



# EDGE

SPRING 2018

A LOOK AT THE  
AFRICA TWIN BUYER

AFRICA TWIN AND AFRICA  
TWIN ADVENTURE SPORTS

WHAT'S **NEW** FOR **2018?**

THE COMPETITIVE  
LANDSCAPE



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Africa Twin history





## ***AFRICA TWIN AND AFRICA TWIN ADVENTURE SPORTS***

### ***THREE DECADES OF DOMINANCE***

Ever since the first Africa Twin debuted 30 years ago, it's been a mainstay of the adventure bike segment, allowing riders to conquer terrains as varied as their personalities. Along the way, its name has become synonymous with all-surface performance, and for good reason. It perfectly balances road going and off-roading capability, with sufficient power and comfort to appease riders who prefer roads less travelled, and just enough of a rugged edge to suit adrenaline junkies whose adventures don't end where the pavement does.

To mark the occasion of the Africa Twin name, a new Africa Twin Adventure Sports trim expands Honda's full-scale adventure motorcycle stable. In line with its "True Adventure" spirit, this new trim offers riders an even more rugged off-road option, thanks to its increased suspension travel, additional ground clearance, enhanced creature comforts and a larger fuel tank for extended range. More fully featured than its Africa Twin counterpart, and sporting a unique tri-colour paint job, the Adventure Sports is a perfect complement to the legendary nameplate. Not to be outdone, the Africa Twin receives a host of enhancements and updates that help make it at once more capable and even more compelling.

*"It has its own personality, doesn't pretend to do stuff it shouldn't, is essentially a big CRF250F and is a handsome, purposeful beast."*

— Bennetts BikeSocial

*"I expect this newest effort to propel Honda into new vistas, both within the market and off the beaten track."*

— TopSpeed Motorcycles



# AFRICA TWIN AND AFRICA TWIN ADVENTURE SPORTS

## KEY SPECIFICATIONS

		2018 Africa Twin	2018 Africa Twin Adventure Sports
Engine	Type, displacement	998-cc liquid-cooled 4-stroke 8-valve parallel-twin fuel-injected engine with 270° crank and Unicam®	
	Bore and stroke	92.0 x 75.1 mm	
	Compression ratio	10.0:1	
	Induction	PGM-FI electronic fuel injection: Throttle-By-Wire (TBW)	
	Ignition	Full transistorized ignition	
	Starter	Electric	
	Fuel tank capacity	18.8 litres	24.2 litres
Transmission	Type	Constant-mesh 6-speed manual transmission (MT) or 6-speed Dual-Clutch Transmission (DCT) with manual shift mode and four automatic shift modes; on- and off-road settings	
	Clutch	Single multiplate wet with coil springs, aluminum centre, and slipper cams (MT); Dual multiplate wet (DCT)	
	Final drive	O-ring sealed chain	
Frame	Type	Steel semi-double-cradle type with high-tensile-strength steel rear subframe	
Suspension	Front	Inverted telescopic fork with full adjustability; 204-mm (8.0-in) travel	Inverted telescopic fork with full adjustability; 226-mm (8.9-in) travel
	Rear	Pro-Link single shock with full adjustability; 220-mm (8.7-in) travel	Pro-Link single shock with full adjustability; 240-mm (9.4-in) travel
Dimensions	Wheelbase	1,575 mm	1,580 mm
	Length	2,334 mm	2,340 mm
	Width	930 mm	930 mm
	Height	1,475 mm	1,570 mm
	Seat height	870 mm (normal ride height); 850 mm (low ride height)	920 mm (normal ride height); 900 mm (low ride height)
	Ground clearance	249 mm	270 mm
	Turning radius	2.6 m	2.6 m
	Curb weight	230 kg (MT); 240 kg (DCT)	242 kg (MT); 252 kg (DCT)
Brakes	ABS system type	2-channel with rear ABS off switch	
	Front brakes	310-mm dual-wave floating hydraulic disc with aluminum hub and radial-fit 4-piston calipers and sintered metal pads	
	Rear brakes	256-mm wave hydraulic disc with 1-piston caliper and sintered metal pads, plus lever lock-type parking brake system with slide-type 1-piston caliper (DCT only)	
Wheels/Tires	Front wheels	Wire spoke with aluminum rim	
	Rear wheels	Wire spoke with aluminum rim	
	Front rim size	21M/C x MT2.15	
	Rear rim size	18M/C x MT4.00	
	Front tires	90/90-21 tube-type	
	Rear tires	150/70-R18 tube-type	
Instruments and Electronics	Instrumentation type	Rally-style negative LCD instrument display including riding modes, speedometer, tachometer, fuel, gear position, ABS, HSTC, odometer, trip, and clock	
	Headlights	Dual LED (1 high, 1 low)	
	Taillights	LED	



## WHAT'S NEW FOR 2018?

### FEATURE SPOTLIGHT

Both Africa Twin models share the same basic underpinnings, boasting user-friendly performance and size with a lightweight steel platform. Together, these traits have earned it a loyal following among adventure riders the world over.

For 2018, they both benefit from a range of innovations that are sure to impress owners as much as they will enhance the riding experience. The table below outlines the key shared new features and their corresponding customer benefits.

### SHARED NEW FEATURES: AFRICA TWIN AND AFRICA TWIN ADVENTURE SPORTS

Feature	Customer Benefits
Throttle-By-Wire (TBW)	Sophisticated electronics can be installed on the motorcycle
2 kg lighter	Lighter weight makes the Africa Twin nimble on the trail, and less fatiguing
Wider foot pegs	Makes riding while standing on the pegs easier and more comfortable
Stainless steel spokes	Resist corrosion while improving the finish
Bigger air box funnel	Allows the engine to breathe easier, improving performance
Lithium-ion battery	Decreases weight without compromising cranking power
3 new preset rider modes	Customize the ride based on road and weather conditions for added comfort and safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TOUR</b> – low power, medium engine braking, and high traction control</li> <li>• <b>URBAN</b> – mid-level power and engine braking and high traction control</li> <li>• <b>GRAVEL</b> – maximum power and engine braking and high traction control</li> </ul>
Honda Selectable Torque Control (HSTC) with 7 levels instead of 3	More traction-control-intervention choices mean there's a setting for almost any condition
Automatic turn-signal cancellation	Convenient, seamless, and intuitive turn-signal cancellation
Assist slipper clutch	Keeps the rear wheel from locking up during aggressive downshifting, increasing traction and grip





## WHAT'S NEW FOR 2018?

### FEATURE SPOTLIGHT

Due to its extra-long-range, off-road nature, the Africa Twin Adventure Sports features a less minimalist design, with amenities that enhance rider comfort during longer rides.

And, for improved ergonomics during extended off-road rides, its seat has a flatter profile and a higher height, and the handlebars sit higher and farther back to provide a more upright seating position. The table below outlines the key features exclusive to the Adventure Sports model and their corresponding customer benefits.

### EXCLUSIVE FEATURES: AFRICA TWIN ADVENTURE SPORTS

Feature	Customer Benefits
<b>30th Anniversary paint scheme</b>	Pays homage to the legendary XRV650 and shows the Africa Twin's pedigree
<b>24.2-litre tank</b>	An additional 5.4 litres over the Africa Twin gives the Adventure Sports a 500-km range
<b>20-mm increase in ground clearance and suspension travel</b>	Additional ground clearance allows the Adventure Sports to go more places and over taller obstacles, while more suspension travel means the suspension soaks up big bumps more easily and without drama
<b>Heated grips</b>	Can significantly extend the riding season, keeping the rider comfortable later or earlier than usual
<b>More rider protection</b>	Larger fairing and an 80-mm taller windscreen offer better protection against the elements, keeping the rider dry and comfortable
<b>Larger skid plate and fairing protection bars</b>	Help protect the Africa Twin from damage on the trail or road
<b>AC charging socket</b>	Integrated 12-volt socket keeps devices charged and ready to go





## BUYER DEMOGRAPHICS

### IN THE COMPANY OF FEW

While many people like to label themselves thrill seekers, true adventure riders are hard to come by. Like many sought-after yet elusive creatures, locating true adventure riders is a tall order. After all, only a special and rare breed of biker is daring enough to venture out into the most remote wilderness or tucked-away trail. And besides, those same riders are bound to be exploring some remote desert, jungle or mountain range, so they might not be seen or heard from for months at a stretch.

Of course, despite greater aspirations of daring exploits, most riders never venture far from the safety of civilization. As a result, most large-displacement adventure bikes will spend the vast majority of their operating life on paved roads, occasionally dabbling in an off-road excursion but rarely straying far from the beaten path. Most of these adventure bikes are therefore designed with long-distance riding in mind, their overall composure and creature comforts aimed at appealing to the masses.

### MEETING THE NEED

Due to the extreme nature of their travels, true adventure riders require a bike that's ruggedly capable yet eminently comfortable. Their ride must be able to traverse a stream one minute and confidently conquer a mountainside trail the next, meaning they have loftier requirements than your average rider — and their environment demands it. All the while, their motorcycle must be flexible enough to carry any additional gear needed for their big adventure. Both Africa Twin models — and the Adventure Sports in particular — can help these riders explore farther and conquer the toughest terrain.

For the everyday adventurer, either Africa Twin model is a perfect companion, with all-day riding comfort and off-road prowess offering adventure-ready performance. Their approachable size and intuitive controls mean even those riders who have relatively little off-roading experience can quickly get comfortable.



### WHO THEY ARE

Regardless of which category your prospective Africa Twin buyer fits into, chances are they meet the following criteria:

- Primarily experienced, returning riders (few novices)
- Reformed sport bike riders looking for improved comfort
- Reformed cruiser riders looking for more performance and comfort

### HOW THEY USE THEIR BIKE

Adventure-bike buyers generally use their ride in the following ways:

- Mostly overnight trips and weekend getaways (few daily commutes)
- Primarily highway touring, with some gravel road excursions (limited off-roading)



## TOP 5 “WHY BUYS”

	Africa Twin	Africa Twin Adventure Sports
<b>1. Style</b>	The protective fairing is both minimal and effective due to much time spent wind-tunnel testing, something experienced adventure riders will appreciate.	Its large fairing, tall windscreen, and tri-colour livery that pays homage to the original Africa Twin provide a unique look that's both appropriately retro and distinctly modern.
<b>2. Engine</b>	998-cc parallel-twin design with optional DCT and HSTC is ideal for putting the perfect amount of power to the ground.	With impressive midrange response and sound quality, the parallel-twin engine with Unicam valvetrain gets riders moving with ease.
<b>3. Chassis</b>	Tall, slim and robust, with a fully adjustable suspension, just like a proper off-road chassis, only on an adventure bike!	Easily overcome tough off-road obstacles and obstructions, thanks to a high ground clearance and extra-travel suspension.
<b>4. Ergonomics</b>	Designed to be ridden standing on the pegs and sitting on the seat. Its slim profile and wide handlebars make riding off-road easier.	A comfortable, upright seating position and tall seat height make for all-day riding comfort — regardless of where the adventure leads.
<b>5. Accessories</b>	With off-road tires, engine guards, and accessory LED lighting, the Africa Twin is unmatched in the dirt in the large adventure bike segment.	A wide range of customization options allows riders to be prepared for even the most extreme off-road expeditions.
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>Possibly the best balance of on-road comfort and off-road performance in the large adventure bike market today.</b>	<b>Designed with the true adventure bike customer in mind, providing an immensely capable and truly long-range off-road ride.</b>

## THE COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

### 2018 Triumph Tiger 800



Touted as being one of the brand's best-loved bikes, the new Tiger 800 features about 200 upgrades, including additional on- and off-road capability, improved ergonomics, and new riding modes. Now the most technologically sophisticated Tiger ever, the new 800 also features an improved Triple engine character for more oomph, more immediate power delivery, and a better exhaust note. Updated lighting and instruments and revised bodywork and badging round out the major updates.

### 2018 KTM 1090 Adventure R



Sporting a trick WP suspension and a 125-hp engine, the Adventure R was new last year and is a lighter, nimbler, and more approachable version of its more powerful 1290 Super Adventure sibling. Aiming for the sweet spot of the adventure bike market, it has the appropriate balance of price, performance, and on- and off-road capability. Four riding modes allow owners to find the sweet spot, and the engine's free-revving nature means riders of varying experience can dial in just the right amount of power.

### 2018 BMW F 850 GS



A smaller cousin to the hot-selling R 1200 GS, the F 850 GS replaces the 800 GS in BMW's large-displacement bike lineup. It's a lightweight, nimble machine sporting a parallel-twin engine design with virtually identical output to the Africa Twin. Available in a comparable tri-colour paint job as the Adventure Sports, the 850 GS similarly uses a new throttle-by-wire for improved responsiveness, while a new light-action anti-hop clutch makes gearchanges more seamless.



## DID YOU KNOW?

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Each month, we'll highlight a specific topic or range of topics that warrant special attention. **THIS MONTH'S FOCUS:**



### THE PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

Conceived by a Frenchman and originally held in 1979, the Paris-Dakar Rally traversed nearly 10,000 miles of arid African deserts over three weeks and quickly earned the distinction of the world's toughest motor race. Due to its extreme nature, many riders failed to finish the race, and some never made it home. The fast-paced action and stunning visuals helped the rally enjoy soaring popularity in the late 1980s, with television viewership rivalling that of other motorsports events, such as the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race. The race is now staged in South America and has since been renamed the Dakar Rally, but its legacy endures.



### THE AFRICA TWIN LEGEND

Honda has a long history of dual-purpose motorcycles created for "True Adventure." During the brand's motorcycle rally-racing heyday in the 1980s, Honda clinched four successive wins in the Paris-Dakar Rally. To commemorate this achievement, and in tribute to the riders who risked life and limb through the gruelling race, the original roadgoing XRV650 Africa Twin debuted in 1989. This set the stage for adventure bikes to follow, and set in motion a movement that continues to this day.

The XRV650's XRV750 Africa Twin successor arrived in late 1989 and remained in production all the way until 2003. It has since become a collector's item, with good-running examples commanding premium prices at auctions worldwide.



### HONDA'S DNA: INEXTRICABLY LINKED WITH RALLY RACING

Following a nearly quarter-century absence, Honda returned to the Dakar Rally in 2013. While the team didn't repeat its past victories, all the bikes finished the race, and they've enjoyed similar successes in the years since. And, Honda Racing Corporation continues to compete in worldwide rally-racing efforts to this day, including Dakar.

In 2016, a pair of Africa Twins were commissioned in support of a program that retraced part of the original Paris-Dakar rally through Morocco and aired on the National Geographic channel.