

The Spirit of **Adventure!**

Roadtrip-USA customers tell it like it is...

"**It's been a while** since our return, and we've been in a constant state of denial. Having become accustomed to solitary confinement for hours at a stretch, interrupted only by brief intervals of inane banter, the brain is no longer equipped for life in an office environment.

The stories have been repeated 100 times over, and exaggerated out of all proportion. This was no holiday, more a magical journey into the world of Harley boys and genuine bad-ass bikers.

The mileage was grueling, but justified by the magnificence of all there is to see and all the people who make America what it is. In every bar, restaurant, supermarket, drive-thru coffee shop, and town that time forgot, characters abound.

Our biggest complaint: why the hell can't they announce 'last orders' before pulling their last pint of the evening? After all, bikers need beer same as Honda Shadows need 92 Premium.

One thing that's not sunk in is that the trip's over. It's done. Six months of preparation and anticipation. Two weeks surviving Motel-6s and huge meals.

And every step of the way, there was the Enforcer [Roadtrip-USA Tour Guide]. You were always there: controlled, reliable, patient, dependable, enthusiastic, and appreciative. If this sounds uninspired, it's because we're at a loss for words.

Maybe we've just got a taste for freedom, a life on the road, few responsibilities, and the time to enjoy.

Lake Tahoe, Monument Valley, Death Valley, and Arches for starters. Did you mention Montana?

Sign me up, Scotty."

Sarah Leonard & Carole Hubbard

"**Having returned** from a two-week self-guided tour incorporating, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming, I should like to record our grateful thanks.

Ever since my initial enquiry and acceptance of the idea, the paperwork has been minimal, the organisation most efficient, and my idiot questions (of which there were many) answered knowledgeably and with considerable patience and tolerance.

When we picked up the bike in Bend, Oregon, yet more information was provided in the form of tour books and maps, together with AAA membership – again, very efficient and helpful.

The bike (Suzuki GS850G) was great; at least as comfortable as my BMW K1100LT (designed specifically for touring) and a very willing workhorse which dragged my wife and myself, plus all our luggage, over 2,800 miles without once missing a beat.

What more could be asked?"

Paul & Val Heley

"**Just like to thank you** for your help and advice regarding routes and places to eat. I thoroughly enjoyed our stay in Bend, especially at the reduced rate. Nice one!

Hope to see you again sometime in the future.

From **Nigel Perkins** and **Trudi** the Brummies. Ta very much"

"**I had an awesome ride** and appreciate all you did in setting me up with a great bike, maps, and an awesome route!

Oregon is definitely a beautiful place to ride – I had no idea how gorgeous the land is out there.

Thanks again, if I ever make it out that way again, I'll give you a call for another ride.

Thanks!"

Scott Lee

"Thanks for all your help. My trip was a total winner!"

Josh Leventhal

"**Where has the summer gone?** It's been eleven weeks since the most wonderful holiday of our lives. We have found it almost impossible to settle back into the 'normal' routine of everyday living in England. Whenever we see a Little Chef we look at each other in resignation – it's not a Denny's.

Unfortunately, we feel superior to all the other USA holidaymakers we know because we really saw it, felt it, and travelled it! We saw so much, crossing time lines and weather fronts, deserts and snow, hail and heat, mountains and plains.

I told someone the other day what the Rocky Mountains were *really* like. And when asked where I lost my sunglasses, I said 'on the borders of four states' [Four Corners in New Mexico, Utah, Arizona and Colorado]. They just stared at me.

We both want to say thank you for the enormous amount of work you did: organising the route, arranging the accommodation, and giving us the opportunity to have one of the biggest experiences of our lifetimes.

In short, thank you for the time and care you put in, and for the experience you led us to.

Best Wishes from 'The Roadies'!"

Jenny Baxter & Rob Boss

"**We've been back at work** for about a week and are now ready for another 'tour' even though we still haven't sorted the 120+ pictures and over an hour of video!

Many thanks for another SUPERB holiday."

Mike & Di Asplin

"**We decided to get married** this year. We also decided that the money we would spend in one day on the old 'church and white dress' routine would be much better spent on a month-long roadtrip around the Western States of America.

We chose Roadtrip-USA as it was the least expensive bike hire company to be found, and also the friendliest. With excellent service and a personal touch, the staff went out of their way to help us, including an extra day on the bike for free and courtesy travel to and from the airport.

The immaculate hired Suzuki GS850G was a reliable workhorse. It was perfect for the job, despite being a bit heavy two-up with a whole load of luggage, and we managed to notch up 4,000 very comfortable miles in 25 days. It got us from Oregon through California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and back again without a hitch!

The scenery was spectacular, and could change from stunning coastline to shimmering desert to national park forest in a day's ride.

With no advance bookings, and only a vague route in mind, each day we just got up and went. The luxury of being so flexible meant we could change direction on a whim, or, as was the case, to avoid a hurricane that was fast approaching from down Mexico way.

Oh yeah... we got married in Las Vegas, or rather over it, in a helicopter dressed up as Elvis and Priscilla. But that's another story...

Top trip and thoroughly recommended."

Sarah & Kevin Nicholson

"**Roadtrip-USA's excellent service** and planning made my vacation a tremendous success and a high point in my life – not just my motorcycling life. And that's not BS!

Again, thanks for all your assistance, understanding and hard work that helped make my Roadtrip-USA vacation a phenomenal success.

I will keep in touch. Hopefully, when you make it to Western PA, I will have another BMW, an R1100S or even better, an R1150S (I wish) so you can ride either that or my great R1100RS.

Thanks again. (An extremely satisfied customer, and hopefully friend forever.)"

Ken McMunn

"On behalf of the travelling classes (creaky old crinklies), we thoroughly enjoyed our trip. Albeit a bit warmish at times – putting the ageing flab under some pressure.

Due to the heat, battery and tyres were checked several times. No problem. But I did lose my nice pressure gauge somewhere. Leavenworth I think. And Marg left her best sunglasses on a wall at Index. Why didn't I lose some weight?

It was a long journey. But gosh, we saw a lot and met a lot of nice folk. It was worth it! Thanks for everything."

Arthur Withey (Aged 71)

"In late September – early October [1997] I led a tour comprising six bikes and riders, plus two passengers. The start of the tour saw us crossing the vastness of Idaho in one day. It was good to know that all our accommodation had been pre-booked by Roadtrip-USA. We could sit back and have fun knowing that every day was going to be an adventure.

Our tour took us through Idaho and Wyoming to Yellowstone National Park, staying the night at The Old Faithful Inn. We rode from Yellowstone National Park to Grand Teton National Park and onwards south to Utah and the magnificent scenery of Canyonlands National Park, Arches National Park and Monument Valley. (A ride through the valley in an open-sided Jeep with a Navajo Indian guide is a must.) We then rode on to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and back into Utah to Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon National Park.

Each day was so different from the day before, and Utah was not the end of the tour, but the start of the long ride back to Oregon. Following the original Pony Express route, now known as the 'Loneliest Road in America', we crossed Nevada and finally made it back to Bend.

I chose to hire the bikes from Roadtrip-USA, a British/American company based in beautiful Bend, Oregon. The good rates of hire and the excellent pre-booked accommodation, plus the use of Suzuki GS1100G, four-cylinder shaft-drive tourers (which proved to be ideally suited for the tour), made the holiday a memorable one. I can't wait to go again!"

Roger Yetton

*Associate Secretary for America
BMW Club (UK)*

"Home 6 weeks now and people are *still* asking me how I enjoyed my holiday. I tell them it wasn't a holiday – it was an *adventure*.

When they ask who travelled with me and I say I was on my own they look at me as if I'm crazy.

It's only now sinking in – the miles I covered and the many states I visited in 12 days.

Thanks again for all your help in making my 'holiday' the adventure of a lifetime. Who knows I may do it again – if my butt recovers (after 5294 miles).

Good Luck."

Vincent Drain

"It had always been a dream for Pete and me... to go motorcycle touring in America. And California seemed like the ideal setting.

How about fulfilling this fantasy and making it a reality? Well, having phoned around, I realised that most [motorcycle rental] companies penalise you for excess mileage. This did not apply with Roadtrip-USA. Having spoken to a representative and taken his advice, we realised that this dream was both achievable and affordable.

We arrived to good accommodation, a warm welcome, and the Suzuki and Kawasaki motorcycles that were to take us on our journey. We found the bikes to be in excellent condition, well maintained and very comfortable for the long distances that we covered.

I would describe the holiday as a total adventure, memorable for many reasons. Roadtrip-USA's Classic Route [The Pacific Coast] was staggering: crossing the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco, riding the Big Sur [PCH-1], visiting Yosemite National Park... just too much to mention; 2,500 of the most enjoyable miles of our lives. We have still not come to terms with the whole experience some two months on, it really was *that* good!

We would recommend this holiday to those who have a sense of adventure, as America is literally the place where dreams can come true if you are prepared to make the effort.

I will certainly be going again with Pete. So watch out America!"

Kevin Evans & Peter Holmes

"There were five of us touring America with Roadtrip-USA: friends, Chris & Angie Birch on one bike, myself and boyfriend Steve Jackson sharing the riding on another, and my daughter Rachel, aged 11, with the Tour Guide.

We were introduced to our Roadtrip-USA Tour Guide, and accustomed ourselves to the Suzuki motorcycles we were to use. The tour we chose [*The American Southwest*] included many very well-known sights, and Crater Lake in Oregon was the first, followed by overnight stops in Klamath Falls and Reno.

From Reno we travelled through the marvelous scenery around Lake Tahoe, stopping at Lone Pine, California. From there we made an early start for the ride through Death Valley National Park. We reached Las Vegas in the evening and had a ball on the town!

Jet skiing [at Lake Mead] was excellent fun on the way to the Hoover Dam. And the Grand Canyon (via historic Route-66) was well worth its reputation, especially at sunset.

From Flagstaff, we went on to the Meteorite Crater, then the Painted Desert, through New Mexico and over the Rockies, where the switchback roads and snowy scenery were something to dream about! No problem for the Suzooks though, which coped equally well in hot deserts.

On to Arches National Park, with its wind-sculptured rock formations, ending the day in Salt Lake City. Then on to Boise, Idaho via the unbelievable volcanic devastation of Craters of the Moon National Volcanic Monument.

We finally came full circle back to Bend, Oregon, having travelled 3,515 miles through eight states in eleven days.

The bikes were well suited to the job, being both comfy and handling well two-up with luggage. The hotels were also good value-for-money, and Roadtrip-USA staff gave us friendly, personalised attention from start to finish, which made it well worth a return visit."

Jill Saunders

Women's International Motorcycle Association (WIMA)

"We wanted a special holiday to celebrate our Silver Wedding anniversary, so we decided to fulfill a long-held ambition and tour the USA on a bike. Work commitments limited the holiday to two weeks. After checking out several motorcycle hire options, the Roadtrip-USA package seemed the best way to make use of the time, and cash, available.

We chose a 3,500-mile tour, which included Crater Lake, Lake Tahoe, Death Valley, Las Vegas, the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and much, much more.

Roadtrip-USA booked the motels for us and offered a choice of bikes to hire. We chose a Suzuki GS1100G, oldish technology, but well suited to a 'laid-back' tour of cowboy country.

We were met at Portland Airport, taken to Roadtrip-USA's HQ and introduced to the bike. We were given time to transfer our kit from suitcases to panniers and to acclimatize to the USA. Then we were off on a true adventure...

Even after several bike tours of Europe, this was something special. With the benefit of Roadtrip-USA's local knowledge, we had two brilliant weeks of stunning scenery, glorious weather and the most fattening breakfasts ever!

Thanks to Roadtrip-USA's route planning and excellent choice of motels/hotels, we had nothing to do, except enjoy ourselves. The only thing we didn't enjoy was having to go home, but Roadtrip-USA even eased that pain with a B-52 liqueur coffee on the trip back to Portland.

Would we recommend it to others? Certainly! Anyone with a spirit of adventure couldn't fail to enjoy themselves. Will we go again? We certainly hope so!"

Di & Mike Asplin

"**Like the poor kid** staring in at the toy shop window, we had been nursing the idea of touring the US on bikes for some years. Our determination to go was kept alive – although on the back burner – by frequent references on TV, in films, and particularly in *BIKE* magazine.

Then, out of the blue, enough cash to realise our dreams. Should we spend it on a car? The house? The kids? No way! We phoned around and Roadtrip-USA was selected. They not only had the package we required, at the right price, but they also displayed a genuine friendly politeness, so rare these days.

Touring Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico (just), Utah, Idaho and back, taking in such diverse experiences as Death Valley, snow in the Rockies, Lake Mead, the Hoover Dam, Vegas, and much, much more scratched that itch called wanderlust – wonderfully.

Our steed for the duration, aside from an afternoon on horseback, was Suzuki's timeless GS1100G. After some early reservations about the bike, we came to adore it: powerful, comfy, good-looking, smooth, and with good road manners – perfect for 200 miles before breakfast followed by 500 miles afterwards.

And then there is America... The size of the place, it's beauty, the friendly, interesting people, the roads, the vehicles, and bikers that still wave to one another... ah bliss. When can we go back?

Bikers out there hear the word. Not only do we recommend this to you, we now *plead* with you 'GO!' You will not be disappointed! Indeed, we shall continue to recommend the 'Roadtrip-USA experience' for as long as there is still one brain cell functioning."

Chris & Angie Birch

"**This is just a short line** to say thanks very much for our Roadtrip-USA adventure; we are still on a high now.

I am still working on the 'survivors guide' thing and will e-mail it when I have finished it. I'll also send some of the photos, there are some pretty good ones.

I don't know if I am going to be able to come out on vacation next year. I just got promoted at work and it looks like I will have courses. Depending on when they are I may try and sort something out. But I will definitely be out in 2004, and my parents are hoping to come over as well, but they want to stay around Bend and just hire the bike for a couple of days or so.

Anyway, sorry this note of thanks was so long in coming, and once again we can't thank you enough.

Regards and THANKS."

Lionel and Mark Jennings

"**Just a note** to let you know that we arrived back in the UK safely after our holidays; it was everything you said it would be – TRULY AWESOME! We were already talking about *next* year's trip on the plane going home – there's no comparison in the UK.

We have had another trip since (with friends) to the Isle of Man (where they hold the TT Races), but still that doesn't compare with our last adventure.

We had the pictures developed, they are quite good, something to look back on.

We have spoken to quite a few of our biking friends and they were very interested. They asked me to ask you how many bikes you could cater for in one booking. You know how it is when you get talking; everybody's interested at the time. You never know, we might end up bringing a load of Brits with us!

It poured for a week when we came home. That made us want to come back even quicker, but we'll probably have to wait until next summer. (Having said that, we may go to Daytona in Feb 2003 for the Harley-Davidson anniversary.)

I'll be in touch again when we have decided when and what route we are taking. Anyway, once again, thanks for a GREAT holiday. Bye for now."

Julie & Joseph Horsfield

"The USA at 70 plus...

(Years-old I mean, not MPH.)

Last winter we entered a competition in MCS&L to win a trip to America with Roadtrip-USA, and *actually* won a prize. This turned out to be a 2-week holiday at a much reduced price, so we decided to go.

I telephoned Roadtrip-USA and spoke to their head man, Scott Sargent. After checking with him that, at our age, insurance on the bike was available (you can't hire a car in lots of countries if you are over 70), we started to make plans.

Earlier this year I contacted Roger Yetton, our club man for America, with a view to going on his trip, but because of Foot and Mouth, etc. he couldn't go – so Roadtrip-USA was a real gift.

We rang Scott, who is based in Bend, Oregon, and he could not have been more helpful. I of course, wanted a BMW and he said 'OK'. He also agreed to fit a power socket so that we could use our intercom.

I called Roger again before we left, and he was most encouraging and helpful, he suggested which route to take, what to see, where to stay, and generally filled us with confidence. (He has already toured with Roadtrip-USA.)

So off we went at the end of June, flying to Redmond (via SFO). Roadtrip-USA had pre-booked our airport shuttle and our room at the Phoenix Inn Suites – all very convenient. Oregon is 8 hours behind the UK, so by the time we arrived we had been on-the-go for nearly 22 hours.

The next morning Scott arrived with a five-week-old yellow/grey R1150R on a trailer, complete with windscreen, panniers and a tank bag, and 8,000 miles on the clock already! The bike was very similar to our own R1100S, so that was fine. And yes, he had fitted a power socket for our intercom (which I know must have caused him a lot of grief because it involves accessing the battery under the tank).

I showed Scott the route that Roger had suggested and he said he would check it out while we went for a ride around the Cascade Lakes (to get familiar with the bike and the roads). The bike had servo-assisted brakes, which makes them very fierce – I never got used to them.

So there we were, feeling jet-lagged and wondering what we had let ourselves in for. We have been going abroad in Europe for over ten years with Bike and Sun Tours, but always in a group, and we have made many friends on these tours, but here we were 6,000 miles from home, all on our lonesome.

The first thing we noticed was how courteous American drivers are. Indeed, throughout our entire trip, we never saw any bad or aggressive driving at all. If the sign said 'STOP' they stopped – even if the crossroad was obviously empty. Nobody pulled out on us and we did not have to make one emergency stop.

Roger's wife Christine had told us that no matter what a café or restaurant looked like from the outside, inside it would be perfectly OK, and this we found to be true everywhere we went. All the food was very good value, with large portions. We never did manage to find much room for desserts. We returned to our hotel feeling much more confident.

Scott met us that evening with a revised itinerary and reservations at ten motels en-route. American school holidays start in June and end in September so some of the motels on our original route were already fully booked. Thanks to Scott we knew we would have a bed for the night everywhere. He also provided us with maps, route details, and information on the towns and places of interest we would visit. (He even provided us with maps which showed us how to find our motels.) He answered all our questions and could not have been more helpful; nothing was too much trouble, he even gave us a spare fuse for the intercom socket. And so we set off for our first stop in Baker City.

We are still trying to come to terms with all that we have seen and experienced. We rode across prairie, rode 100 miles following the same river, went through Logan Pass in the Rocky Mountains, rode over a pass 10,000 ft high, went into a canyon deeper than the Grand Canyon, met friendly people everywhere and talked to dozens of bikers (mostly H-D riders). The whole trip was just magic.

We came across a sign that said 'Road curves for next 77 miles' and it *did*. It was also empty, with advisory speed signs before every bend. Once you knew how much over the posted speed you could go you were away. If the sign said 40mph, you could take it at 50mph, so after a few bends you knew exactly what speed to go into every corner. Just imagine riding from Liverpool to Leeds, or Taunton to Plymouth, with bends all the way, on empty roads. That's what it was like.

All told, we went into five states: Oregon, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and Washington. And on a day off the bike, we took a coach trip into Canada. We put 2,850 miles on the clock in twelve days of riding.

We were very lucky with the weather. We put our over-trousers on a couple of times, but never got caught in rain. It was very hot at times and some roads were straight for miles, but by our standards always empty. At one gas station we filled-up at it looked like it might rain. I went in to pay and the conversation went like this:

Continued...

"How are you folks today?"
"We're fine."
"Going far?"
"Glacier National Park."
"That sounds like fun."
"Yes, but it looks like rain."
"So you get a little wet."
"Yes, but I'm worried about the grip on the road."
"So you go a little slower – have a good trip!"

Laid-back or what! And that was the general attitude towards things in this part of the US.

We have been biking for 52 years and have been to most places, but the USA really opened our eyes to what a wonderful world we live in.

We did our homework beforehand, got advice from Roger and Christine Yetton, and had the utmost help from Scott and Roadtrip-USA. It's not cheap, but save-up, hit the plastic, anything. But do GO! You'll never forget it."

John & Joan Courtney

BMW Club Journal (Sept. 2002)

"**We would both** like to take this time to thank you for making our vacation to Central Oregon very special and most memorable.

The flexibility on your part when we changed our departure time was greatly appreciated. To sum it up, your customer service was excellent and your machine was top notch.

I can only say I'm sure your rentals and tours business is the best, because of your dedication to the customer.

The open road around the Cascade Loop was beautiful; that last stretch of road before reaching Bend was fairly curvy and the Honda handled smooth and sure-footed. The ride was a memory not soon forgotten.

Thank you for being part of the great vacation getaway."

Bob and Peg

"**Having always** toured the UK and Europe we decided, at two weeks notice, to hire a bike and take three weeks touring some of the US.

We did quite a bit of research and finally ended up contacting Roadtrip-USA in Bend, Oregon. Their website is really useful and gives lots of information and different touring routes. If we had any questions, they were extremely helpful, and if we couldn't get through first time, they always called us back.

We settled on the Pacific Coast route with a trip back to Bend via the national parks (including Yosemite). We were asked what we wanted to do and see, and were sent different itineraries to cover all our requests.

Although Roadtrip-USA could have booked our accommodation in advance, we decided not to take this option as we didn't want too rigid a schedule – they were still happy to recommend hotels/motels in towns along the way. We were also given '800' [free] telephone numbers to call at any time, in case of problems... or just for a chat.

On arrival in Bend we were given loads of information and maps for the route we had chosen and of course the bike with luggage. We then travelled over 3,000 miles of fantastic roads with magnificent scenery. The most used phrase throughout the trip was 'WOW stop, must take a photo'.

It was the best biking holiday we have had, everything was covered. We arrived in 75f° and then experienced temperatures up to 104f° and on arrival back in Bend it was snowing in the mountains, although still nearly 80f° in town.

We will definitely go back to Roadtrip-USA and book another touring route, there is so much more to see. THANK YOU Roadtrip-USA for all your enthusiasm and help, and also for the great evening out at the Pine Tavern before we left."

Patrick & Eileen Bullimore

"**I rented a motorcycle** from your shop in Bend this last summer [2002] and would like to be added to your list of vocal riding customers with the following remark:

'The best part of the family reunion at Sunriver was hopping on that big motorcycle with a passenger and riding the Century Drive Loop. Everything else I did during that week was tame by comparison.'"

Andreas Mueller