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[R nineT: The blank canvas from BMW Motorrad](#)

Lead

The R nineT is a brand-new motorbike intended from the outset to be customised. BMW Motorrad describes its as “pure and original”, with a “casually cool look” – and quickly points out that the bike’s bare minimalism is perfect for customisation. What a clever marketing concept...

It’s a strange reversal of roles when a huge, highly respected, mainstream motorcycle manufacturer hops onto the customisation bandwagon by launching a bike that few owners will leave intact. In a curious case of ‘life imitates art’, the retro-styled R nineT boasts a removable rear frame and enough space for 6-inch rims, clearly anticipating that – rather than settling for BMW’s purist design – buyers will tear apart their new bike and make it their own.

A magnificent Italian job



Few could manage a better job than Officine Sbrannetti (a company so young that its website is still ‘under construction’), however. The company consists of five friends who took on BMW Italy’s challenge to turn the R nineT, with its air/oil-cooled, 1170cc, 4-stroke boxer engine, into the best custom bike. Officine Sbrannetti apparently took inspiration from the BMW RS54 Rennsport that came second in the 1956 500cc World Championship (ridden by Walter Zeller).



We think they’ve made a magnificent job of the customisation, especially the level of attention to detail. We’re told that the tank was given a slightly worn look where the rider’s legs and arms would rub against the paintwork, and the seat was upholstered in carefully aged leather. Perhaps it will inspire other buyers to try their hand at their own custom special.

Gallery

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