



Aerostich Kanetsu Airvantage Electric Vest

Riding gear that fits too tightly often becomes uncomfortable on long rides. On the other hand electric vests work better the tighter they fit, because the closer they are to your body the more heat they transfer. But what if you're not built the way the vest is—if, for example, the vest is cut for a rider with broad shoulders and a thin waist, and you're just the opposite? If you buy a vest that's big enough to fit comfortably around your midsection, it'll be loose at the shoulders, and loose spots equal cool spots. Now there's a solution to the problem—the new Kanetsu Airvantage vest from Aerostich.

The Kanetsu Airvantage is made of Aerostich's TLTec 1 fleece. It has a heated collar that's thinner and shorter than those on some other vests so it doesn't bunch under your jacket when you fold it down. The vest is cut low in the back and shorter in the front, so it doesn't ride up in the back or bind in the front in a seated position. It has two pockets, one on the inside for storing the power cord and another on the back that you can fold the vest into and zip shut for compact storage. The main zipper is a two-way.

What's inside an electric vest is just as important as what's outside it. In addition to the heating wires, the Kanetsu has an inflatable Airvantage insert—a vest within a vest. You inflate the insert by blowing into the tube inside the small zippered compartment on the left upper chest—you can do this with a helmet on. As the insert inflates, it presses the vest close to your torso over its entire area—Aerostich likens the sensation to “a big, warm hug”—so the heating elements are right next to it, providing maximum heat transfer. To let air out of the insert, just push the valve on the inflation tube with your finger or tongue.

On a cold November morning I took the Kanetsu on a comparison ride with another electric vest. The Kanetsu's inflatable insert did exactly what it was supposed to do, pressing the heating elements close to my torso without an uncomfortably tight fit in any one spot. With the other vest, I often had to crank up the heat to warm up the cool spots, which resulted in uncomfortable hot spots where the vest already fit snugly. The Kanetsu produced even heat throughout with no hot or cold spots anywhere. And the insert's insulating properties let me ride in lower temperatures than I normally would before turning on the heat.

The Kanetsu draws about 45 watts, which is comparable to other popular electric vests. But its design makes more efficient use of the power it draws, and insulates better, making it an ideal choice for use on bikes with limited alternator output. Even if you have the watts to spare, the Kanetsu solves one of the main problems inherent in other vests with a fit that conforms to your shape instead of requiring you to conform to the vest's.

The Kanetsu Airvantage sells for \$237 and comes in green only in sizes small through XXL. It comes with a fused, lighted coil cord hookup and power switch with BMW, Quiconnect, or SAE plugs, with a thermostat available as an extra-cost option.

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—Jerry Smith