

TRIED & TESTED

MCN STAFF RATE THEIR RIDING KIT

★★★★★

Merlin Akashi Pro Laminate
£399.99 jacket, £349.99 trousers

‘A magic cloak for your adventures’



Tested by Adam Oldfield for 3000 miles
A new premium adventure and touring textile suit from Merlin, the Akashi Pro Laminate jacket and trouser combo delivers a wealth of practical features and all-weather protection for four-season riding. And our test suggests that if you demand dependability from your gear, the Merlin Akashi Pro will exceed your expectations.

At the heart of its performance is a two-layer 15/12k laminate membrane bonded directly to the outer shell for excellent waterproofing and breathability. Unlike drop liner-style textiles, the outer shell never feels saturated – even during the extended downpours from Storm Amy weeks back.

Up close, the Akashi stands out with elevated details over Merlin’s



Well-placed zippable venting also features magnetic fastening

other great explorer range. The camel brown colourway is a nice touch, distinguishing it in a world awash with all-black suits. But it’s the thought behind each feature that really lets you know you are protected by something special.

There are added abrasion-resistant panels, with reflective details, large front and rear cargo pockets, as well as a built-in camel pack pocket and a tube fastener. The coin pocket on the arm is incredibly handy, as is the detachable neck guard that helps prevent driving rain and wind from reaching your skin.

One of the most impressive traits is the suit’s versatility in summer. Usually, I ditch textiles for a light jacket and jeans combo. Heading to this year’s ABR Festival, my go-to was the Akashi suit with all its vents open; the chest, arms, and back, keeping the flaps tidy with the neat roll, tuck and magnet securing system. The effect? Fully optimised airflow! The perfect amount of direct cooling prevented me from arriving overheated.

Safety is also impressive with AA-rated abrasion protection, plus Level-1 D30 armour at the elbows, shoulders and back. It also includes pockets at the front for additional chest armour, should you require it. The trousers come installed with D30 hip and knee armour, too.

The antibacterial mesh lining and 125g detachable thermal liners in both jacket and trousers ensure comfort across variable climates. Sizing fits true to the label, with plenty of adjustment in the bicep, forearm, cuff, hem and waist points, allowing you to perfect the fit.

Retailing for £399.99 for the jacket and £349.99 for the trousers, the full set comes in at a touch under £750. Its quality and features match – and in some ways exceed – better-known premium brands like Rukka and Dane, offering excellent value for money.

The only notable criticism is minor wear when the collar is fastened back on its hook from the Velcro, a small issue easily avoided or remedied in future iterations.

However, I am splitting hairs; if I had to ride tomorrow and carve a path across continents, battling various terrains and weather, this would be the kit I would choose.

MCN rating ★★★★★
www.merlinbikegear.shop

PROS & CONS

- +

Detachable neck guard, calf openings for boots
- Slight outer shell fraying from Velcro abrasion

5 months ON TEST

Akashi Pro is brilliant value for money



Calf openings create the perfect fit over your boots



Back vent includes a lower rear cargo pocket