

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT

★★★★★

5000 miles ON TEST



There is no arguing with the beauty of the design



Arai RX-7V Evo (Ogura replica) £799.99

‘I expected more for £800’

Dan lives out his MotoGP fantasies...

Tested by Dan Sutherland for six months
Kit brands don't come much bigger than Arai. The Japanese helmet firm began protecting bikers in the early 1950s and have been responsible for some of the most memorable designs ever seen on a racing grid. One of the things they do best is collaborating with their homegrown racing talent to create stunning replicas for the likes of you and I to own and cherish – something they've done here with this Ai Ogura version of their sporty RX-7V Evo. Priced at a considerable £799.99, it's just one in a long line of Grand Prix tributes, and a design that I've been putting through its paces for the last 5000 miles of commuting, weekend rides, and on three trackdays.

Meeting the latest ECE22.06 regulations, the Evo is the brand's top-spec sports road and track riding product, tipping the scales at a claimed 1600g. I was drawn to it by the striking flashes of red down the sides of the helmet, however up close the best elements of the design are without doubt the subtle flecks of glitter in the deeper blue sections. They catch the light like no other helmet I've worn and encourage you to keep on top of your cleaning. It certainly grabs attention, and its fair share of compliments from fellow riders when I am out and about. Then there's the overall look of the helmet shell to consider. Although tweaked over time, the rounded shape of the Arai RX-7 line-up (created to prevent the lid catching during a tumble) has remained largely unchanged for decades and, as such,

it's almost taken on something of a retro appeal. As a result, I feel just as at home wearing the Arai on my Royal Enfield Classic 350 as I do on my Yamaha R9 long-term test bike – a handy trait if you're lucky enough to have a couple of toys tucked away inside the garage. The inner lining is soft and plush, and the field of vision on road and track is impressive. As a thing to own and be proud of, it ticks all of the right boxes. It's not perfect though. For all of its simplistic beauty, there are some sticking points that I can't overlook. Number one is the chin vent, which often gets stuck open on its middle setting. It's made from a flimsy-feeling plastic and I'm constantly worried it's going to snap. I've also experienced issues with the small rear spoiler between the dual exhaust ports, which is best

adjusted off the bike when you can attack it with both thumbs. I expected better for the asking price. What's more, at motorway speeds, the top vents can generate a gentle whistle when open at some angles, and while the visor system is easier than Arais of old, it's still far more complex than many other designs on the market. I do, however, like how the helmet's side pods shroud the visor mechanism from view. **MCN rating★★★★★**
www.whyarai.co.uk

- PROS & CONS
- +

Finish on the graphics is superb, good on-track field of vision
- Top vent whistle, awkward visor mechanism



The rear spoiler can prove a bit fiddly



Super-plush lining and double-D strap