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# **Royal Enfield Thunderbird 500 - Made For The Highways**

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The iconic Indian motorcycle manufacturer, Royal Enfield showcased its new product, the Thunderbird 500 at the 2012 Auto Expo that was held in Delhi. The bike was just showcased at the event and not officially launched with no disclosure of its prices. The new Thunderbird is powered by the 500cc engine that has been carried over from the Classic 500. It is a single cylinder, 4-stroke, twinspark, air cooled engine that produces a maximum power of 27.2 BHP at 5250 RPM and a hefty torque of 41.3 Nm at 4000 RPM. The engine is mated to a 5 speed constant mesh gearbox via a wet multiplate clutch. The bike is expected to be launched by the company by mid-2012. It will be available in 3 colours - midnight black, matte metallic black and arctic winter black.

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It's a well known fact how good Enfield engineers are at designing the bike for the correct feel of ride comfort. The Enfield Thunderbird gets telescopic 41 mm forks at the front with a 130 mm stroke while at the rear; it gets twin gas charged shock absorbers with 80mm stroke. They are complemented with 90/90-19" spec tires at the front and 120/80-18" tires at the rear. Stopping power of this bike is obtained from the 280mm twin piston calliper disc at the front and a single 240 mm single piston calliper disc at the rear. The Enfield Thunderbird 500 weighs about 195 kgs and has a wheelbase of 1350 mm. The overall length stands at 2060 mm, width 895mm and a height of 1300 mm. The fuel tank can now hold 20-liters of fuel, which gives it an increased range. A 55 watt projector headlamp ensures visibility on the highways at night. The Thunderbird is a cruiser and the pillion seat can be removed to accommodate luggage.

Currently, Royal Enfield sells the 350cc version of the Thunderbird and the company is expected to position this motorcycle right in between the Thunderbird 350 and the Classic 500. Overall, the design elements of the Thunderbird 350 has been exactly retained in the 500cc version of the motorcycle with the addition of the super smooth, super responsive 500 cc engine from the Classic 500. This makes it a good package which the Indian motorcycling enthusiasts are surely going to love. Since we have already tested the Classic 500 and were mighty impressed with its performance, it just needs to be found out how it fairs our test ride. So, stay tuned!

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*Royal Enfield also displayed the Cafe Racer Concept, Bullet 350 and Classic 500 Desert Storm at the 2012 Auto Expo.*

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