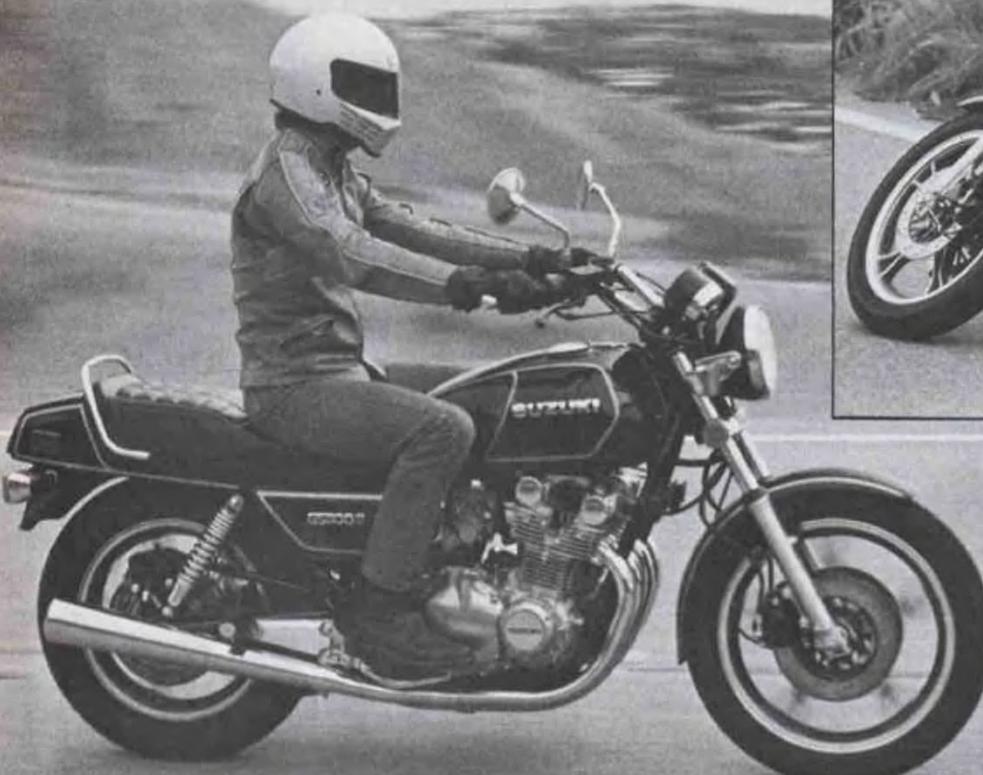


MINITEST:



Suzuki GS1100G

*Still curling the toes
of all kinds of riding boots.*

Suzuki's GS1100G can make its home anywhere from the flat stretches of a freeway to the twisty turns of a canyon road

It's as much a sportbike for tourers as it is a touring machine for street racers.

- Suzuki didn't invent sliced bread; but it did provide the GS1000G, a literbike that proved once and for all that a shaft-drive motorcycle could take on roads normally reserved for sportbikes.

Reactionary sport riders' toes curled in their scuffed Lewis Boots—a 550-pound shaftie carving an apex as well as their clip-on/rearset/fairing-festooned roadsters? Ha, they scoffed, and charged into the next series of eses. With the GS1000G looking right up their tailpipes.

Tourers only shrugged. The liter-G was steady and comfortable for chugging long distances, reason enough for them to like it. They left the sport-touring controversy created by the G-model behind. They were far too busy horizon-hunting to be concerned.

The liter-G passed on in 1982, but not into obscurity. The model is now the GS1100G. The current engine is bigger, having been stretched out to 1074cc—the same dimensions as the GS1100E. But there the comparison begins to get a little fuzzy. While the bore and stroke of the two 1100s are the same, the E-model has 16 valves to the G-model's eight. The 1100G's engine is largely unchanged from the liter-G's, but with heavier connecting rods to better support the 1100's larger pistons. And to help the G sip lower-octane unleaded fuel, the compression ratio was lowered to a milder 8.8:1.

The big news from the larger G isn't connecting rods or compression, though; it's power. Suzuki claims an increase of five horse-

power for the new GS1100 shaftie. It's hard to sense that increase, though, since any indication of more power is going straight to the road, not to the rider. The G's dual-density seat not only is one of the best places to sit out a ride, it stops engine vibrations dead. And the chromed vibration-dampers at the ends of the handgrips further reduce any hot-rod vibes.

But a show of force has never been in character for the G. It still isn't. Instead, the smooth-running four pulls strong from idle right up to the 8500-rpm redline—the kind of power that both touring and sport riders never complain about. Neither group will complain about the mileage returned, either. Our maroon shaftie (also available in black) averaged from 42.5 to 48.3 mpg.

The GS1100G's handling—for both tour and sport—is cast in the GS1000G mold as well. The chassis is unchanged, and with the rear shocks' adjustable spring preload and rebound damping adjustments clicked to their No. 2 settings, there's a soft, cushy ride available for the freeway. But just a few clicks stiffer on the adjustments turns the mild-mannered GS1100G sport-tourer into a genuine peg-scaper. Racer Road becomes just another thoroughfare for the GS1100G. A good part of the bike's sport capability can be attributed to its near-neutral steering. When you point the G to an apex, it eagerly dives for the inside of the turn, never feeling like the 555-pound motorcycle that it is.

The unmemorable body lines of the 1000G

have given way to a more distinctive styling, but the 1100G still doesn't turn heads with its chrome and paint. Instead, it quietly makes its statement through performance and handling. And when you have a bike that will charge into the horizon with the same authority it displays in straightening out a tangled stretch of road, that statement is forceful indeed.

—Dain Gingerelli

SUZUKI GS1100G

Importer: U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

Category	street
Suggested retail price	\$3999
Engine type	four-stroke transverse vertical four
Valve arrangement	double overhead camshafts
Bore and stroke	72.0mm x 66.0mm
Displacement	1074.9cc
Compression ratio	8.8:1
Carburetion	four 34mm Mikuni constant-vacuum
Gearbox	5-speed
Front fork/wheel travel	Showa air-sprung, 37mm stanchion tube diameter/ 5.9 in. (150mm)
Rear shocks/wheel travel	dual Kayaba shocks, 5-way adjustable spring preload, 4-way adjustable rebound damping/4.8 in. (122mm)
Wheelbase	58.8 in. (1493mm)
Seat height	30.8 in. (782mm)
Weight	555 lbs. (252kg)
Best 1/4-mile acceleration	11.919 sec., 114.21 mph (184 kph)
Top speed (calculated)	137 mph (220 kph)
Stopping distance from 60 mph	138 ft. (42m)
Fuel consumption	42 to 48 mpg (18 to 20 km/l)
Warranty	12 months unlimited mileage
Available colors	black or maroon