

Suzuki GSX 1000 SZ /D 1982/83

A rare beast or is that just folklore?

Although the 1100SZ had been tested by motorcycle magazines and had appeared in selected dealers showrooms at the end of 1981 mid 1982 saw the GSX 1000SZ Katana range introduced into the showrooms of the world.

The reason was production racing, The forerunner to the world super bike series, which pitched sub litre cc machines up against each other.

The rules for the class stated that they had to be "road going" off the shelf" so to speak machines.

Suzuki got round the rules with the GS1000 SZ. A sleeved down 1100SZ. from 1074cc to 998cc. With altered timing to suit. This was to homologate the machine to bring it inline with the rules. Everything else remained the same.

Here in the UK the 1000 was also fitted with 32mm Minuki slide carburettors, as were preferred by the racing fraternity. Some of these found their way to European countries. These machines also came with out pillion grab handle as they weren't necessary by law in UK.



In the USA and most other markets not only was the pillion grab strap fitted but it also got 34mm Minuki CV carburettors. This was mostly to comply with emission laws that don't allow fettling of Carbs in the US but also limits the amount of unused fuel that can be spilt when not in use. Another official reason was a more linear take up of power.

The slide carburettors provide a good power curve but can be lumpier at low revs.

Brake horse power was also slightly down on the 1000 against the 1100 by 3 bhp.

So in the showrooms of GB the 16 valve 1100 sat also side 16 valve 1000, though the 1000 was in more limited numbers both came in Silver (13L) Aluminium coloured frame. Blue tail piece. Graphics were minimal with Suzuki in orangey red as used on the 650 brought out early that year. ANDF manual 4 way adjusted rebound forks (Anti Nose Dive Forks. Operated with the brake fluid/system.) The now famous Katana logo was at an angle on the early models.

Multi position rear shock absorbers with adjusting handle in place. The Exhaust a 4-2 in semi gloss black. The seats were covered in a blue /grey suede effect. Switches on the left hand side panel were neatly hidden as air ducts and mirrored the false ones on the right side. They weren't connected but were intended as auxiliary for heated grips, etc. The choke lever mounted on left side panel and made easy for gloved hand and styled to mirror the space age influences. The styling was revolutionary as the 1100 was still new to the public. As was the now famous speedo/tachometer binnacle that gives the impression the needles are going in opposite directions. showing 140m/ph

The GSX1100S as it was designated in the in 1982 UK sales brochures had a list price of £2650, comparable to the 1100.

The 1000 became the choice weapon for amateur racers both on the track as well as the streets and were soon modified. Harris 4-1 exhaust pipes, saved a great weight over the original system. This led to Dyno-jetting and K&N airfilters. Marzocchi remote reservoir shock absorbers offered a better ride though the original the Koni items proved usefully stiff at speed. The original Bridgestone Mag Mopus tyres were adequate for normal road use but reports of them "going off early", led to almost instant changing of them for Avon road runners.

The reputation of the 1000 in the UK was further enhanced by the likes of Phil Read , Barry Sheene amongst others showing what they could do and coverage in the motorcycle press from the USA which saw the likes of by Wes Cooley & Dave Aldana with better results winning rounds of 1982 AMA



Superbikes & F1 against legends Eddie Lawson, Freddie Spencer, Kenny Roberts & Wayne Rainey. With support from Yoshimura.

In the USA the 1000 was designated as GS1000S , due to the American aversion at the time to putting the letters S&X next to each other as it sounded offensive . As previously mentioned they were 34mm CV vacuum carburetors . The seat gained the grab handle and side reflectors on the body work.

The speedometer had a highlighted 55M/ph (The national speed limit.) and terminated at 80m/ph. The colourways as per UK European model.

The rules for production racing changed and the cc limit was lowered to 750cc , which spelled the end of the 1000 as a race machine but the model carried on to the GSX1000SD in 1983.

Changes included all models receiving 34mm CV carbs. The seat became covered in usual vinyl but still blue/grey. Wheels became 3 spoke type as per the rest of the Suzuki range. The engine was now black and the emblem straight .Colour was as the 1100 SD of silver and blue pin striping, but the top of the fuel tank was still silver. Tail piece now black. Only 3000 were made.

What goes wrong? Not a lot really. The usual electrical faults caused by the charging circuit being wired through the light switch. Problems can be avoided by running with headlamps on all the time and frequent oil changes. Most examples available now have had the charging circuit rewired with the simple mod of a super dream regulator/rectifier or updated after market one. The clutch basket can rattle on tick-over which is not unusual, Out of balance carbs is a usual reason. Cracks around the front indicators are symptoms of the units being bolted to the fairing direct and if they get knocked or bent the fairing suffers.

The Anti Dive can result in spongy brakes though they still work fine. (by 1980's standards.) The home repair method was to simply disconnect the units or blank them off. In fact the units are smaller versions of piston brakes and have rubber seals inside that become contaminated just as brakes do, due to them using the same brake hydroscopic fluid. Renewing these seals requires the unit to be removed from the fork leg as a complete unit to gain access to piston seal. The original suede seat is now very difficult to source , but alternatives are available, which have the same look but are more hard wearing. The best way to clean the original seat was to steam clean. Speedo/tacho needles break off by the centre or the red of them fades away.

1983 GSX1000SD (EXPORT)

13L BRIGHT SILVER METALLIC



art : Alexandre GODARD © 2005

The designation for the American/Canadian market has caused confusion over the years. In Europe the designation GS 1000S, was the 1978-80 8 valve affectionately know as the “ice-cream van”. due the colour scheme and handle bar fairing.

Over the years imports from the US have come up for sale some still in the original packing crates and because folklore remembers “the thou” as having slide carbs and was the racing version, prices are kept high. However the slide carb version is indeed the one to retain it’s value, due to the limited production run and therefore scarcer machines on the second hand market. Values are slightly higher than the 1100.

In 2006 a GS1000S was imported from California still in it’s crate never opened. It was auctioned still in it’s box advertised as the racing version with slide carbs . Both of these statements probably not true but as said, folklore was referred to ,(Though we as a club did advise otherwise,) indeed was it a Kat?

It was eventually sold as was, for over £10.000. The owner than had it shipped back over the water to Canada. Never to uncrate it. As an investment. Such is the power of folklore.

The availability of the **1000 Katana** now is limited, with prices around

	Private	Trade retail
Project/ non runner	£ 400- 800	£ 250-800
Tatty runner	£1000- 1200	£1000-1200
Average condition	£1250--1500	£1500-1750
Good Condition (Tax /Test)	£1750-2450	£1800- 2600
Very good - Excellent - Restored original	£ 2800- 6000	£2750- 7000
Concours	£ 8000 +	

Overall length	2260mm (89inches)
Dry weight	232kilo 511 lbs)
Engine capacity	998cc
Bore&stroke	69.4 mm/ 66.0mm
BHP	108 (73.5kw)
Engine oil capacity	3.2 litres
Fork oil capacity	227ml each leg
Brakes (front /rear)	FA65 FA36
Tyre front	350v19 (100/90/19v)
Tyre rear	450v17 (130/90/17v)
Sprocket sizes front/rear chain.	JT 518-14/ JT818 42/ 630 096 links
Battery	YB14LA2
Spark plugs	DR8ES-L
Air filter	Cartridge element non washable
Ignition timing	15’BTDC below 1500rpm 32’above 2350 rpm
Fuel tank capacity	22litres incl 5 litres reserve