

Ride Report: Gypsy Tour November 5 + 6, 2022

DAY ONE:

There were 5 riders with deposits for this, the last ride of 2022. At the last minute, 3 cancelled, leaving just two locals, friends and fellow “Taco Tuesday” regulars: Fred and Nico. With me, there would be 3 of us, a good size for this sort of adventure. There was no destination. We flipped a coin Saturday morning at breakfast to determine direction which came up as North. I had prepped 7 bikes for this trip ranging from 500cc to 650cc; less is more. The idea was to give participants a choice and to have a spare just in case. We chose England/1970, the T100C, Japan/1978, the CX500, and Italy/1979, the Moto Morini 500 Strada. These choices cover the decade and the planet: variety is the spice of life.



With no particular destination in mind, we headed out on small roads keeping out of the traffic flow. The sun was out, the weather was perfect, with the Autumn foliage adding a splash of vibrancy that gave me a Zen-like state of mind. I realized early on that if I kept my shadow in front of my front wheel, I would maintain a northerly heading since the sun travels in an arc across the southern half of the sky in these parts. I did just that and banged turns at random, following interesting looking roads that I had never been on before. On small bikes and with no set course, we kept a very reasonable pace that allowed for ample rubber necking for enjoying the scenery. It was really liberating to spend the whole day just meandering around the countryside.

*Slow down you move too fast
You got to make the morning last
Just kicking down the cobblestones
Looking for fun and feeling groovy.*



There was a threat of rain, but nothing serious ever materialized. Still, with rain suits and the warm riding gear that *might* be needed at this time of year, we were grateful for the large-ish luggage racks on the CX and the Triumph. I still haven't found a rack for the Morini, but that just adds to the thrill of riding a very light, nimble motorcycle. Same can be said for the Triumph. For the Honda....not so much.

We made a long stop at a restored Colonial Era village and watched a short video that explained how iron used to be smelted and cast for wood stoves. We made a short stop at a Dunkin Donuts in spite of which, at a certain point, Lynn's hearty breakfast began to wear off, and we settled on a pizza restaurant that popped up at just the right time. We ordered just the right amount of food and it cost just the right price. Tasted pretty good too.



We resumed our northerly course after lunch, and nearing sundown, wound up popping out of the woods in Lehighton, PA, a town that I had visited several years before. We pulled up to the same motel where I stayed back then and discovered that it was Autumn Festival weekend in nearby touristy Jim Thorpe. There were no motel rooms available anywhere! But we are Gypsies, and we can sleep in our wagons, or on the ground, if necessary, right? Using our cell phones, we began calling all the local motels and every single one was in No Vacancy mode. Getting a bit desperate, we decided to go through the list one more time and found a gorgeous motel just a mile or two down the road with a late cancellation that opened up 1 room. We booked the last available room in the county and were set for the night.



We still needed to do something for dinner though, so we called up an Uber and crammed ourselves inside for the short ride into Jim Thorpe. There, we strolled down “Millionaire’s Row” with its throngs

of tourists. The restaurants seemed to be totally booked up: Autumn Festival Weekend. But

the ‘Row’ is long, and at the far end we came across a tiny eatery with live music. Cold drinks came quickly, unlike the food, but our wait was not unpleasant, as the talented pianist/vocalist entertained us with songs of a certain era that we all knew



well. The food was worth waiting for. Fully sated, we strolled back towards the old railway station and called up another Uber to bring us back to the motel.

DAY TWO:

Clouds in the sky and a rainy forecast but somehow, we never saw anything more than a brief light mist. With no sun, a different navigational tactic was called for. The mountain and ridges in this area generally run from north east to south west. I tried to ride up and over one ridge after another, zig zagging in the process so as to maintain a generally southern heading. It worked! Not only did we manage to head more or less due south until we recognized our environs, but we also explored many very interesting back roads that tended to curve this way and that when climbing said ridges and upon descent. I really enjoyed not having to follow a set course for our 2 days of 'Gypsy Touring'.

Back at home after a bit over 100 miles of enjoyable roadcraft, we unloaded our gear and headed upstairs to wash up for a gourmet meal prepared by my wife Lynn. Hors d'oeuvres, beer, and wine were waiting, and occupied us while the meal was plated. An enjoyable hour or so of camaraderie ensued after which Fred and Nico took their leave.



**LESS IS MORE: GYPSY TOUR
RETROTOUR.**

We swapped bikes every 50 or 75 miles. The variety and contrast of these three bikes is remarkable. We enjoyed riding each of them immensely.



Three 500's: 1970, 1978, 1979.
Two V-twins, one parallel twin.
Two air cooled, one by water.
Two with discs, one with drums.
Two electronic ignitions, 1 with points.
Two drive chain, 1 shaft drive.
One electric start, 1 kick start, 1 both.

