

SWM GRAN MILANO & GRAN TURISMO



Traditional instruments on the Gran Turismo.



Engine is exceptionally well finished.



Aggressive looking front end on the Gran Milano.



Sharply angular tank highlights both models.



ABOVE Bob gives the Gran Turismo a workout. BELOW The Gran Milano, available in bronze or green.

SWM Gran Milano and Gran Turismo  
**SWM on the rebound**

When the editor asked me to come along to help with ride impressions of the new SWM Gran Milano and Gran Turismo I jumped at the chance. Why not, I just like riding motorbikes.

Test Bob Rosenthal Photos Jim Scaysbrook

SWM was once a respected brand interested mainly in competition machines. Today they have resurfaced as a small brand making slightly alternate Italian motorcycles.

At first glance the Gran Turismo looks more like a utilitarian bike. It's never really going to be a long-distance tourer. In appearance, it is a fairly conventional sit upright bike that would make a great ride to work/suburban steed. And that's exactly how it feels. The seat is not too tall and the riding position is quite comfortable. Instruments are very conventional with a speedo and tach and a few warning lights for fuel and indicators. The trip meter is a bit on the small side, but it's all there.

The Gran Milano is a little sportier. The riding position is more forward leaning and the footrests feel a little further back. Unlike the Gran Turismo, the handlebars are clip-ons, not conventional pipe. Quality controls on both bikes reflect the Italian influence. The brakes on both are Brembo, straight 260mm disc on the Turismo, wave 320mm on the Milano with a radial calliper. Both felt a little limp to me, but having said that, they would be fine for an inexperienced rider and

both could be pepped up with more aggressive pads. They probably would get much better with more kilometres behind them. The Milano also has upside-down forks with adjustability.

So, what did they ride like? The Turismo felt a little loose on the road. With its 101mm trail due partly to leading axle forks, it is quite manoeuvrable and light feeling. With the 100/90 x 19 front tyre it felt stable enough. The engine is OK at higher revs, but don't try anything below 3000rpm or transmission snatch will intrude. The gearbox shifts smoothly with a light, short pedal travel, but is not easy to find neutral. The trick is to pop it into second and give the pedal a tap. These were almost new bikes, so things would improve with more kilometres. Give it a bit of a rev and it gets up and boogies.

The Gran Milano is a slightly different animal. The centrally located axle and different offset triple clamps give longer trail of 110mm and this gives a more "planted" feel. That, together with the more forward leaning riding position and lower handlebars, imparts a steadier feel as well. The seventeen-inch front rim, as against a nineteen on the GT, helps

with the chuck-ability of the Gran Milano. It's really easy to quickly crank it over and just gas it. I'm not so sure about the fatter front tyre though, and although it didn't slip, I was wary of it. There are no pillion footrests so it is a single seater only. The exhaust pipes curve up behind the rider's heels to a pair of very nice mufflers which sound great. There is a down side to all this though. Watch out if manoeuvring the bike or standing beside it. That upward bend will give you an SWM branding, trust me. One thing I didn't like much was the side-stand switch. It kills the engine as soon as you put the stand down, so you have to sit there and warm it up. Surely, they could have linked it with the neutral switch.

The current crop of SWM bikes are assembled in Italy, using a Chinese-made engine and European cycle parts, including the frame. So, what did I like about these Chinese/Italian bikes? The lack of plastic was one. The fit of everything another and just the difference from the endless clutter of same-as-same-as. European bikes have a unique feel, ask any Ducacisti or BeeEm rider. They have their quirks, but this is often also a character of their own. ■

Gran Milano (GM) and Gran Turismo (GT)  
**Off-the-shelf**

ENGINE	Air/oil cooled SOHC 4 valve single
BORE X STROKE	90mm x 70mm
CAPACITY	445.3cc
HORSEPOWER	30hp at 6,800 rpm
TORQUE	35.8Nm at 5,300 rpm
TRANSMISSION	5 speed. Wet clutch with hydraulic control (GM) and cable control (GT)
IGNITION	Electronic GET
FUEL SYSTEM	EFI, electric start
SUSPENSION	Front: Adjustable 47mm USD fork (GM), leading axle telescopic fork (GT) Rear: Twin shocks with pre load adjustment.
BRAKES	Front: Brembo 320 wave disc with 4-piston caliper (GM), 260mm disc (GT) Rear: 220mm disc with single piston caliper
WHEELS/TYRES	Front: 120/70 x 17 (GM), 100/90 x 19 (GT). Rear: 150/60 x 17 (GM), 130/80 x 17 (GT).
SEAT HEIGHT	809mm (GM), 822mm (GT).
FUEL CAPACITY	22.5 litre.
DRY WEIGHT	145kg (GM), 148kg (GT).
WHEELBASE	1410mm (GM), 1444mm (GT).
PRICES	\$7,990 (GM), \$7,490 (GT) (including pre-delivery and on-road).
TEST BIKES	Mojo Motorcycles Ph: (03) 9918 8000