

## THE PIAGGIO BUILT 125 STANDARD 1948 – 52



In 1948 Piaggio upgraded the Vespa to 125ccs and gave it proper rear suspension, and over the next few years continually developed and refined their product. The models produced prior to 1953 can be conveniently categorised as a single group because they all share basically the same single-transfer port engine. Additionally, they are the only Piaggio-built Vespas to be finished in the familiar metallic green. The development changes noted here are in the order that Piaggio introduced them, but will be confusing to those familiar with the evolution of the Douglas Vespa – since the latter introduced them in a completely different order. These types of Vespas were almost completely unknown in this country until fairly recently, but these days quite a few are being brought over. Production records are incomplete for these models, so none have been quoted.

### V1 (1948)

Compared to the preceding 98cc model, most of the changes concerned the frame – the engine being virtually a bored-out version of the old one. Most obviously the front suspension had changed sides, and there was a new vertical coil spring. The engine cover no longer completely encircled the flywheel, and at last there was rear suspension! The lower gear change rods were now routed through the frame and, finally, there was a change of colour to metallic green.

### V1 (1949)

The 1949 version (nobody seems quite sure if it was still designated the V1) is mostly notable for having a steering lock as standard and also a proper centre stand (the 1948 V1 had a side stand and the 98 no stand at all!). This version is the nearest equivalent to the first Douglas produced Rod model.

### V15 (1950)

The big change here was that new tooling allowed the frame to be produced with smooth sides as opposed to with the ridges that had characterised Vespas since day one. A Vespa with a smooth frame and a rod gear change looks particularly odd to

British eyes, as this combination does not correspond to anything built by Douglas. Also notable were a new fish shaped silencer and the first appearance of plastic stand feet.

### V30 (1951)

Major changes from the V15 included the introduction of cable-operated gears and a revised front suspension incorporating a damper. Additionally the rear of the floorboards were extended slightly, there was a central boss to the handlebars, a new rectangular rear light, a pressed steel brake pedal and a box-shaped silencer. But possibly the most important thing to know about the V30 is that it achieved screen immortality in "Roman Holiday".

### V33 (1952)

A minor update of the V30 with a few detail alterations including a stronger front damper