



Floating On Air >

Things have been stop-and-go in America for Suomy, as the price of its handcrafted Italian helmets means it competes with the elite brands. Returning to this country for another go, the new Suomy MX Tourer is the company's first foray into the adventure market. Using a Kevlar/fiberglass compound for a strong, lightweight shell, the MX Tourer weighs in at a feather-like 3 pounds, 1.1 ounces—one of the lightest full-face helmets we have ever tested.

The faceshield is optically clear and is coated with a permanent and effective anti-fogging agent, plus an anti-scratch material for longevity. The shield properly seals against the shell and an internal smoke grey shield slides into place behind the full-face clear visor to keep the afternoon sun in check.

Like any adventure helmet, the MX

Tourer is a hybrid of street bike and dirt bike designs. However, the MX Tourer does a good job of avoiding the look of a street bike helmet that simply has a visor attached or a dirt bike helmet that has a face shield slapped on to it. The chin bar extends away from the rider's face sufficiently far to allow air to come in from underneath, yet not as far as typical dirt bike helmets. The eyeport is the size of most dirt bike helmets, which increases peripheral vision.

On my commuter route, I invariably find myself in the infamously turbulent zone behind semi-trailer trucks. Even with the removable visor installed, the buffeting is no worse than a street helmet, even when I turned my head into a crosswind to check my blind spot to execute a lane change. The helmet's performance in windy conditions is excellent.

With the faceshield fully down, the wind-generated noise is attenuated to a level similar to a street bike helmet. Additionally, road noise is basically eliminated. This feature also makes the helmet comfortable to wear on long rides, as the rider does not experience fatigue due to excessive noise.

For daily use this helmet easily replaces the other helmets in my personal inventory. The MX Tourer is a great value given the incredible light weight, excellent wind handling with the visor, drop-down tinted sun shield, and the ability to be configured to look (and work) like a street helmet for those excessively blustery days. Loaded with capabilities, the Suomy MX Tourer allows the adventure bike rider to enjoy journeys from pre-dawn until after-dark. <

—DON WILLIAMS