because you've already used polish on the paint. The bike needs to be completely dry before you start waxing, and compressed air is the quickest way we know to get everything dry. Next, apply a layer of wax to the entire bike. Once the bike is waxed, take it off using cloths and brushes to remove the wax dust. You can even wax parts that get hot such as engine components. We've heard of people using WD-40 to shine up engines, but we'd never put anything on an engine that could attract and hold dirt the way a lubricant can. We wax engines by hand, using swabs and brushes to apply the wax to the tight spaces.

Pay special attention to chrome and aluminum parts. When we're cleaning chrome parts, we use the finest steel wool we can find and rub wax into it. Then we rub the steel wool over the chrome parts so that we're cleaning the part at the same time we're applying the wax. You have to use extremely fine steel wool or you will scratch the chrome. Once the wax has dried, we wipe off the excess wax to get the shine. People who own bikes with polished aluminum need to keep up their detailing maintenance. The longest I'd wait between polishes is a month. People who live close to the ocean can't even wait that long. After the aluminum starts corroding or pitting, you can't do much other than take the part off the bike and get it polished at a machine shop. The trick with aluminum is to make sure you dry it after it gets wet. Don't let the water sit there on the parts or they'll start corroding. If you ride your bike in the rain, blow it off with compressed air when you get home.

Don't forget the soft parts. We treat any leather or vinyl parts with a high-quality leather conditioner. Regular treatment will keep the leather and vinyl from fading. However, some people don't like the slippery feel of a seat right after treatment. If a customer asks us to put on tire brightener, we will. We don't recommend it, but if you have to have it, make sure that only the sidewall gets treated. The stuff's slippery.

Make detailing a routine part of your maintenance. Depending on how much a rider uses his bike, we recommend doing a complete detail about three or four times a year for daily riders. People with a short riding season or those who don't ride often could probably get away with once a year. In between detailings, regular washing and waxing will keep the bike looking new. But you need to remember that when your bike gets wet from washing or riding in the rain, you don't want to let the water sit on it. Dry your bike if you can. You can't wash your bike too often—as long as you remember to dry everything when you're done.

—Andy Torres



Honda ST1100, 1991–2001

CHEER: Large, comfortable, extremely long-range sport-touring platform that's utterly reliable

JEER: Weight approaching full-dress tourers, parts are costly, smallish luggage capacity

MAINTENANCE WATCH: 1991–1993 bank-angle sensors, alternator stators, use of motorcycle coolant only, cam belts

VERDICT: A "typical Honda": nearly so perfect you take it for granted

PRICE: Standard \$5740 ('91), \$6140 ('92), \$6565 ('93), \$6995 ('94), \$7525 ('95), \$8250 ('96), \$8910 ('97), \$9505 ('98), \$9965 ('99), \$10,760 ('00), \$11,200 ('01)

ABS \$5740 ('92), \$7325 ('92), \$7720 ('93), \$8185 ('94), \$8710 ('95), \$9570 ('96), \$10,230 ('97), \$10,955 ('98), \$11,420 ('99), \$12,340 ('00), \$12,930 ('01)

HONDA'S ST1100 WAS THE FIRST REAL COMPETITOR to join the BMW sport-touring hegemony. Its longitudinally mounted 90-degree liquid-cooled V-four put out approximately 90 horsepower and more than 70 foot-pounds of torque at carlike revs, and provided a serene, nearly vibration-free ride at any speed. Lighter than a full-boat touring rig, it still weighs in at more than 700 pounds wet. With 7.4 gallons of fuel aboard, it can provide approximately 300 miles of cruising range.

There have been many upgrades over the years, including the addition of ABS in 1992, traction control (TCS) in '94 and an upsized fork (from 41mm to 43mm) in '94, also. In '96 the ST got ABS-II, linked brakes, a larger windshield and radial tires.

The bike has several rider's clubs devoted to it, and the aftermarket supports it strongly as a result of its combination of comfort, handling and durability. High mileages are common but STs are usually well-maintained by people who use them, so look for a complete service history as well as obvious crash damage. While there have been changes to the braking system, notably the addition of linked brakes on the '96-on ABS models, you can't really go wrong with any particular year or model.

There was a "bank-angle sensor" Honda installed in earlier years that proved problematic. It was designed to shut off the fuel if the

motorcycle exceeded a normal lean angle, as a safety precaution, these sometimes intermittently cut in while riding and chop the power; check to make sure yours has been replaced under the factory recall. Due to the weight of the bike, normal wear items need to be routinely checked and replaced: wheel bearings, steering-head bearings, brake pads and shocks. Replace the camshaft drive belts at 60,000 miles, and it's a good idea to change the main coolant hoses at the same time. Make sure that at each rear-tire change the drive splines and the thrust washer are greased.

Most riders who use the bike on straight highways find the suspension works fine. Others who tour twisty back roads install Progressive or Works Performance fork springs and higher-viscosity fork oil, along with replacement rear shocks at approximately the 30,000-mile mark. Other items most often desired by the long-distance crowd include the multiadjustable Heli handlebar set, custom seats, taller windshields, luggage racks for camping gear and to supplement the smallish factory luggage and halogen driving light sets.

Modified to taste or left bone stock, a well-maintained ST can take you effortlessly from horizon to horizon with no more drama than jumping into an Accord, and that skill elevated what we expect from a sport-tourer.

—David Tong