



5500 miles ON TEST

Alpinestars Andes V3 Drystar £269.99

'A jacket for all occasions'

Tested by Carl Stevens for three years
When it comes to textiles, I want gear that covers everything from sunny off-roading to winter jaunts in torrential rain, and the Andes V3 Drystar jacket has been mightily impressive in all environments and conditions.

For sunny jaunts, the Andes handles heat nicely thanks to well-placed vents which do a surprising job of directing air around the chest and under the armpits, working well with the 3D mesh inners to make sure things don't get uncomfortable on sweatier, longer journeys.

And yet, with the long sleeve thermal liner fitted I've used this jacket through sub-zero temperatures and although it's not the thickest, toastiest textile money can buy, it can handle colder temperatures.

It fits snugly with a good length at the front and back and enough space to fit thicker thermals and armour underneath, although if you're on the short side (I'm 5ft 7in) the arms do come up a tiny bit long, but this is not too much of an issue thanks to Velcro adjusters.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.alpinestars.com

Decent vents and stacks of adjustment

Rear pocket is a welcome touch



Halvarssons Gruven jacket and Laggan trousers £1029.99

'Great performer'

Tested by Justin Hayzelden for three months
The outer shell has plenty of stretch, allowing for a full range of movement both on and off the bike, and the fixed Outlast lining is extremely effective at maintaining a comfortable temperature. The jacket also gets a lightweight detachable thermal liner. CE certification is AA, with Level 2 armour.

Waterproofing has proved faultless so far, thanks to a water repellent treatment on the outside and laminated Dryway membrane on the inside. The storm collar is a disappointment though, as it only attaches with magnets and is prone to flying off.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.bikerheadz.co.uk

1900 miles ON TEST



Warm and dry in all weathers

3250 miles ON TEST

Richa Cyclone 2 jacket/pants £529.99/£429.99

'Delivering Cyclone-level protection'

Tested by Richard Newland for five months
This AA-rated suit blends a decent level of safety protection with an encyclopaedic range of features, great weather protection, attractively understated styling and a five-year warranty. Sizing ranges from S to 6XL on the jacket, and S to 12XL on the pants, while stretch panels and adjustment ensure a snug fit. Constructed using ripstop textiles, the layer most will focus on is the Gore-Tex Z-liner membrane, which keeps the rain out when the heavens open. It works, too. I've so far remained completely dry inside its cocoon, despite regular persistent downpours. It's not a laminate though, so doesn't repel rain in the same way the firm's Arc suit does. Armour is D30 all round (shoulders, elbows, knees, back, hips), but only Level 1, while it can all be upgraded to Level 2 Ghost/Viper protectors. There's a proliferation of vents and pockets, and it comes with a thermal liner for both jacket and pants. The thermals do well down to single figures, but don't have enough power for sustained warmth at those temperatures.

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



Richa Atlantic 2 Gore-Tex £1439.98

'Waterproof but the cold creeps in'

Tested by Dan Sutherland for six months
I've been using Richa's AA-rated Atlantic 2 jacket (£849.99) and trousers (£589.99) since the onset of autumn 2023. Although undeniably expensive, I am happy to say that they are some of the comfiest I have worn, with Level 1 D30 armour in the shoulders, arms, back, hips, and knees, plus plenty of adjustment points to get things just right.

It's one of the few sets of textile kit I've used that remains waterproof during serious downpours. That said, on very cold rides below five degrees, I have been wearing a rain jacket over the top to keep some of the wind chill away, as the top half doesn't keep me warm enough.

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

7000 miles ON TEST



Rukka Explore-R £2345

'Expensive but impressive'

Tested by Gareth Evans for 10 months
I've already reviewed these textiles but thought given the recent poor weather I'd revisit them to note how they fared in more severe conditions. I've ridden in torrential rain and temperatures hovering around zero, and they've taken it all in their stride. With the zip around the waist, the cuffs secured with Velcro and the snug-fitting collar seal in place, there's hardly any cold air allowed into the suit with the vents shut. There's barely any need for an extra jumper – I was simply warm enough. All the zips are so solid and easy to use, too.

Incredibly expensive, yet also highly effective.

Quality ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★
www.bikerheadz.co.uk

4000 miles ON TEST