

The **Wasp** is back

'The buzzy buzzy thing' or Vespa is back in India with the LX125. We take it for a spin to see if the new scooter lives up to the hype

There are very few in India who haven't experienced a Vespa in some way or the other. Be it the original imports, the Bajaj Vespa 150s or the LML Vespas, at some point, many of us have ridden or at least seen them. Now after an absence of more than a decade, the iconic Italian brand is back in India with the LX125.

The LX125, though modern, carries quite a few retro styling cues; it is more about curves than straight angles. The large front mudguard with the metal logo is reminiscent of the past, as is the front apron with the little horn bezel finished in chrome. The three spoke alloy wheels shod with 10" MRF Nylogrip tyres, though are modern. These look good too,

especially the front along with the traditional single sided front suspension. The handlebar is a relatively large unit which houses the authentic Vespa style round headlamp and the instrument panel. The latter gets a speedo and fuel gauge along with other telltale lights.

There's a smart looking glove compartment too which can be

operated via the ignition lock. The foot board strips are an India-special. The seat though comfortable is good for mostly the slimmer kind especially with two travellers.

However, pop the seat up and there's space for a helmet or some grocery shopping. Unfortunately, the underseat stowage is not large enough for a full-face helmet.



The underseat storage space can only house an open-faced helmet. The white-faced clocks look smart and are easy to read. The instrument panel houses a speedo, fuel gauge, tell-tales as well as a digital display for a clock. A traditional hook placed in front of the seat to carry knick-knacks. It is a made-for-India special



i Vespa LX125	
Engine	Single cylinder, 3 valves
Displacement	125cc
Max power	10.1bhp@7500rpm
Max torque	10.6Nm@6000rpm
Gearbox	CVT
Wheelbase (mm)	1290
LxWxH (mm)	1770x690x1140
Kerb weight	100kg
Fuel tank	8 litres
Price (ex-showroom, Delhi)	Rs 60,000 (est)
+ Looks, features	
- Fit and finish, price	



The LX125 features an all metal body. The metal strips on the floor board are an Indian touch. The tail light juts out in tune with the scooters of yesteryears



The new Vespa gets many chrome touches including the mirrors, the horn cover and the mudguard garnish. The indicators fit flush on the all steel body. Note the large locator on the main stand which has been modified for India. A little dab and the Vespa gets on the main stand with ease. 10" tyres are from MRF and are tube type

Piaggio has stuck to a single sided front suspension on the LX. Note the Vespa logo embossed on the main pin



Switchgear is easy to use but the quality of plastics could surely have been better considering the suggested price



The glovebox can be opened by pressing the key inside the ignition lock. But it is a bit hard to use



At the back the tail light juts out just like the ones found on classic Vespas.

The LX125 is powered by a 125cc, 4-stroke single cylinder engine mated to a CVT. This engine sports three valves which helps breathing on the intake side resulting in better performance. The transmission system too has been modified with gear ratios suited for Indian riding conditions.

Thumb the starter button and the Vespa settles into a quiet idle. Twist the throttle and it pulls away

briskly but nothing as dramatic to smoke the rear tyre. On the move the riding position feels very comfortable and is just right for both long rides or short hops around the city streets. The test route included sections where the area was a bit crowded and negotiating traffic was a breeze on the Vespa.

It should be fuel efficient too. Piaggio claims the 10.1bhp engine is efficient enough to return 60kmpl, albeit under standard test conditions. What this figure looks like in the real world, only

an extended test will show.

The ride on the LX is on the stiffer side and on uneven terrain, you can feel the surface. But, it isn't back braking or even irritating for that matter. What really impressed us about the scooter though, were its brakes. These have good bite and even though it's an all drum setup, the feel isn't bad either.

The ground clearance also seems well suited for Indian roads and even with two on board, it should not have a problem negotiating speed breakers.

Verdict

Pawan Dagia

■ Vespa is an iconic brand and Piaggio wants to cash-in on it by positioning the new Vespa LX125 as a premium scooter. It will cost around Rs 60,000, which is a lot given the likes of the Suzuki Access cost under Rs 50,000. Sure, besides buying into heritage, the LX will also give its buyers a unique identity. But, how many would be willing to pay for it?

