

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT



1400 miles ON TEST



Stepped sole provides grip on and off the bike



Alpinestars Toucan Gore-Tex-Boots £399.99

'Ready for adventures'

Ready for adventure (or the commute)



Tested by Michael Guy for six months

With such a wide variety of boots on the market, finding the right pair to match your needs and type of riding isn't easy. As I currently spend most my time onboard adventure bikes I end up doing plenty of miles on the road, but I also love to venture away from the tarmac whenever the opportunities arise.

Having used stacks of dedicated enduro boots over the years, along with a range of adventure boots, my current footwear of choice is the Alpinestars Toucan. First up they are Gore-Tex so they are waterproof; this is a real must as wet feet generally equate to cold feet – an utterly unpleasant experience. Their waterproof qualities have been thoroughly tested in some torrential downpours over the last few months during what has been an unpredictable summer. They have also coped with a few off-road water crossings and they

delivered on their promise. So far, the only time I suffered soggy feet was when the water was deep enough to go over the top.

Compared to a dedicated enduro boot the Toucans are about 4cm lower which reduces the level of protection, but given that I wear knee protection it feels like this is not really a vulnerable area. They are not as stiff as enduro boots, which has the bonus of making them more comfortable – especially if you need to walk more than a few metres, but they still feel rigid with a high level of protection.

In many ways they are a half-way house between an adventure boot and an enduro boot and that's a compromise that I find easy to live with. The protection is close to the level of an enduro boot but you get the more practical nature of adventure product.

On the bike the steel instep and conventional stepped sole work well, making standing on the pegs for long periods of time a comfortable experience. The sole also offers

excellent grip when walking or man-handling your bike on slippery terrain. There is decent protection and additional plastic panels covering the leather and suede outer, but the design is good – meaning it's a neat boot and there is nothing sticking out. It's the same for the two buckles on each boot that combine with a Velcro top fixing to make it easy to get the boots on and off. Better still, the buckles stay done up and don't get in the way when you ride. Great boots all round.

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

PROS & CONS

- + **Waterproof with a great mix of support, sole grip and flexibility**
- **They squeak when you walk so everyone knows you are coming!**

CE approved and properly waterproof, unlike many boots that claim to be



Buckles are easy to adjust and work well