

DIFFERENT NAME, SAME GREAT JOB

Ferris Wheels becomes World on Wheels

Ferris Wheels Motorcycle Safaris has grown into a worldwide motorcycle travel company and relaunched in 2016 as World on Wheels, with annual tours to nine destinations and 15 countries.

After 21 years, Ferris Wheels Motorcycle Safaris owners Mike and Denise Ferris have decided to re-name the business to reflect their global reach.

"The name Ferris Wheels has served us very well over this time, and has given the desired impression that we are a very personal and 'hands-on' business," they say in an email newsletter to more than 5000 loyal customers. "But we are now in an expansionist frame of mind and to portray a more global presence, we are expanding our tours portfolio and re-launching as World On Wheels."

It sounds like the best job in the world guiding riders on tours in exotic locations

for 10 out of 12 months a year and Mike and Denise are passionate about riding and travel. However, Mike says sometimes it can be hard work.

"When it's good it's great, but when things go wrong that's when we earn our keep," he says. "On our last trip in Bolivia we had six major incidents in six days."

Mike says it's no secret that they are planning to sell the company and the new name makes more sense. However, he says they are happy to stay on under the new owners for a transition period. Meanwhile, they have plans to expand the company, taking in South Africa and possibly Cuba, Honduras and more.

"To keep up our own level of interest we might drop off and put on a new one. We like to mix it up and keep it evolving," Mike says. He adds their demographic is 80 per cent Aussies, 10 per cent Kiwis and 10 per cent the rest of the world, with about 200 customers a year.

"We love doing what we do with Aussies because we speak the same, eat the same and

■ Denise and Mike Ferris



share the same sense of humour. But we also get a few Brits, Europeans and Americans."

Mike says their international appeal might spike with the global name change. World on Wheels comes from their highly successful TV mini-series from a few years ago, which has been screened in about 20 countries, on several airlines and is available on DVD.

From 2016, World on Wheels will have a new internet address, using the new international Domain classification .tours. The new website is www.WorldOnWheels.tours but they will also retain the Ferris Wheels website, Facebook and YouTube accounts during the transition, with re-directs to the new sites.

The company can now be contacted on its new official email: adventure@worldonwheels.tours

WE HAVE IGNITION!

Victory Motorcycles has confirmed earlier suspicions that it is heading towards a younger market with the unveiling of the Ignition Concept muscle cruiser. It is built around the water-cooled V-twin engine from the Project 156 race bike that attempted an assault on the Pikes Peak International Hillclimb in June.

The engine is an unspecified capacity, but it appears to have similar architecture to the Indian Scout 1133cc engine that has also now been modified to 999cc for the new Scout Sixty.

When we spoke in Denver with one of the Roland Sands Design mechanics who helped build Project 156, he let slip that it was "almost 1300cc" so the engine architecture seems to allow for a fair bit of capacity variation.

Victory says in its press release that the "lean and muscular" Ignition Concept "represents the future of Victory Motorcycles' production machines" and it has never made a secret of the fact that the engine would power a new model to be released in 2016.

Ignition Concept is a muscular beast much like the Harley-Davidson V-Rod and new Ducati XDiavel with forward controls and belt drive — somewhere between a cruiser and a naked bike.

"We knew any production version of the Project 156 race motor would be a great centrepiece in any American bike, but we wanted to see a European take on the design for EICMA. So we sought out Urs Erbacher to see his vision," says Gary Gray, director Motorcycle Product. "In the end I think we have a concept bike that both American and European consumers can get excited about."

Urs is a six-time FIA European drag racing champion and renowned Swiss custom bike builder whose drag racing bike is sponsored by Victory Motorcycles.

His vision of a future model to house the new V-twin is an exciting one and it remains to be seen how close to his concept Victory's production will be.

One of the most beautiful details of the concept is the swirling exhaust system that ends in a 45-degree stubby exhaust. The exhaust makes it necessary to have the footpegs in a forward position. Together with the flat drag bars, it will create an aggressive riding position not

dissimilar to the V-Rod.

It features beefy fully adjustable Marzocchi forks from the "Erbacher The One" custom bike and it is jacked up an extra 50mm in the front for a greater lean angle. "The good thing is, we can also mount the Brembo brake on this fork and it brakes like a race bike," says Urs.

It runs an Ohlins rear shock between the frame and the swing-arm and is shod with red 17in alloy wheels and Metzeler Racetec Interact tyres with a 200mm section rear.

"The lean and muscular Ignition Concept represents the future of Victory Motorcycles' production machines"



■ European drag racing champion and renowned Swiss custom bike builder Urs with his Ignition Concept