

2018

SOFTAIL DELUXE:

Old is New Again



By Koz Mraz
Photos by Brian Nelson

Yea, you've heard all about the brand new Harley-Davidson Softail line, lighter weight, bigger motors, and better suspension all married to brand new frames. It's all true and don't get me wrong, that's great but really, I just wanted a cool vintage looking motorcycle. With all H-D's newfangled technology they must know that nostalgia and antique design also caters to the young buyer demographic...vintage is hip.

Bingo! The 2018 Softail Deluxe and Heritage Classic. The Motor Company delivers classic good looks with modern technology. The current Softail Deluxe traces its lineage back to 1949 when Harley-Davidson first mounted hydraulic front forks to replace the springer front ends on their rigid FL frames to beget the Hydra-Glide. It's no coincidence that the faux-rigid Softail frames allow the original geometry to shine through in the upper lines that drop uninterrupted from steering stem to rear axle. A design that truly mimics the look of these old hardtails, but hard ride it's not. I



2018 SOFTAIL DELUXE SPECS

Lean Angle, Right (deg.): 28

Lean Angle, Left (deg.): 28

Wheels, Front Type: Chrome Steel Laced

Wheels, Rear Type: Chrome Steel Laced

Brakes, Caliper Type: 4-piston fixed front and 2-piston floating rear

Tires, Front Specification: MT90B16 72H

Tires, Rear Specification: MU85B16 77H

DRIVETRAIN

Engine: Milwaukee-Eight® 107

Bore x Stroke: 3.937 in. x 4.374 in.

Displacement: 107 cu in

Compression Ratio: 10.0:1

Engine Torque: 109 ft-lb @ 30000 rpm

Fuel System: Electronic Sequential Port Fuel Injection (ESPFI)

Exhaust: 2-into-2 shorty dual; catalyst in muffler

can personally vouch that the Softail Deluxe offers one of the smoothest rides available. The adjustable mono shock was simply amazing. I intentionally looked for pot holes and because I couldn't believe my ass.

The retro front fender continues the old FL look with a chrome brow and piping and a minimal touch of chrome at the trailing edge of the old-school fender skirts. The fender itself is cut high on the sides to leave plenty of visibility for the laced rim and whitewall tire. A chrome cover on the right side mimics the look of vintage drum brakes on a 50's Harley, while the stock solo seat is most definitely a "Wild Ones" look. From the Tombstone taillight to the whitewalls and wire-spoke rims, the untrained eye could easily call this motorcycle 'vintage.'

Vintage it is not. The Milwaukee-Eight 107 boasts 109 lbs. of torque. It doesn't matter if you're in fifth or sixth gear, twist the throttle and there's get-up-and-go. The Mil-8 runs an undersquare layout with a 3.937-inch bore and 4.374-inch stroke for a total displacement of 107 inches (1,746 cc) and a 10-to-1 compression ratio. Though the engine has the same loping offset to the firing order that Harley enthusiasts expect, a counterbalancer tames much of the vibration for longer, more comfortable cruising.

The mild-steel tubular frame has also been redesigned and is 65 percent stiffer than the outgoing Softail frame. This new frame also has 50 percent fewer component parts, 22 percent fewer welds and, with the solid-mount engine, makes for an overall 34 percent more rigid chassis. These and other changes help reduce the weight of the Softail Deluxe by 33 pounds for 2018. Increased lean angle and more precise steering are also benefits of the new chassis.

The modern Daymaker signature LED headlamp and "winged" LED turn signals light up the night. The 26.8-inch saddle height fits a wide range of riders and a five-5 gallon tank allows for some serious touring. Toss on a few accessories like a windshield and saddlebags and you're good to go. Or, get on a 2018 Heritage Classic that includes both. The Heritage name is self-evident, and with saddlebags and removable windscreen also keeps the classic look alive. Both the Deluxe and the 2018 Heritage Softail come with the Milwaukee 8 107 ci standard and the 114 ci is optional.



2018 Harley-Davidson Heritage Softail

What's not to love here? Classic good looks with modern flair. Whether hitting the local haunts or it's a 500-mile day, the Deluxe or the Heritage take you there in comfort and style.



NEW PRODUCTS

GRIPS FOR HARLEY-DAVIDSON® BIKES - NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH FROM INCHARGER

INCHARGER, a European manufacturer of motorcycle accessories for Harley-Davidson® bikes, launches the newly designed grips to supplement the BASELINE collection. The BASELINE collection aims to provide motorcycle riders with affordable, functional and custom look accessories. The Grips are CNC machined from single piece billet aluminum and are oval shaped to reflect the shape of the palm which gives you full control with an especially relaxed hold during long trips. The in-house created rubber pattern provides a subtle design but also keeps focus on functionality.

Grips are available with cable throttle or electronic throttle control and are available in polished or anodized Satin Black. Matching footpegs and shifter peg from the BASELINE collection are available separately. About INCHARGER: Our mission is to



help motorcycle enthusiasts create the best riding experience of their life. Currently INCHARGER offers six collections and five different finishes of Grips, Footpegs, Shifter pegs, Floorboards, Derby & Timer Covers and Brake pedals for Harley-Davidson® motorcycles. Every product comes with a one year warranty and can be shipped worldwide. Find out more at www.incharger-parts.com. Contact for media: Ingrida Andruyte, Marketing Manager, ingrida.andruyte@incharger.eu

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The first style of frameless mirror launched by CycleSmiths is the Naked Lollipop, which features a clean, subtly-tapered stem and round mirror that's just as at-home on retro bobbers and choppers as it is on modern cruisers and baggers. The pivotless design won't vibrate out of place after tightening and only requires a 5/32" Allen key to adjust.

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