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Touring on a Motorcycle in the Alps

by Sal Diliberto

Touring and riding a motorcycle in the European Alps is incredibly fun, culturally enlightening, user-friendly, technically challenging, and is much simpler and easier to do than most people realize. World class roads, culture, cuisine, and exceptionally friendly people await the adventurous motorcycle traveler. Every motorcyclist should experience a trip to the Alps at least once in their lifetimes - maybe more! Many people, like myself, return time and time again to ride there. I have been on 3 separate motorcycle trips in the Alps for a total of 4 months over 3 summers, and plan on returning there as many times as possible! There is simply a lifetime's worth of passes to ride, places to see, and things to do in the Alps.

The Alps contain over 230 documented mountain passes - literally a motorcyclist's paradise. There are as many as 43 hairpin turns going up each side of a mountain pass - ride them both ways! On top of most of these mountains are refuggios (small restaurants), and usually hundreds of other bikers. Imagine yourself spending an afternoon sitting on the patio of one of these refuggios with your newly made motorcycling friends, sipping cappuccino, watching hundreds of different bikes make their way up and down the dozens of 180-degree hairpin turns below. Besides the social aspect of making new friends, the entire Alps region is an incredibly scenic wonderland, covered with crystal clear lakes, impossibly green and lush alpine forests, and raging waterfalls. Almost everyone speaks English, so language is never a barrier to conversation. This is truly Motorcycle Heaven.

How does someone get to ride a motorcycle in the Alps? There are basically 3 ways to do it: Ship your own bike, go on a guided tour, or rent a motorcycle there. If your vacation time is limited, the expense of a short trip (less than 3 weeks or so) cannot justify the expense of shipping your own bike there and back. If shipping by sea, an important consideration is the problem of building, storing, and disposing of the required crate your bike must be shipped in. I would recommend flying your motorcycle by airplane through a "Fly and Ride" program. It's more expensive than shipping by sea, but much more convenient.

Guided tours include maps and area information, the convenience of pick-up and drop-off at the airport, and knowledgeable and experienced Tour Guides with their own motorcycles that know the roads and offer alternative routes. Reservations are made in advance at hotels and usually include breakfast. Transportation of each rider's luggage is provided, and you tour with the comfort and safety of knowing that most of your needs are taken care of so you can concentrate on RIDING! Prices range from \$2,100 - \$4,500, depending on bike chosen, length of trip, and passenger accommodations. The alternative of renting a motorcycle allows you the freedom to plan your own itinerary. Rental prices range from \$95 - \$140 per day.

If one has a limited time to tour by motorcycle in the Alps and wants to travel independently, I recommend staying in either Andermatt or St.

Moritz, Switzerland. Many of the famous Alps passes are within a day's ride from either location. Andermatt in particular, is near the must-see Jungfrau region of Switzerland. Words cannot describe this place! There are over 70 waterfalls in the valley, some over 1,000 feet high, and a cog-railway train ride takes you up and through the Eiger Mountain to the largest ice field between the Poles. The valley is simply amazing and is an inspiration in its grandeur. Highly recommended.

I have personally ridden a motorcycle throughout 26 states, including every state west of the Mississippi. Combine the best roads in California and the Southwestern US, add in impossibly beautiful snow capped mountains, lush, green valleys with challenging hairpin turns, and you still cannot imagine what a motorcycle trip to the European Alps is like! Call or email me if you have questions or want some information about touring the Alps or shipping a motorcycle there. Phone: (619) 469-1819 Email: sdiliberto@cox.net. What are you waiting for? Do it now!

Ride Report

by Ron Farkas

Due to the bad weather, our ride that was scheduled for March 16, was rescheduled to the following Sunday, March 23. Ride master, Richard French, laid out an easy to follow ride to the southeast side of the county with the finish at "The Luckiest Place on Earth", The Golden Acorn Casino in Campo. After coffee and donuts and some tire kicking at the "House", we took a short hop on the freeway to the east side of El Cajon and enjoyed some nice two lane twisties that rise and fall with the canyons that make up the landscape. A short stop at what is a "must see" for all San Diego motorcyclists is the Lyons Valley Trading Post. The cool shade from the overgrown oaks, the nearby horses and even "BlackJack" the mule, was a stark contrast as to the inviting motorcycle friendly roads that populate the area. After the short "Pit Stop", the ride continued out Highway 94 past the Dulzera Café and out toward SR 188 (the road to Tecate, Mexico), up "Joe's Curve" and the group started the final leg of the road to Campo. The ride instructions referenced a train trestle as a landmark to denote that we were "almost there". After a great run climbing up out of the canyon that forms the US-Mexican border, a large trestle like the kind you see in old movies, was a welcome site. The tanks of our bikes as well as our stomachs were ready to be refueled at the casino. The club was able to call ahead to the casino after a count of hands back at the "House", allowing us some special treatment as we were quickly seated with very little wait at the restaurant.

It was a great day and a great ride as some of us continued the day with a ride on Old Highway 80, Sunrise Highway, and finally the road home.

Newsletter Articles Needed

Did you have a product evaluation report? We need your report, Please send your report to hondaron@cox.net before the end of April!

New HRC Liaison Announced

Keith Knapp has relocated and Dale Stark is our new Honda Rider's Club of America Liaison. Thanks for stepping up to the plate Dale!

RHR in Motorcyclist Magazine!

Check out this month's editorial in Motorcyclist Magazine. Mitch Boehm, editor and our February speaker, mentions the club and published our contact data.

Next Meeting Facility

The April Meeting spot will be:

Tio Leo's
3510 Valley Center Dr
San Diego, CA 92130-3301
(Del Mar)
(858) 350-1468



See what you are missing when you miss a club ride... an exotic CBR400 was available for inspection before the start of the ride.



Diane de Sequera and her husband, JE, were on their first club ride. Diane is seen here navigating a corner on Lyons Canyon Road. JE wasn't too far behind on his BMW R1150R. (ps-JE swears he was in front . . .)

March Meeting Report

by Ron Farkas

More Changes! -First, long time member and Baby Butt route master, **Eric Levy** left for Colorado, then our Safety/Honda Rep, **Keith Knapp** leaves for NASCAR country. What else could change?...well at the last minute our meeting place got moved! - The Acapulco restaurant chain got bought by a competitor and our regular meeting place on Mira Mar was closed. Thanks to the quick work by **Jim Branch**, a call was placed to Filippi's Pizza on Mira Mesa Blvd. in Scripps Ranch and a meeting place was secured. Please check the Red Hot Rider's WEB SITE for information concerning the location for April's meeting (Tio Leo's, (858) 350-1468).

A motorcyclist and "Bike Psyche", **Brenda L. Bates, MA., C.H.t.**, was good enough to speak to us about the unique and different type of personality we motorcyclists have. Brenda explained the physical make up of our brain. a description of a typical denial case, and how the psychological treatment for depression after a fall by traditional methods can do more harm than good. Some riders have a very difficult time "getting back in the saddle" after a crash and often hide or come up with excuses not

to ride again. Brenda has done a study and is about to release a book on the subject of treating the psyche of a person who seeks adventure and has a negative experience, like a fall. Brenda also discussed how we tend to take chances in our professional lives and the need in society for "calculated risk takers", like motorcyclists, in order to keep making progress in our every day lives. If you would like to contact Brenda for additional information you may reach her via the web at: www.motorcycle-madness.com



Patrons of Filippi's Pizza trembled in fear at the site of these outlaw RHR members.



Brenda Bates, MA, C.H.t. fondled a human brain as Filippi's patrons consumed mass quantities of pasta.

Next Meeting: 4/9/03

The guest speaker for April 9 will be Gary Christopher. A veteran at American Honda with 10 years in product development, Gary will share with us how bikes go from paper to pavement as only an insider can. For the last 2 years he has managed the Honda race teams. So, this is the time for all those Top Secret questions you've never been able to ask! Come out and join us for some primo tire kicking!



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EVENT CALENDAR

April	9	Wed	Club Meeting
April	5	Sat	Fontana-AMA SBK <i>Meet @ HOM, 8:30am</i>
April	14	Mon	.....	Streets of Willow Track Day
May	2-4	Fri-Sun	.....	Sears Point
May	14	Wed	.....	Club Meeting <i>Speaker: Rex Marsee</i>
June	7	Sat	.....	Solvang (RHR Overnight)
July	10-13	Thur-Sun	....	Laguna Seca Superbike

Inclement weather may cause the cancellation of any of the above rides. Contact Jim Branch at (619) 460-0669 the evening before a scheduled ride if weather is a question. You can also check out the web site for up-to-date changes in the schedule: www.redhotriders.com

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(760) 433-4333

Club Meetings

We do not have a permanent meeting spot at this time. April's meeting is at: **Tio Leos, Del Mar. See map on front.**
Dinner: 6:00 pm
Meeting: 7:00 pm

Newsletter Submission

News letter submissions can be sent to Ron Farkas, email is hondaron@cox.net. Phone and fax is 858-486-3257

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