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LG Chocolate phone (LG-KG800) mobile phone

Can the touch sensitive mobile replace the Motorola RAZR?

by Stuart Miles published on 12 August 2006

According to LG, when the LG Chocolate phone (LG-KG800) launched in Korea it sold more than 300,000 units in 3 months. Here in the UK, it's become the Phone de jour of the chav set with even Wayne Rooney's girlfriend Coleen proud to be seen using one.

Boasting a "hidden" LCD screen and touch-keypad controls that glow red when in use, you can see why. The phone has more chav appeal than a Vauxhall Nova that's been pimped with one of those neon under-lights.

But under those glowing red buttons, the slim phone has minimalism written all over it. Of course it's not all a button free experience. On one side there are quick buttons on the side to access the mediocre digital camera and the model's MP3 player, while the other features volume controls.

Like the Samsung D500 and the Samsung E900, the digital camera is only revealed when the slider is slid open. This does help to protect it getting scratched or damaged, however it's a shame that the camera's quality and speed leaves much to be desired. In our tests the camera took longer than we would have liked to load up from pressing the button, and images look pale and washed out. Additionally there was far too much image noise to do anything with them apart from view on the phone.

The other downer here is the fact that the Chocolate phone lacks a memory card slot so those pictures and MP3 tracks are going to have to stay on the phone's 128MB of internal memory.



But this phone isn't really the next big contender

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to the Sony Ericsson CyberShot range, but a fashion statement so show that you don't need buttons to look cool. For that it passes with flying colours.

The front as we've said hides a mirage of buttons that all you to navigate around the phone, make calls and influence people. In use and the interface is incredibly light to touch, but once you've got the hang of it easy to master (think iPod click wheel). Slide the slider back and luckily LG has opted to keep things simple and straightforward and it was surprising and pleasing to see that the number keypad hasn't been messed with, that feeling soon ends however when you see the numbers appear on the screen is a plethora of colours as if someone has been let loose with a tube of Smarties.

No slouch in bed, the phone features the usual now standard but necessary elements: Bluetooth, tri-band and a range of polyphonic ringtones even Jamster would be proud of.

VERDICT

While the phone does do a lot of the things that you want it to, it really is a case of style over function - although be wary of its easy smudgeability. Yes the design is very fashionable, and yes we are sure that this handset will eventually attract all those Motorola RAZR owners once they get bored and realise that the interface on their Moto is actually quiet appalling, however, we are sure that come the end of your contract you'll be upgrading to the next model, which by the way has already been announced for the early-2007. If you are looking for a phone that's just a phone and one that you will be happy to swap out in 12 months time then this is a great chav/fashion statement to own (delete as you see fit). Heck, if it's good enough for Colleen then surely it's good enough for all of us.

At a glance

What is it?

Mobile phone

Good

No buttons, Bluetooth, tri-band etcÖ

Bad

Ö while sleek it's a bit of a bling statement, digital camera is poor, smudges easily, no memory card slot

Verdict

If you are looking for a phone that's just a phone and one that you will be happy to swap out in 12 months time then this is a great chav/fashion statement to own

Price Price dependent on contract

Our score

8/10

Your score

3/10