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FREE

AUSTRALIA'S MOTORCYCLE

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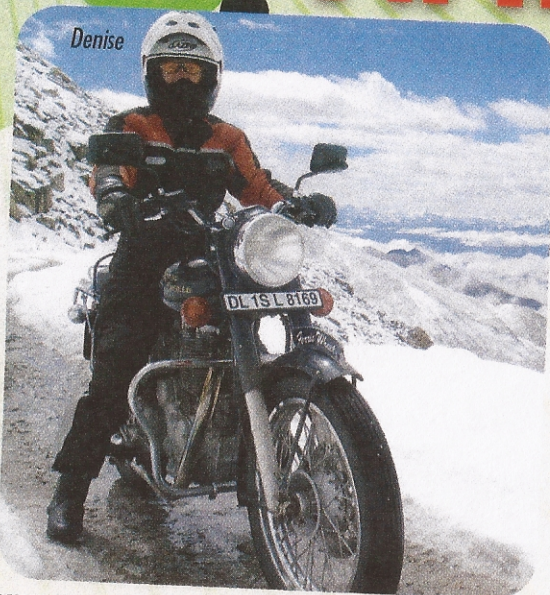
Triumph Rocket III
Touring

Pack Up and Go!

A SMORGASBORD OF EXOTIC MOTORCYCLE TRAVEL DESTINATIONS...

I'll have what she's having

The stereotypical international motorcycle tourist is a bloke. These ladies break the stereotype.



MIKE AND Denise Ferris run Ferris Wheels, a motorcycle tour company which will take you to some very exotic places throughout the world. Many riders dream of one day undertaking such a tour but the ladies in this feature have lived the dream with Ferris Wheels, and kept living it, showing that neither age or gender should be a barrier to enjoying a motorcycle, whether it be at the controls, or on the pillion seat. These are their stories.

'Chicken Lyn' she calls herself.

"I was asked by my friend Kerry to be a pillion. She wanted to take a motorcycle safari in Turkey and her husband

couldn't go. I had only been on the back of a bike once in my life in Bali and that was over 30 years before. She took me for a trial ride from Murray Bridge to Renmark in South Australia one afternoon when it was about 40 degrees. I enjoyed the ride and so I said I would go, having never done anything like that before. The Turkey experience was great; a real adventure. I loved being on the bike and would have loved a go at riding but I considered my age was against me as I was getting close to 60. When we left Turkey Kerry let me keep the helmet I had been wearing. Back home in Adelaide I kept looking at bike riders and feeling jealous. I missed the experience so I made some enquiries about getting my licence - I already had the helmet! I purchased a CB250 Honda and after my second try I got my Learners and started taking rides along the coast.

"One day coming back from a very enjoyable ride I stalled on a steep hill because I was in the wrong gear. I tried to start off again but unfortunately the bike was too heavy and I fell. Putting my arm out to prevent breaking anything on my bike, I broke my elbow instead.

"One year off 60 with a bolt in my arm and still on my Learner's everyone kept telling me to give up, to give my bike riding a miss. Instead I waited for my elbow to mend and went back to the riding course several months later, passed the test, and got my licence. I was so thrilled I couldn't stop smiling.

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Pack Up and Go!

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Helen

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"I still have my little Honda 250 because of my size (152 cm, 60 kg). I have found it hard to find a bike on which I can place both feet on the ground. I'm not keen on cruisers because of the weight; I would love a more powerful bike but have trouble with the seat height. My partner got a bike after I got my licence. I plan to retire soon and look forward to doing more riding and hopefully will find a more powerful bike with a low seat height.

Helen works in Quality Assurance

"Getting on a motorcycle was something I would never have considered on my own. In my mind it was always something other people did, but not me. My first time on the bike was with my boyfriend Sean – a gentle ride around the block. The block got bigger and bigger until we did a 700km return trip to Hervey Bay. I hung on so tight that my hips seized up. I felt as though I'd done a full gym workout by just sitting in constant anxiety.

"I soon became very relaxed on the bike and loved being with the one I love without having to say anything. A month after my first pillioning effort we rode from the Gold Coast to Longreach. This is where I first fell in love with being on a bike. I could see all of the things you can't see from a car – bird's nests in trees and the finer details of Western Queensland that otherwise might go unnoticed. Only three months later my relaxation levels had progressed so much I could barely keep my eyes open, especially after a counter

meal. So I had my first bike lesson.

"Even though each lesson had me feeling like a teenager learning to drive again, the smile never left my face. Every new skill learnt was such a rewarding achievement.

"After a few lessons it was time to head off on an international motorcycle safari, where we rode two-up on a 650 V Strom (Suzuki). Being a pillion again I suddenly realised all of the reasons



Viki

I loved being a rider. After three weeks on the road as a pillion I was hooked on the feeling of riding. Having had some lessons, I could really appreciate how well Sean rode and I learnt a lot from the back seat. As soon as we arrived home I was keen to continue riding, so I had a few more lessons and got my licence. Two days later I bought a GS500 (another Suzuki) – my first bike, in an attractive blue (colour does matter).

"After spending three weeks with like-minded people in a foreign country, bike riding became the glue of some fantastic new friendships. Having had my licence only a matter of weeks, one phone call from the great friends we'd made on the trip and suddenly I'd committed to join another tour and ride around Morocco - on the front seat this time.

"In the nine months I had to prepare for the tour, I put 13,000km on my bike. But the first day on the rented bike in Morocco I was petrified! Luckily the 650cc BMW had a bit more grunt than my GS500, otherwise I may never have rolled off the starting blocks. Next thing you know I'm cutting it up with the locals in the crazy Marrakech traffic. We rode in all sorts of conditions on all sorts of roads, waving enthusiastically at all of the Moroccan children and farmers. 3,700km later I'd be lying if I denied I shed a tear of

