



# AJS Insetto 125

*Since the Modena 125 and its smaller moped scooter siblings were originally released, AJS scooters have developed a bit of a cult following. This is probably due to the company trying to keep the design close to the original styling of classic 50s and 60s scooters, but with the added modern-day technology of Delphi electronic fuel injection and electric start*

The Insetto is claimed to be the most powerful AJS scooter to date - and powered by the new series 3J4 engine with a maximum power of 6.4Kw (8.58hp) @7.500 rpm, this single cylinder four-stroke looks similar in design to the Vespa Primavera model. Funnily enough, both names translate as aphids, with Vespa literally meaning 'wasp' and Insetto meaning 'insect' or 'bug' in Italian. The Insetto certainly has that Italian-inspired styling much loved by scooterists worldwide, and to me, it looks very chic and stylish, although not quite as traditional or classic in the old style as the AJS Modena though (if I had named these two scooters, I'd have swapped the names around)! Three colours are available for the 2019 UK market models - a groovy Gunmetal Grey, Firefox Blue and a bright Chilli Red.

CVT automatic variable transmission allows a seamless and effortless gear change, which adjusts to suit differing road conditions. The linked brakes offer improved safety over older models with disc brakes front and rear fitted as standard. Another standard feature is a nice little rear luggage rack and combined

grab-rail for use by any passengers you may wish to carry.

All new AJS motorcycles and scooters are now covered with a 12-month AA breakdown cover package, which includes three months' warranty labour contribution plus one year 'Roadside Repair and Recovery', 'Home Start' and 'Onward Travel' (this AA package is in addition to the two-year parts and labour AJS warranty).

## High expectations

My first impressions of the Insetto were very high. Having never ridden a scooter before, this was going to be a first for me. I already loved the look and styling of the Insetto; air grilles match, the sleek curves of the sidepanel cowlings; also a matching small grille on the front fairing (above the front wheel guard) blends in well to the overall appearance. With a racing-style stubby exhaust and pointed tail end, the scooter looks longer than it actually is. The seat looks comfortable and has a nice curved look to it, with plenty of room for a passenger. Nice touch, too, are the foldable rear footpegs (I didn't even

notice these at first glance until I accidentally knocked the 'open' button and down one popped)! I also love the LED indicator lights and rear tail light cluster - a very modern look.

Fuel injection and electric start make firing up the beastie (insect - get it!) easy and give it a frugal fuel consumption. According to the info I've found, this in the region of 100mpg. Tank capacity is just 7.2 litres (or 1.5 gallons in old money), but the instrument panel does include an LED fuel gauge to help monitor usage.

The instrument panel is clear and precise with easy reach switches, and the speedo reads in both mph and kph, including an old-style arrow marker on the dial and digital LED read-out in mph. The indicator switch also has a cancellation button, making it easier to switch them off after turning.

I like the large underseat storage area. The scoot also has the rear luggage rack fitted as standard and a front bag clip on the inside of the front fairing (not that I'd want to have a bag load of shopping swinging in the wind fitted to that hook)!



## What's it like to ride?

As I said earlier, as a first-time 'scooterist' it surprised me how very different they are to ride than a motorcycle. You don't straddle the seat, you sit on the front edge; and with footboards instead of footpegs, it took me a while to find the right foot position. There's also no adjustable handlebars like a motorcycle has, so I had to shuffle around to find my correct riding stance. With a seat height of 789mm it's ideal for little old

me, and it's so light too, at 115kg (253.5lbs). It also has a great turning circle, courtesy of its 12-inch wheels and short wheelbase, so moving it around to park, etcetera, is a cinch.

As with many modern machines, you do have to remember that the Insetto won't start whilst it's on the side stand, so gone are the days when I could start a bike up, leaving it on its stand to let the engine warm whilst I finished fastening my jacket and gloves.



My first commute to work on a chilly April morning found me in a quandary. Having fitted a cable to allow a heated vest, I connect the cable to the vest, climb on the machine and fire it up. The scooter starts, but as it is cold it needs to be given some revs to get it warmed up. Whilst trying to then switch on the heated vest and set the heat setting the bike dies, so I start the heated vest scenario off again. Engine won't start - side stand is still down!

Eventually I got all fired up (the bike, not me), connected again and gloved up, setting off on my 27-mile commute. The second day, this all worked so much easier - connect vest and put gloves on, switch ignition on, adjust heating setting on vest, start engine, take off main stand and off I went...

The bike is extremely sure-footed and stable even in a gusty wind, due to its 12-inch wheels and hydraulically damped telescopic front suspension. With it having a short wheelbase though, you do have to avoid dangers in the road like manhole covers, or uneven surfaces, but so far I felt confident on the little AJS with its positive steering. I didn't even have to use the brakes that much as the engine torque drops nicely as soon as you ease off the throttle grip. They are awesome when you do need them.

Before I know it, the scooter is whizzing along nicely and picking up speed. I didn't realise what speed I was travelling at in a built-up area until I checked the speedo, which said 34mph - and I was in a 30 zone. I also then spotted a local council speed warning LED sign which said I was actually only doing 28mph!

### In conclusion

After riding the Insetto and commuting daily, would I recommend one? Yes I would, as they really are a joy to ride. There are only a couple of points to mention.

I'm not sure exactly how accurate the speedo is. From my past experience of driving bikes and cars through local council speed indicator traps, they are usually around 2mph lower than the speed shown on your own speedo, but this was a big 6mph difference. Top speed is said to be 60mph and I managed an indicated 61mph.

The large underseat storage is good, but not quite deep enough for my flip-front helmet (even in a small size), but a waterproof over-suit, spare gloves, lunchbox, etcetera, will fit in a treat. Might squeeze an open face in there - just?

On the positive side, the LED fuel gauge is really handy and once the level had dropped down to just two bars, I decided it might be time to

refuel, as I wasn't sure what the reserve capacity would be. Well, I nearly died at having to fork out to fill the bike almost to the brim, a whole £4.68! But bear in mind it does only have a 7.2 litre tank (1.5 gallon) after all. Low cost motoring at its best. Nice, big, comfy seat, which does slant forward slightly, but all-in-all a very positive ride on this little scooter. Even my wife has started singing the old Avril Lavigne song, but changing the words slightly to, 'He is a scooter boy, will see you later boy' around the house!

Words: John  
Images: Gary

### SPECIFICATION

#### AJS Insetto

ENGINE:	125cc 4-stroke, forced air-cooled
MAX. POWER:	6.4kW@7,500rpm
TRANSMISSION:	CVT twist & go
FUEL SYSTEM:	Delphi electronic fuel injection
STARTER:	Electric/kick
BRAKES:	Disc front/rear. Combined Braking System
FRONT TYRE:	120/70-12
REAR TYRE:	130/70-12
SEAT HEIGHT:	789mm
FUEL CONSUMPTION:	(as recorded on the COC) 101mpg
FUEL TANK CAPACITY:	7.2 litres
RRP:	£1799 (incl VAT)
CONTACT:	www.ajsmotorcycles.co.uk
O2W RATING:	★★★★★★★★

