

New Benelli targets 'off-roaders'

Better known for sportsbikes and funky street bikes, the revitalised Italians now have a designer trailie

► Troubled Italian bike manufacturer Benelli is back in business, thanks to a buyout by the Chinese Qianjiang Corporation. Flush with cash and confidence, Benelli has unveiled two new bikes based around the 1130cc three-cylinder engine from their TNT streetfighter.

The Tre-K is a sports-tourer in the road-based giant-trailie mould – think Ducati Multistrada rather than KTM Adventure. Despite the maker's boast 'Where the tarmac ends... adventure begins', we reckon the 205kg Tre-K will be as natural off-road as a tiger ice-skating.

However, with both Dunlops on tarmac, the detuned TNT engine should stick it to the competition. Benelli claim 123bhp (about 110 at the wheel) which is 20bhp more

than BMW's R1200GS and 30bhp up on a Multistrada. Its claimed 85 lb.ft of torque should let it easily outgrunt the BMW and Ducati.

Styling is by Adrian Morton, the Brit who also penned Benelli's TNT and Tornado sportsbike. It was the last Benelli drawn by Morton and will cost around £13,000.

Benelli have also unveiled a Tornado 1130, complete with a version of the 1130cc engine tuned for a claimed 160bhp. Final spec for the Tornado is to be confirmed.

Will we see these multicultural bikes (designed by a Brit, built in Italy by a Chinese-owned company) in the UK? We should: Benelli have a new importer, KJM Superbike (01257 451656, kjmsuperbike.com). The first bikes are expected to arrive in May, with prices to be announced.

Underseat pipes... check. Coloured trellis frame... check. So chic, so Benelli



Like the 1130cc engine, the indicators are shared with the TNT and new Tornado



Benelli Tre-K
Tre is Italian for triple, this one's the 'off-road' option, so it's a trek – geddit?



BENELLI TRE-K

Price
£13,000 (est)

Top Speed
140mph (est)

Power (claimed)
123bhp@8500rpm

Torque (claimed)
85 lb.ft@4500rpm

Weight (claimed)
205kg

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