

THE MCN SHOWCASE

ARMOURED RIDING JEANS

There've never been as many denim options but which are the best for you?

- Fit and comfort rated
- Design, construction and CE scores rated
- Each pair worn for hundreds of miles

2300 miles ON TEST

Stretchy denim adds comfort on the road



Distressed look adds to the under-the-radar ethos



Richa Original 2 £199.99

'Loving the lived-in look'



Tested by Justin Hayzelden for one year

With regular high street looks and a good level of protection, these Richa Original 2 jeans are a great example of what a practical riding jean should be. If I'm going casual, be it to the office, a social gathering or relaxed rideout with mates, I want something comfortable that won't stand out as motorcycle kit, and these absolutely fit the bill.

Construction is a single-layer cotton and Cordura mix, with a dash of Elastane for stretch, and the result is a soft and pliable material with plenty of give. Tailored with a slim cut, the Original 2 fit perfectly in my usual size and feel just as comfortable as a pair of Levi's for general strutting about in. On the bike there's no restriction in movement at all, and unlike some jeans they don't bunch up behind the knee if you're riding something sporty – that's a pet hate of mine.

Abrasion resistance is achieved by Cordura, a nylon-based aramid fibre woven into the cotton denim, which earns them CE AA certification. Hip and knee armour is D30 Ghost Level 1, which is only 6.5mm thick and highly flexible. As a non-Newtonian fluid it remains soft in general use, but hardens upon impact, making it a suitable choice for that 'under the radar' look.

The tough construction and stretchiness make the Original 2 just as practical as any bike gear. Despite being a slim cut, they fit over most boots, including my sturdy winter Daytona Roadstars, but I tend to wear them more with urban style armoured sneakers. They don't have any kind of waterproofing, as I found when caught out in a summer shower – not that I was expecting any.

In terms of looks, they suit my taste right down to the ground. The faded, aged appearance reflects my own, and I find there's a certain kudos to well used denim, harking

back to its origins as workwear. Even when brand new they looked like I'd had them for five years, and other than the slight hint of armour at the knee and hip you'd be hard pushed to tell them from regular jeans.

Build quality is exceptionally good, and after a year's use involving sweaty summer rides and multiple washes, everything is as intact as it should be. The only issue I had was that one of the pocket rivets came loose. Luckily, a small bag of spare parts is provided.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
nevis.uk.com

PROS & CONS

- + Comfortable, well cut, look good, lightweight armour
- 'Only' CE AA certified rather than the full-on AAA some offer

Approved to the CE AA standard and they are holding up well



D30 Ghost armour is flexible and reassuring