



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF TOURATECH



TOURATECH

Travel Time



**DUCATI MULTISTRADA
1200 ENDURO**
OUR TEST JOURNEY



EXTRA DVD!

ADVENTUREFILM
whereverwego (46:11 min.)

ADVENTURECLIP

- Ducati Multistrada Enduro
- Ducati Scrambler
- United People of Adventure

+ CATALOG

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ADVENTURES IN THE BALKANS

FRANCE
TOURATECH TEST TOUR

PORTUGAL
ORGANIZED OFF-ROAD

NEW MEXICO
BACKCOUNTRY DISCOVERY ROUTE

EQUIPMENT

TEXTILE SUIT

RE-DESIGN - COMPAÑERO WORLD 2

MODULAR HELMET

FLIP-UP HELMET MEETS OFF-ROAD

BASIC PANNIER

THE NEW ZEGA MUNDO

TRAVELING BOOTS

THE UNIVERSAL DESTINO ADVENTURE

WWW.TOURATECH.COM



NEW

AFRICA TWIN

PORTRAIT OF THE NEW ADVENTURE BIKE
PLUS REVIEW, OPINIONS, ACCESSORIES



SUSPENSION

COMPETITION LINE FOR ROAD RACING
CARTRIDGE KIT EXTREME-TEST

INSIDE TOURATECH

MAKING OF: THE CARBON HELMET

VISIT TO THE **DESIGN STUDIO**

ANNIVERSARY: THE TOURATECH STORY

SIMON & LISA THOMAS: 12 YEARS ON THE
ROAD WITH TOURATECH EQUIPMENT

TOURATECH ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Official Partner of
BMW Motorrad



You are already familiar with the quality of Touratech products – now we offer you adventure tours with the same high standard. You fly to the destination – the rest is included. **These tours are arranged by Touratech in Scandinavia** – Official BMW Motorrad Partner with certified tourguides and instructors.

”

During my many years as a motorcyclist, and motor journalist, I have been on many exciting trips, such as my amazing trip in the Himalayas or the tracks of the Dakar rally in Morocco, but never before have I had the privilege to join such a comprehensive and well-organized tour.

Johan Ahlberg – www.fasbikes.se

Portugal

8 days in February/March 2016

Photo: Johan Ahlberg



Iceland

9 days in July/August 2016

Bikes
included

Kverkfjöll 44 F9

Askja 28 F9



All nationalities are welcome, we speak English, Swedish & Danish. Included: Tourguides, transfer, accommodation, Touratech equipped BMW GS of the latest model, bike insurance, spare bikes, fuel, breakfast & lunch all days, support vehicle and full support throughout the tour.

For detailed information, dates and prices, see website:

www.adventuretravel.se/en



HERBERT SCHWARZ



JOCHEN SCHANZ



Travel Time

Cover photo: John Beck - Albania

EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

This bumper edition of Touratech Travel Time rounds off our anniversary year while at the same time launching us into the 2016 season. Never before in the 25-year history of our company have we had such a wide range of new products to introduce as we do today.

In Touratech's relatively new segment of rider equipment, the Compañero World 2 represents the second generation of the textile touring suit that set new standards in the clothing sector when it was first launched five years ago. The experience gathered over tens of thousands of test miles and feedback from motorcyclists around the world have gone into a careful re-design of this successful suit.

We have also extended our helmet range by adding the Aventuro Mod. I am confident that this modular helmet, which combines the benefits of a flip-up and off-road helmet and is perfectly suited to touring, will cause the same kind of stir among touring motorcyclists as our Aventuro Carbon helmet, which is now available in three exciting new designs.

Another great addition to the Touratech rider equipment line is the Destino boot. Its revolutionary concept of making the interior shoe double as a sneaker is a real global novelty.

It goes without saying that there will also be plenty of accessories tailored to the motorcycles being launched in the 2016 season. The parts for the brand-new Africa Twin are ready for launch, and I was able to test numerous products for the Ducati Multistrada Enduro during our trip through Albania.

I am particularly pleased that we will be able to present the fourth generation of our Desierto fairing for the 2016 season. With this unique and constantly updated fairing concept, Touratech has transformed every GS generation since the R 1100 GS into adventure bikes that are just as comfortable as they are tough. The design and creation process for the fourth generation is described in detail in this edition.

Of course, this edition also contains plenty of reports about motorcycle adventures. These include our ride through the Balkan state of Albania, exciting adventures from our readers, organized dual-sport fun in Portugal, and extreme undertakings along the historical Silk Road and through New Mexico – a colorful mixture of very diverse destinations.

We hope you will find this edition of Travel Time inspirational, and that you will have a good start to the 2016 season with Touratech.

Yours,

Herbert Schwarz





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TOURATECH IN THE BEST BRAND AWARDS 2015

TWO POLE POSITIONS

Touratech has won two separate first prizes in the readers' "Best Brand" contest run by MOTORRAD magazine. In the hotly contended categories "Accessories/Conversions" and "Tank bags", this was actually the fifth time in a row that the "Made in Nidereschach" products have come out tops.

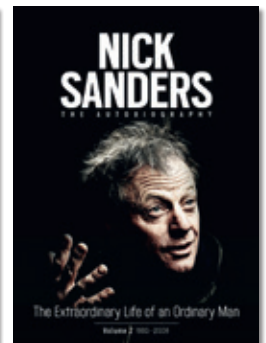
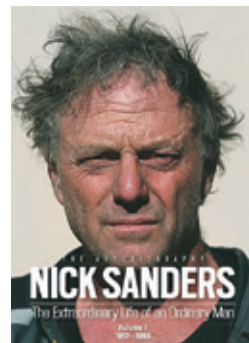
MOTORRAD magazine presented the "Best Brand Awards" for the tenth time this year as part of its readers' vote for "Motorcycle of the Year". An impressive 48,118 people cast their votes in Germany alone, naming the brands they consider the best. Every segment was covered, from brakes right through to tools. Touratech finished head and shoulders

above the runners-up in the categories tank bags and accessories/conversions. Relative newcomer Touratech Suspension also did well at the Best Brand Awards, just missing out on the winners' rostrum in fourth place. "To make fourth place with our suspension tuning in such a short space of time is just fabulous," commented Touratech's delighted CEO Herbert Schwarz.

NICK SANDERS' EBOOK BIOGRAPHY

Quick Nick unplugged

Anyone who has ever wanted an insight into the mind of someone who has circumnavigated the world in a mere 19 days now has the chance to get just that. Record-breaking motorcyclist Nick Sanders has published his autobiography entitled "The Extraordinary Life of an Ordinary Man", which offers some deep insights into Quick Nick's driving forces and mindset. Readers will actually need quite some stamina themselves to keep up with Nick on his journey through life. The two-volume book is anything other than a motorcycling reference book. Nick kicks off his recollections with his (not exactly straightforward) childhood and devotes plenty of space to his early years, before anything hinted at what was to come. He also relishes describing his adventures as a bicycling globetrotter in quite some detail. Then he eventually gets down to relating his experiences as a racing tourer around the world – and this in epic proportions. **Both volumes of Nick Sanders' biography are currently available as Kindle eBooks on Amazon (in English only).**



TOOLKIT BOX FOR THE R 1200 GS

For DIY mechanics

The new toolkit box from Touratech is designed to precisely fit the pannier rack from BMW's original accessories. The container makes perfect use of the space next to the inner wall of the left-hand pannier. It can be mounted entirely independently from the pan-

niers and its combination of stainless steel and plastic complements the appearance of the GS superbly – even, and indeed especially, without panniers in place. The container holds up to 4.2 liters – that's enough to accommodate even the large kind of toolkit required on long-distance tours. There's even enough space for spare parts. In fact, it's the perfect place to stow anything that's better off protected, both in general and especially from water splashes. **Art. No.: 045-5610**





SMARTPHONE HOLDER

iBRACKET

The iBracket is a vibration-free holder for motorcycles or bicycles that turns smartphones into navigation devices.

After successful use with several generations of the Apple iPhone, this practical accessory is now also available for numerous other smartphones currently on the market. The ingeniously simple-to-operate closure mechanism offers a completely secure hold on the phone, and clever details such as its perfectly finished plastic corners and shock-absorbing rubber pad help protect sensitive devices.

IMPROVED FUNCTIONALITY

TOURATECH online



WEBSITE For years now, the Touratech website has been THE place to go for news and information about motorcycle traveling. After a comprehensive redesign, the diverse content is now presented in an even more structured way. The responsive layout also makes it easy to use on a full range of devices. The content adapts perfectly to the screen of the device being used.

International: www.touratech.de

USA: www.touratech-usa.com

WEBSHOP Thanks to the improved search function in the Touratech online shop, shoppers will find the product they are looking for even faster – and that also applies when the language and spelling in the entry is different from the product information in the database. But there is even more to the new shop search. With every click of the mouse, the intelligent system gets to know the webshop visitors better. **Just like an attentive shop assistant, it suggests suitable articles that go with every product.**

Internat.: shop.touratech.de

USA: www.touratech-usa.com



The iBracket is currently available for the following devices:

Apple iPhone 3 (compatible with the Nokia Lumia 620, Sony Xperia E and Huawei G330)	Art. No.: 065-0430
Apple iPhone 4 and 4s (compatible with the HTC Desire X and Samsung Galaxy S3 mini),	Art. No.: 065-0435
Apple iPhone 5 / 5s / 5c	Art. No.: 065-0436
Apple iPhone 6	Art. No.: 065-0439
Apple iPhone 6 Plus	Art. No.: 065-0446
Samsung Galaxy S3 and S4 Active (compatible with the Sony Xperia S, Nokia Lumia 925, Huawei Ascend P6, Samsung Galaxy S4 and HTC One M7)	Art. No.: 065-0437
Samsung Galaxy S5/S6/S6 Edge	Art. No.: 065-0447
Samsung Xcover 2	Art. No.: 065-0448
Sony Xperia Z3 (compatible with the Sony Xperia Z2 and HTC Desire Eye)	Art. No.: 065-0449
Sony Xperia Z3 Compact (compatible with the Samsung Galaxy S5 Mini, Samsung Galaxy A3, HTC Desire 310, Nokia Lumia 635, Motorola Moto X and Alcatel Fire E)	Art. No.: 065-0451



TOURATECH SUSPENSION FOR BMWs WITH ESA

PLUGGED IN

Touratech Suspension has now produced replacement shock absorbers for the ESA versions of both the BMW R 1200 GS and the F 800 GS (see p.32). The spring elements are extremely robust, and feature a special traveling setup and an extra-large settings range. The ultimate feature is that the shocks can simply replace those on the vehicle without making any modifications. All series operational and display functions remain, while performance is boosted significantly.

Further information is available at www.touratech-suspension.com

► TOM TOM RIDER 400

The new TomTom Rider 400 can take a lot of the planning work off the rider's hands even before a tour has started.

Thanks to a completely new function, the driver needs only select an area on the installed map and the device will suggest a made-to-measure route through the region. The user indicates any personal preferences at the outset by choosing from the profiles stored on the navigation device.

The device is touchscreen-operated, as customary for TomTom equipment. Various color options make the display more easily readable in changing light conditions. Its screen now offers the kind of functions users are familiar with on smartphones, supporting numerous finger controls such as zooming in with two fingers or wiping to move around the map section.

The TomTom Rider 400 comes equipped with a pre-installed map covering 46 countries in central Europe. Thanks to the "Lifetime Maps" service, the latest data can be uploaded time and again throughout the device's entire lifetime.

A standard feature on smartphones but new for a navigation device, the Rider 400 automatically switches the info displayed according to the screen orientation. The portrait mode offers the user



an extended view of the stretch ahead.

The practical option remains of planning tours on the PC and then loading them on to the device. The Rider 400 now also supports .gpx files, so touring data can easily be exchanged with users of other brands of navigation device without the need to convert files.

It uses Bluetooth connectivity to transmit voice directions to a headset and for hands-free use linked to a mobile phone. What's more, riders can use the device to link up and share route information.

As before, the device is weather-resistant to IPX7 standard, it is operable wearing gloves, and can be powered by the on-board electrical system.

Touratech supplies a customized holder for fixing the device safely enough to the motorbike to withstand even rough terrain.

Further information on the Rider 400, the latest prices and everything about Touratech motorcycle holders can be found at shop.touratech.de TomTom Rider 400 CE, Art. No.: 060-1409



Becker Mamba.4

Becker has finally released a successor to the Crocodile. The new device is called Mamba.4 and it continues the tradition of navigation aids dedicated to motorcycling.

For instance, the user can choose from three different variations of "winding route" — from "slightly winding & fairly long" and "moderately winding & fairly long" to "extremely long & winding" — as the preference when calculating a route from A to B.

The device has 250 pre-configured tours installed and a POI collection including motorcyclist-friendly hotels.

Becker has equipped the new Mamba.4 with a decent set of hardware including a bright Blan-

view 4.3 inch screen, an IP57-certified water- and dust-repellent housing, and a robust mounting cradle with RAM Mount fixtures for motorcycle use. The touchscreen user interface is specially designed for use with gloves.

The cable delivered with the device is used to connect it to the onboard electrical system, although the device also has its own exchangeable rechargeable battery.

State-of-the-art hardware components ensure high-speed route computation and an optimum

3D map display. A full set of Central European maps comes pre-installed.

Navigation directions can be transmitted to the integrated loudspeaker or communicated to a headset using Bluetooth.

Further information on the device and motorcycle holder will be available from April at shop.touratech.de Becker Mamba.4 CE LMU, Art. No.: 060-1431

GS GIRLS

Motorcycling enthusiasts from all over Europe came to enjoy three fun-filled days on their BMW enduros in Niedereschach.

Text: Sabine Przewolka Photos: Herbert Schwarz, Sabine Przewolka



The BMW GS Girls get really wound up by men's derogatory smirks at their passion for motorcycling. What? The weaker sex trying to master enduros, of all things? There were no such thorns in their sides, but beaming faces all round, at the first German meeting of women GS fans.

"BMW GS Girls Central Europe Get Together" was the title of the event held at and around the Touratech site in Niedereschach on the weekend of September 18 to 20.


The idea for the event was born online, among a Facebook group of women motorcyclists with a fondness for BMW enduros founded by motorcycling adventurer Jolandie Rust. One of them, Marta Carrasco, had the idea of organizing a meet. She got in touch with Ramona Schwarz, who was delighted to oblige. As a passionate world traveler herself and the wife of Touratech's founder, Herbert Schwarz, Ramona is a big fan of women motorcyclists. "I'd like to encourage women to live their dream, jump on a motorcycle and simply set off into the big, wide world!" she exclaims.

Once word got around that event organizer extraordinaire Touratech was putting together a

colorful program, 60 BMW GS Girls from nine European countries rolled up – some with husbands in tow.

Looking back over the three days packed with a company tour, guided rides, a travel workshop and baking pizzas in the wood-fired oven at the home of Ramona and Herbert, all you can say is "mind-blowing"! One of the highlights has to have been the professional off-road training session with Günter and Dominique Essig from "enduroXevents". Serpil, the girlfriend of GS Trophy finalist Jens Andris, managed to mount a moving motorcycle at her first attempt – and she only passed her motorcycle test two months ago. Conversely, well-traveled and highly experienced tourer Jessica Lejne ending up dumping her "Yellow Boy" R 1100 GS onto the wet grass. Her boyfriend Bart stuck a bilingual declaration of love on petite Jess's burly tank, reading "I love you Babe".

As it happens, many women give their motorcycles pretty names such as "Aurelie", "Rita" or "Sun Calf". And women perhaps ride their motorcycles a bit differently than men. There's Kathrin with her impressive 6' 1" stature, or tiny Andrea, who rides an F 700, even though she'd so love an F 800 – but her feet wouldn't reach the ground. All the same, the women all jump with joy at the throaty roar of a BMW's throttle. The spirits coursing through the GS Girls' veins sure are high-octane.

The Touratech weekend's resounding success has inspired Marta Carrasco to set up a Facebook group specifically for European women GS motorcyclists interested in outings or other events, called BMW GS Girls Central Europe Outings. Any woman motorcyclist with a BMW GS is welcome to join! The first outing will tour the Vosges mountains in October. 



TOPCASE AND
TOPCASE RACK

THE NEW HONDA CRF 1000 L AFRICA TWIN

FINALLY!

Honda really hasn't made it easy for fans of the Africa Twin. The company has taken longer than the other Japanese manufacturers to present a successor for an adventure motorcycle that has been out of production for a long time. Finally, Honda has something exciting to offer its patient fans – the brand-new CRF 1000 L.

COMFORT SEAT

ALUMINIUM
PANNIER
SYSTEM
ZEGA PRO

ENGINE GUARD

Motorcycles that can truly be described as legendary are few and far between. These are machines whose very name gives you goose bumps, reminds you of great things you have done yourself or heard about around a

TOURATECH ACCESSORIES FOR THE NEW AFRICA TWIN

With the new Africa Twin, Honda has handed Touratech developers a real opportunity to work on a whole range of touring accessories. Of course, Touratech was given the chance to thoroughly test the motorcycle before its official presentation and gather ideas for new parts. The technicians already have a number of accessories in the pipeline that will be available in time for the 2016 season.

More information is available at
africatwin.touratech.com

camp fire, and brings a glorious past back to life in your mind's eye.

Of course, the exact make-up of this elite collection of motorcycles that have reached the status of immortality varies according to your point of view, but there is an undisputed core of real legends. In terms of more recent motorcycling history, this would include the GS from BMW, Yamaha's XT 500, a Bol d'Or, Suzuki's Water Buffalo, the Kawasaki Z1 and, of course, the Honda Africa Twin.

HEADLIGHT PROTECTOR

CRASH BAR, ENGINE & FAIRING



THE BIG UNVEILING

When it first came on the scene in 1988, it created quite a storm among dual-sport enthusiasts. Yamaha's XT models were suddenly underpowered, and the BMW GS seemed

technically outdated in so many ways. With a huge aluminum motor guard opening a new chapter in esthetic history and a pure rally look, an initial engine capacity of 650 cc in a V-twin engine that was as powerful as it was cultured, disk brakes front and back, suspension that easily coped with off-road stretches with a pillion, a 6.3-gallon tank, and space for two people, the Africa Twin – officially known as the XRV 650 – took the hearts of adventure bike riders by storm (with the exception of a couple of complainers who found it all too modern).

The engineers at Honda had simply done everything right, as confirmed by the trade press. For example, after the first major touring test, "Tourenfahrer" magazine awarded the Africa Twin its best ever rating to date in its 5/88 edition.

A whole subculture soon grew up around the Africa Twin. Machine and riders alike built up reputations on long expeditions. One of the most famous travel writers, Andreas Hülsmann, and his colleague photographer Dirk Schäfer, who also left a lasting impression on the image of motorcycle touring journalism, both used an Africa Twin on their travels in the 1990s.

The engine capacity of the Africa Twin was upgraded to 742 cc in 1990 to keep pace with the performance of the GS 1000 and to at least partially counter the all-out attack from Yamaha in the shape of the 69 hp Super Ténéré in 1989. With the upgrade to 60 hp – the same as the BMW R 100 GS – the XRV 750 Africa Twin became more dynamic. Since this figure is still not devastatingly high, it was not so much the peak output as the incredibly long service life that formed the basis of the reputation that the three-valve, liquid-cooled, two-cylinder V-engine soon built for itself.

FADE AWAY

While the competition's machines either disappeared from the market (DR Big and Super Ténéré) or broke through into completely new technical and conceptual areas (R 1100 GS), the Africa Twin simply stayed what it was – a robust and incredibly reliable touring motorcycle.

When the Varadero came onto the market in 1999 as a potential successor, the network of fans around the world was hugely disappointed. Too heavy, not suitable for off-road terrain ... all in all, not the same as an Africa Twin. With technical and performance upgrades, the Africa Twin remained in the Honda portfolio until 2003, when it dis-

appeared without fanfare – and, crucially, without a successor.

Other manufacturers tried to step into the gap. BMW going for a direct equivalent in the F 800 GS, while KTM had something similar in the 950 Adventure. Only Honda was strangely quiet. Finally, in the wake of the company's renewed participation in the Dakar rally, the prototype of a "True Adventure" motorcycle was showcased at Eicma 2014. The fans dared to hope, but remained skeptical. All too often, motorcycle manufacturers have presented promising studies and prototypes with no greater purpose than

to hype up anticipation for a later, uninspiring series model. Their patience was rewarded in summer 2015, however. After some carefully crafted secret-mongering, Honda finally released details of the new Africa Twin, designated the CRF 1000 L. One thing was clear – the legend was back.

POWERFUL RE-LAUNCH

You just have to look at the engine to see that the CRF 1000 L is more than just a remake of its predecessor with a few updated features. Instead of the V-shaped arrangement, the cylinders of the new power unit are arranged in line. Although there was initial speculation about a true parallel twin, the in-line engine of the CRF has a crankpin offset of 270 degrees. It is clear that running characteristics were more important to the engineers than maximum oomph.

The 998 cc of new Africa Twin's parallel-twin engine delivers 95 hp. Just 7,500 revolutions are needed to achieve



WELCOME BACK, AFRICA TWIN!

In the last few years, the ongoing discussion among the Africa Twin community about the successor to the dual-sport legend has reached fever pitch. Finally, it has arrived, and everyone wants a ride. Die-hard AT fans reflect and formulate their expectations.

ANDREAS HÜLSMANN LOYALTY REWARD

I have many memories associated with my Africa Twin – after all, we covered more than 110,000 miles together. I wasn't always kind to my dear Auntie Twin. Time



and again, I neglected her, kicked her, and shoved her around, but she always forgave me. The Twin kept going. No matter what! We traveled all over Europe and Arabia, researching dozens of stories for Tourenfahrer. Sure, she wasn't exactly zippy at just 60 hp, and riding her was like being on an off-road chopper. As long as there was a white line down the middle of the road, that wasn't a problem. Beyond the tarmac, however, she was clumsy, and threw me off on more than one occasion. And now she's back, looking chic and attractive. The styling is emotional. I think it is great that Honda have not gone for extreme performance with the "new one". If it turns out to be just as reliable as the "old one", I might be tempted again by the latest Twin.

Andreas Hülsmann is Editor-in-Chief of the MotorradABENTUEUR motorcycle magazine.

MARTIN AND KATJA WICKERT RELIABILITY HAS TOP PRIORITY

We spent 21 months touring along the Panamericana and through various European countries with two Africa Twins. By the end of it, both Twins had over 60,000 miles on the clock and were still running perfectly. While we were traveling, we kept saying, "The old lady might not be terribly agile, but she can fight her way through anything." Whether the surface was sand, mud, boulders




this peak output. Its maximum torque of 98 newton meters can even be achieved at 6,000 revs.

To ensure this power is always transferred to the ground in a controlled manner, the Africa Twin is fitted with the "Honda Selectable Torque Control System", or HSTC. This offers the engine three characteristics, and the ABS on the rear wheel can also be switched off when traveling on loose ground.

Honda promises the two-cylinder engine with PGM-FI gasoline injection will have economical fuel consumption, enabling it to cover distances of more than 250 miles on a single 5-gallon (18.8 liter) tank.

The spoked wheels of the Africa Twin are large for an enduro and made for adventurers. A good range of

tires are available with both off-road and on-road profiles in the planned dimensions of 90/90-21 and 150/70-18.

The Africa Twin has impressive spring element values to go with the large wheels. The USD fork has over 9 inches of travel, while the central shock absorber has over 8 1/2. 



or long stretches of blacktop along the Panamericana, and whether the weather was 95 degrees in Nicaragua or 5 degrees in the Cordillera Blanca, Peru, the Twin never once let us down.

Between 2004 and 2006, we traveled about 45,000 miles on two 2003 Africa Twins. We went from Montreal, Canada, to Alaska and then on to Ushuaia without any problems at all. We didn't adjust the valves and change the spark plugs until we had gone nearly 35,000 miles. Otherwise, the only maintenance was for brake pads, chain kit and tires. Since we are not expert mechanics, the reliability of this vehicle was amazing. Since I am 6 foot tall, the Twin was perfect for me, but Katja is only 5 foot 3, and frequently found the motorcycle too heavy and awkward to handle, especially when it was fully loaded.

Our hopes are probably about the same as other AT riders. We want the new Africa Twin to have a better engine and to be lighter. The data we have seen so far is a bit disappointing. Of course you don't need 150 hp when you are traveling, but the weight or at least the weight distribution needs to be improved. Every vehicle has ABS these days. There should be the ability to switch this off, or it has to be an off-road ABS. It would be good if there was

easier access to the engine for maintenance purposes. On the old Twin, the oil filter and particularly the spark plugs, etc. were difficult to get to. The top priority as far as we are concerned, though, is reliability. We will willingly compromise on performance if it is more robust in exchange. We will see whether this new Twin is a worthy successor. It has a big act to follow.

Martin Wickert is Director Sales & Marketing at Touratech AG, his wife Katja is responsible for studio photography.

DIRK SCHÄFER BIG SHOES TO FILL

If ever there was a two-wheeled jack-of-all-trades, it was the Africa Twin. And I had four of them. One after the other. Whenever the milometer had gone all the way back round to zero, I sold it in good conscience – or it was stolen. Even with 60,000 miles on the clock, they could still look brand new. And they drove as if they were. What

spare parts did you need for the thing? Steering bearings, chain, gasoline pump, and that's it! In other words, while others were busy with repairs or waiting on spare parts on the campsites of the world, the Twin just kept on going.

Since the 2-cylinder engine needed so little work, I made my own modifications – larger tanks, home-made luggage racks ...

Half of Europe, East Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Australia, the Middle East – close to 250,000 miles on the back of an Africa Twin have given me a whole different view of the world. The new one will not be able to do that to start with. That is still to come. It has big shoes to fill.

Dirk Schäfer is a travel writer and film-maker. His travel reports can be found in MOTORRAD magazine, among others.



THE WAY *it used to be*

Short spring stroke, small tank, no wind protection – the new Scrambler from Ducati has none of the features typical of modern adventure motorcycles. As John Beck discovered on a trip through Albania however, traveling on this motorcycle not only takes you back to basics, it is also enormous fun. Text and photos: Jon Beck

There's a man taking his bear for a walk. Traffic is a bit heavy and quite chaotic, but he doesn't appear concerned. Drivers seem to yield as if there is a codified rule of the road providing bears the right-of-way. This scene might seem unusual in Los Angeles or Munich, however this is Albania. Shkodra, to be specific. Here, taking one's bear for a stroll in the number two lane of a major downtown thoroughfare is apparently no more unusual than jogging through a city park. While Caniformia in California are mostly forest creatures, Albania used this duo to pull back the curtain on normal, and ready us for seeing other things a bit out of context.



Broad, serrated foot pegs provide stability off-road (l). Robust – metal canister on a sturdy stainless steel holder.



The 2015 Ducati Scrambler might seem an unusual choice for an “adventure” motorcycle, perhaps more so when it is paired with the 2015 Ducati Multistrada for a journey through the Balkans. Decades of heritage would be rolling together through the pristine pavement and sometimes brutal backcountry roads of Albania. Both bikes firmly held their ground, presenting the riders with new ways to appreciate what one wants out of adventure travel, and the machines themselves.

With little more than a passing glance, the Scrambler turns the clock back decades. Un-

der its coat of green paint, the bike draws the viewer to an era where cars rolled off assembly lines wearing British racing green. Instead of vinyl or aluminum, varnished wooden panels hover just above the steel teardrop fuel tank, offsetting the ultra-modern Touratech photo tank bag in an entirely unique way for a modern machine. The Scrambler would look quite at home idling patiently next to a Morgan while its leather luggage trunk was being secured.

Breathing history through its delightfully curvy header pipes into an exhaust that was clearly inspired by cigarettes and fine espresso while overlooking the Amalfi Coast... whatever your thoughts on smoking, I have



to give this illustration a pass - this is simply good design.

Vintage bike popularity is on the rise, and "Scrambler" has perhaps become the Siren Song of those wanting to return to a simpler time. The caveat is, those "simpler" times weren't always so simple. Spending a night hammering on a stuck valve in a Barstow parking lot with tractor tools surrounded by 1960's Triumph parts makes this quite clear (see "Texas", Travel Time #1, 2015). Sometimes the desire is there to fire up a machine and hold the throttle open, with your wrist instead of a computer, and simply experience the environment while the wind fights against you. Ducati has been building machines for just this purpose since 1962, when they introduced the



The robust guard made from electropolished stainless steel protects the radiator (l). Headlamp grill provides stylish protection.

Scrambler 250. Had production not ceased in 1974, the 2016 Scrambler would have been the likely result of development over the past 40 years. Modern manufacturing practices woven through 1970's heritage, resulting in the "pure" riding experience, without the tractor tools.

Drastically reduced luggage capacity had the unintended effect of deepening the riding experience. The 13.5 liter fuel tank offered a limited range of about 250km, so

TOURATECH ACCESSORIES

- "Daytrip" tank bag
- Canister holder with metal canister
- Guard for brake fluid reservoir, rear
- Hand protectors, black
- Headlight protector, removable
- Long distance foot rests, stainless steel
- Luggage rack on tank
- Luggage rack, rear
- Pannier rack, black
- Pannier rack, silver
- Progressive fork springs
- Touratech shock absorber suspension, Level 1




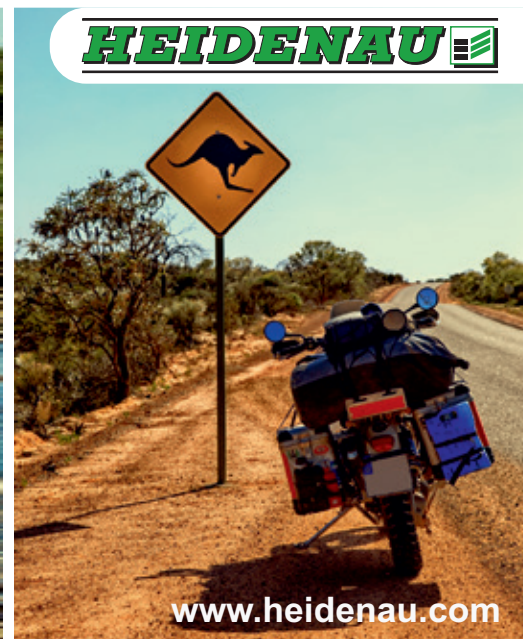
a jerry can, in matching "Urban Enduro" green, replaced the left-side pannier with the help of a custom Touratech rack. A top case was used as a right-side pannier, maintaining the svelte lines of the smaller machine. Only what was necessary was brought along for the journey, and sometimes less is more. While this is true for luggage, it's not necessarily true for suspension travel. Some of the more adventurous roads on the trip were far from "urban", and much more "enduro". Weighing in at under 190kg with fuel, the Scrambler is not a beast by any means, but it does not have "dirt bike" suspension either. Touratech's suspension kit helps take the edge off stretches of endless rocks, like those we encountered on some mountain passes in Albania.

It dropped to 4 degrees riding into Kosovo. Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Albania each provided their own range of riding conditions for the two bikes. Seeing the Scrambler riding the exact same route with the hyper-modern, massively capable Multistrada answered the question of the bike's on and off-road qualifications - the Scrambler will get you there. Lower travel, no windscreen, virtually no cockpit computerization, classic design and accessories - the result is the feeling that you're going on vacation in these places 40 years ago.



"Luxury" is a relative term. Sometimes you want the beach chair more than the feather bed.

By the trip's conclusion, the idea of taking a modern vintage (or "post-heritage") machine for a spin through the unknown still seemed the right decision. Then again, taking a bear for a walk through the city here is also, apparently, "the right decision". To each their own. 





MADAGASCAR 2016

UNITED PEOPLE OF ADVENTURE

Herbert and Ramona Schwarz are hitting the road again. To Madagascar. In international company. They're looking for an intrepid team member from each and every continent.

EXPLORING THE WORLD ON A MOTORCYCLE.

Finding unorthodox answers to unusual questions. Coming into contact with locals along the way. This is how Herbert and Ramona choose to travel.

Once the 2016 hurricane season has blown over in April, they'll set off to Madagascar. But this time, the two extreme travelers want company — the company of people who think and travel like them.

They want an experienced motorcyclist from every corner of the Earth to bolster the team. Together, the group will spend a week exploring breathtaking routes in the far-flung north-east of the island on state-of-the-art machines kitted out with Touratech accessories. A professional photography and film crew will accom-

pany the team. They'll be sharing their experiences via social media as they happen, then releasing a 60-minute film of the trip when they're done. American actor and ex-BMX pro Kurt Yaeger will also be on board as a special guest.

If you're up for this unique international motorcycling challenge, then you'd better apply straight away! You have three minutes to impress Herbert and Ramona. Three minutes to explain what you're about in English. It's your chance to show Herbert and Ramona why you're just what the team needs! Tell them about your adventures so far, show off your off-road prowess and any other skills you can offer for the good of the team on the road!

Reveal how you captivate people with your tales, why you're a great team player and what makes you a keen and inquisitive traveler! Simply be yourself! And don't forget to let us know about any experience you have in front of or behind the camera. Make your video as creative and original as you can!

Besides being an experienced tourer, you should be competent and confident in English — our team language. Some French would be useful, too, when it comes to conversing with the locals. And last but not least — you have to have a good sense of humor!

Herbert and Ramona will watch the videos together with their team and invite the most charismatic contenders to be a part of their tour.

JOIN US!

Video



Upload your video here:

<http://united-people-of-adventure.com>



Key dates



Tour date:	Mid-April 2016
Applications:	Videos should be uploaded by December 15, 2015
Announcement of the team:	February 2016



Which machines are we riding?



1	BMW 1200 GS Adventure
2	BMW 800 GS Adventure
3	Triumph Tiger 800 XCX
4	KTM 1190 Adventure
5	Yamaha Super Ténéré 1200 Worldcrosser
6	Ducati Multistrada Enduro
7	Suzuki DL1000 V Strom
8	Honda Africa Twin 1000

▶ Touratech is providing the motorcycles, all equipped with state-of-the-art accessories

Who is on board?



1	Herbert Schwarz
2	Ramona Schwarz
3	Jan-Peter Sölter
4	Wolfgang Danner
5	Jonathan Bentman
6	Jon Beck
7	African team member
8	European team member
9	Asian team member
10	North American team member
11	South American team member
12	Oceanic/Australian team member
13	Kurt Yaeger (special guest)

▶ Touratech is providing all the equipment and covering the full travel costs, including the flights



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www.compassexpeditions.com

HERBER SCHWARZ AFTER 1500 MILES — **ON TOUR WITH 160 HP**

A touring motorcycle with 160 hp? After the KTM Super Adventure pushed the limits of what a dual-sport motorcycle can do into a range that was the exclusive domain of thoroughbred supersport motorcycles until just a few years ago, Ducati is now following suit with the Multistrada 1200 Enduro.

The 160 hp may look impressive on paper, but what does it actually mean on the road? It means a whole load of fun! The increasingly smart motor management system is keeping pace with the advances in engine performance. In terms of the Multistrada 1200, this means that the riders have the choice of four different driving modes, enabling them to select the precise engine characteristics they need at any given time.

In enduro mode, for example, the l-twin engine proved itself to be hugely responsive on the endless gravel tracks of Albania. Even fully laden, it was easy to guide the machine round the bends thanks to the ability to adjust output at any time. Back on the asphalt, the rider can choose between the touring mode, which requires less gear shifting, or the sport mode, which gives free rein to the 160 horsepower. Even with the full output available, however, assistance systems such as traction-control still ensure that all this power is safely transferred to the road. This made riding on the freshly surfaced passes of Albania a real pleasure!



FUORI STRADA!

With its “Enduro” model, Ducati is adding a real dual-sport to its Multistrada 1200 line. Touratech has developed exclusive factory-fitted accessories for Ducati, but also offers its own range of parts for long and short trips.

The name of Ducati's adventure bike – Multistrada – is the first indication that it aims for universal usability. In the Multistrada 1200 Enduro, Ducati now presents a model that feels perfectly at home on any kind of road, including gravel tracks, and its off-road credentials are clear to see.

The Italian company has made the enduro better suited to off-road riding by increasing the size of the front



Closed hand protectors to protect hands and levers. With GPS mount and iBracket, navigation device and smartphone are positioned in the rider's line of sight (l.). The fairing crash bar and radiator guard really prove their worth in enduro usage.

wheel by two inches to 19 inches. As you would expect on an enduro, the wheels have a wire spoke construction with lightweight metal rims. The spring stroke is also considerably larger – almost 8 inches (200 mm) on both front and rear wheels. The Ducati engineers have really gone to town on the fuel tank. The enduro can carry



close to 8 (US) gallons of fuel for a long trip. Combined with comfortable seats Made by Touratech and functional wind protection, nothing stands in the way of a marathon journey.

As with the familiar 1200 Multistrada, a range of assistance systems are also standard on the enduro model. These include cornering ABS, traction and wheelie control, and four driving modes.

The launch of the Multistrada 1200 Enduro also marks an extended OEM partnership between the Italian company and Black Forest-based motorcycle equipment supplier Touratech. As an OEM partner of Ducati, Touratech had already put together an enduro package with various protectors for the previous model. The tried-and-

tested comfortable seats from Touratech have been available for the Multistrada exclusively through Ducati dealerships since summer 2015. Touratech joined the Ducati Suppliers Club in spring 2015.

“Ducati Performance by Touratech” is the result of intensive development cooperation. Ducati has also turned to Touratech to make the new Multistrada 1200 Enduro even better suited to off-road and adventure rides, with accessories including crash bars, oil cooler protection, navigation device mounts and top case. The original special luggage system with 45-liter aluminum panniers also comes from Touratech.

The Multistrada 1200 Enduro was presented at EICMA 2015, and it goes without saying that Touratech has a number of other accessories for it up its sleeve, including ABS sensor protection, various colored oil filler caps, and a handlebar riser that really improves motorcycle control, especially off-road.

As you would expect with Touratech, all of the parts developed for the Ducati Multistrada 1200 Enduro were tested on an adventure trip undertaken through Albania by Touratech boss Herbert Schwarz and his wife Ramona with Ducati’s support before the official presentation of the motorcycle (see report on the following pages).

MR 



The bright red brake calliper covers are more than just an eye-catching feature. They effectively keep dirt off the pads (l.). The robust engine guard protects the motor from stone impact damage.



New Ideas for Motorbikes

TOURATECH

made for adventure

ADVENTUREFILM

■ #whereverwego (46:11 min.)

ADVENTURECLIP

■ Ducati Multistrada Enduro (05:09 min.)

■ Ducati Scrambler (03:37 min.)

■ United People of Adventure (02:30 min)

CATALOGPDF

■ German

■ English

■ French

■ Italian

■ Spanish

ADVENTUREFILM

TOURATECH

New Ideas for Motorbikes

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TOURATECH AG

Auf dem Zimmermann 7-9 · DE 78078 Niedereschach
 Tel.: +49 (0) 77 28 92 79-0 · Fax: +49 (0) 77 28 92 79-29
info@touratech.de



ALBANIA OF ALL PLACES!

Albania is nothing but mountains! This sentence in itself would have been reason enough for Herbert and Ramona Schwarz to set out and explore the country from the back of an adventure bike. When they found themselves faced with complete disbelief that they would voluntarily go to such a “dangerous” country, they decided to find out what it was really like there.

Text: Ramona Schwarz Photos: Jon Beck, Herbert and Ramona Schwarz

They're all car thieves, weapons smugglers and money launderers," was a common reaction from our friends when we told them of our plans. It's true, Albania is not your typical holiday destination, but it's almost 15 years since the war ended! Could it be that these preconceptions and half-truths about Albania have more to do with a fear of the unknown than with reality?

Arriving at the border from Montenegro, we join a long line of soot-spewing cars – old Mercedes and VW Golfs of all generations. The man in uniform seems threateningly unapproachable. When I remove my helmet and smile at him, he smiles back. Once again proof that the ancient Golden Rule applies no matter where you are in the world – treat others as you'd like to be treated.

As is so often the case, we don't have a specific plan or destination in mind. Herbert is on a Ducati Multistrada Enduro and I am on a Ducati Scrambler





It's not every day you see foreign motorcyclists in Kosovo, so it's no surprise the kids are fascinated!



Urban Enduro. Our preparations for the trip didn't go much beyond buying a map, studying it carefully, circling topographically interesting areas and deliberately not deciding how and whether we would combine them. In our experience, this all comes together as the trip progresses. Other motorcyclists and the locals provide tips on what roads to take.

With a fresh stamp in our passports, we roll into a country that is completely unknown to us. At this point, Albania is still a white spot on our map of Europe. Having been born and brought up in East Germany, I have always gone out of my way to avoid Eastern European countries on my travels – maybe because I did not want to face the demons of my Communist past. Behind the building at the border crossing, a good-natured beggar with naked feet and a sun-baked face is sitting in a wheelchair. He

holds a few coins in his hands, the most valuable of which is a 1-Euro piece. He turns to me and smiles I give him another one, and he is happy. We take a photo, and he kisses me goodbye.

The first stop of our trip is Shkodra, Albania's third-largest city and, with a history stretching back 2,500 years, one of its oldest. Typical Communist-era multi-story concrete buildings and heroic statues are relics of the proletarian dictatorship. Over-filled cars with happy, waving occupants sound their horns at us as they pass us in the other direction. The traffic reminds us of Africa – an organized chaos of cars going the wrong way, missing manhole covers, flocks of sheep and stray dogs. The question of whether the time of day, vehicle size

Albania is a white spot on our map of Europe

On the road to Vermosh: The long and winding road into the Cem Valley is on a par with those in the Todra Gorge in Morocco (left). It's not unusual to come across a goatherd as you go round a bend in Albania (bottom).



or driving style decides who has priority when entering a round-about is never really cleared up. The pedestrians give us the feeling that the whole of Albania is one big crosswalk. The highlight of the evening is a man taking a fully grown bear for a walk in the city center.

Our destination is the Albanian Alps. Vermosh, to be more precise. Along with Valbona and Theth, this is one of the three great high valleys in the region. At Hani i Hotit, the rugged cliffs plunge down into the plateau that stretches out to the east of Lake Shkodra. A unique twisting road leads up from here into the secluded Alpine world. Bend after bend on new asphalt! From the high pass, we look down into a valley 1,600 feet below, where the blue of the Cem river winds its way through the landscape. Dotted here and there are gray stone houses. The



Fearful of an invasion, paranoid dictator Enver Hoxha had 750,000 bunkers built in the country (top).



asphalt turns to gravel. We reach the village of Lepushe. Time for a Turkish-style coffee in a little hut. An Albanian woman makes it for us using water from a garden hose and a Bunsen burner. It is so strong you can stand the spoon up in it. The taste and consistency take a bit of getting used to, but the atmosphere is like nothing else we have experienced.

The next morning, in Vermosh, we experience true Albanian hospitality and discover that the local breakfast consists of three courses – coffee, raki and cigarettes. We really only wanted to ask for directions, but the man invites us back to his home. There is a raki still in the garden, and of course, we're not allowed to take our leave straight away! We get talking. They tell us the winters are long and hard. As much as 13 feet of snow fall here, and the isolated villages are cut off from the outside world for months with no electricity. People have always looked after themselves. The lives of the large families are shaped by centuries of tradition. They have their own legal system, the Kanun, which also includes the law of hospitality. This dictates that every Albanian house belongs to "God and

**Breakfast
consists of
coffee, raki
and a
cigarette.**



guests". Our host tells us he is currently building an extension onto his house with two rooms that are to be rented out to tourists. The road to Montenegro will soon be finished, and he hopes this will bring a lot of tourists to the area. It is good to hear that "gentle" mountain tourism is the order of the day here, and not the process of "compulsory purchase, bulldoze everything flat, rich investor builds an ugly hotel fortress".

Having gone as far north as we can, we circle round through Montenegro and Kosovo. The temperature plummets to a wet 40 degrees and it is a relief to finally cross back onto Albanian soil, where the sun beats down on our hel-

met. We expected this stretch to be on gravel, but we underestimated the incredible work-rate of the road builders! White stones mark the edges of the new, narrow band of asphalt that winds round endless bends and in dizzying heights along the wooded hillsides. Far in the distance, it disappears over the ridge of a mountain.

On the way to Fierzë, where we were planning to take a ferry across the Komani Lake, Herbert got a flat rear tire. Two hours should be plenty of time to cover 37 miles, even allowing for a repair! Together, we heaved the Multistrada onto the center stand. Just as it is tipping over sideways, a police car comes round the corner. Inside is the "Sheriff of

The historic old town of Gjirokastra was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites in 2005 (bottom).



GENERAL Albania is a sunny, mountainous country in the west of the Balkan peninsula. To the north, it borders Montenegro and Kosovo, to the east, Macedonia, and to the south, Greece. There are lots of beaches on its 224 miles of coastline along the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Albania is on the same latitude as Madrid. Despite its relatively small area of 11,100 square miles, it has a very diverse and beautiful natural heritage, primarily concentrated in its 14 national parks. Two-thirds of the surface area of the country is covered by mountains, valleys and lakes, while one third is flat coastline. Its capital Tirana is a lively metropolis at the foot of the Dajti mountains. Some 90 percent of the currently 2.9 million inhabitants are ethnic Albanians, the rest are primarily Greek, Roma and Aromanians.

GETTING THERE Either with the convenient ferry from Italy (www.ferriesalbania.com) or by land through the Balkans. A scenic alternative to the boring transit route (Belgrade-Macedonia-Kosovo) is to follow the coast through Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro to Albania.

MOTORCYCLING The road network is being expanded at a rapid pace. What is a gravel track today could well be an asphalt road tomorrow. Theth is one of the most beautiful enduro routes that Albania has to offer. It is a real adventure! Coming from Shkodra, you start out on tar, then gravel into the Kir valley and on through the Shala valley into the Theth National Park. Don't forget your international driving license, vehicle registration and green insurance card! The blood-alcohol limit is zero. The speed limit in built-up areas is 40 km/h (25 mph), 60 – 90 km/h (37 – 56 mph) on the open road.

FILLING UP WITH GAS With an average of nearly two filling stations every mile on well-developed routes, Albania has without a doubt one of the most efficient gasoline supplies in Europe. A liter of gasoline currently costs €20 (US\$ 1.36).

KOMANI LAKE FERRY "BERISHA" The ferry leaves Fierzë for Koman every day at 1 p.m. The crossing takes three hours. It costs €5 (US\$ 28) per motorcycle with rider. More information at www.komanilakeferry.com

ACCOMMODATION Accommodation is available in any category and to suit any budget. Good guest houses and hotels can be found from €20 (US\$ 23)/night for a double room with a traditional breakfast. There are also a number of newly established campsites, but wild camping is usually not a problem, either. Tips: Lake Shkodra Resort. Camping on a large field right on the shores of Lake Shkodra, www.lakeshkodraresort.com. Rilindja Guesthouse in the Valbona valley, €20 (US\$ 23)/night for a double room, including delicious breakfast, www.journeytovalbona.com

EATING Albanian cuisine has Mediterranean and oriental influences. Even in the most remote areas, a guest will always be presented with a portion of mountain cheese with freshly baked flatbread and Greek salad. Fish is also a common dish.

MAPS/BOOKS The Albanian map (1:220,000 scale) from Reise Know-How is reliable and up-to-date. It is available from Touratech. Art. No. 090-3103, price: 9.95 euros

Valbona". He immediately realizes our unfortunate situation, rolls up the sleeves of his uniform, and gets to work with our little bicycle pump. It takes 400 pumps just to get the pressure up to one bar. Even at one and a half bar, the tire still stubbornly refuses to emerge from the rim bed. What now? The ferry won't wait for us! The sheriff suddenly decides to load the rear wheel onto the back seat of his car. He has a friend who runs a little workshop round the corner. Of course, he has a compressor. It just takes five minutes to solve the problem. Unbelievable! We try to thank the mechanic with a banknote – the equivalent of one Euro – but he won't hear of it. He tells us that it is only natural that people help each other. He hugs Herbert and insists on smoking a cigarette with him before we leave.

We are the only passengers on the ferry. "Greece meets Norway" is a pretty accurate description of the scenery the crossing has to offer. The water is crystal clear. Rocks reach as much as





The best thing about motorcycle touring – camping out beside a wild river in wild mountains (top). There are still plenty of gravel roads in Albania... (right).



a mile into the blue sky. There is hardly any sign of human occupation on the shoreline except for the occasional stone house hidden away. Who would choose to live in this kind of isolation?

A crew member tells us about the troubled history of the country. Albania has always been getting caught between the lines of European politics. It was occupied by the Ottomans for 500 years, and the People's Republic of Albania was declared in 1946, making it a relatively young nation. The Communist dictator Enver Hoxha ruled with an iron fist for almost 50 years. Liberation finally came at the beginning of the 1990s. Students demonstrate in the streets, Albanians flee to Western embassies, and the statue of Enver Hoxha in Tirana is toppled off its pedestal. As if in fast forward, this isolated, backward country develops into one that is embracing technology and mobility and is connecting itself with the rest of the world. But just shortly after the introduction of a free market economy, political scandals cause anarchy. The state collapses, resulting in looting and destruction. In the middle of this chaos, the Kosovo War of 1998/99 breaks out. Albania is flooded by 450,000 refugees. The elections of 2013 were the first to be assessed by international observers as free and generally fair, so you could say the situation has now more or less normalized. However, the lengthy democratization process and the inconsistent reforms have left many Albanians demoralized. They are disappointed and resigned. They need new players on the political scene. One ray of hope may be that Albania became an official candidate for accession to the EU in June 2014.

We head toward the sea. Toward the Mediterranean south, where olives and lavender grow and the air is full of the

scent of herbs. We pass through Berat, the town of 1,000 windows, through Gjirokastra with its Turkish bazaar and narrow, cobbled alleys, and through the nation's capital, Tirana, which never sleeps.

Arriving back in northern Albania, we have come full circle. In the far east of the Dukagjin highlands lies the wild Theth valley, ringed by white peaks stretching over 6,500 feet into the sky. It is not easy to get there. That's the whole point! The eastern approach to Theth is a Mecca for adventure riders. It goes without saying that we want to undertake this pilgrimage, too. On a large, heavy dual sport, it is better to attempt difficult off-road sections in sunshine than in rain. The same is probably true for a lightweight Urban Enduro fitted with street tires, relatively short spring stroke and low ground clearance and therefore better suited for urban rather than offroad riding. We do hesitate slightly when dark clouds start to gather and storms are forecast for the next day, but we want to try! Rough gravel, river crossings, deep ruts, rock steps and a steep ascent to a 4,000 foot pass all pose their challenges. In the end, though, we made it, and are thrilled. I am sure my scrambler set a new record, too – the first to ever bump its way to Theth.

Looking back, I am glad that I agreed to enter an "undiscovered" East European country. Albania of all places! Discovering beautiful vistas on the motorcycle is one thing – experiencing a deeply moving warmth at a human level is something else.

The Theth valley lies in the far east of the country



MORE THAN A PRETTY FASCIA

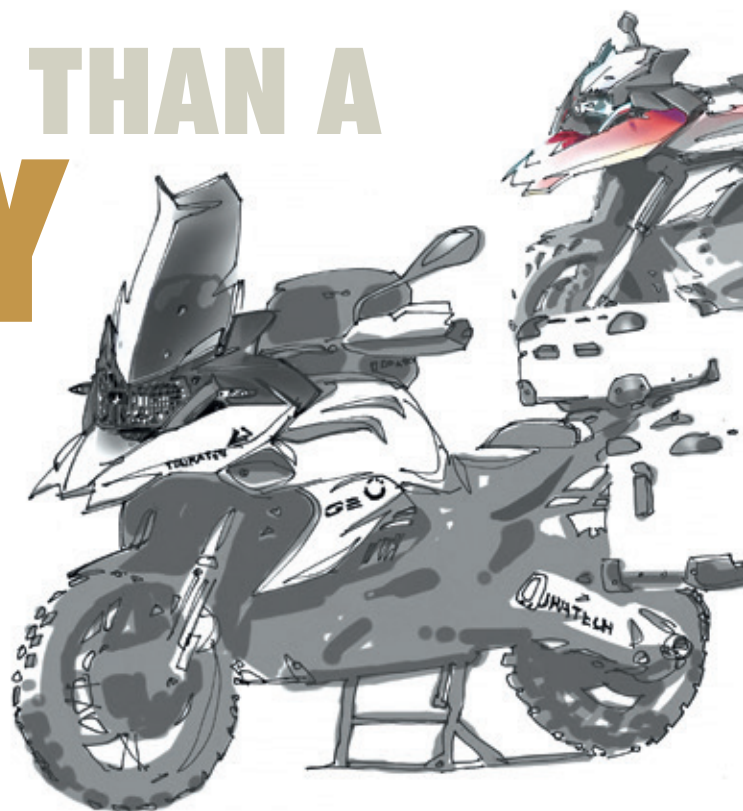
The unmistakable look of Touratech's products results from the seamless dovetailing of uncompromising functionality and rigorous design. We took a look over the shoulder of the designers working on the company's latest "Desierto IV" project.

Bart van den Bogaard holds a piece of plastic in his hands, tilts it to one side and scours the line of the edges intently as he runs his fingers carefully along the surfaces. Produced as a pre-series model using reaction injection molding (RIM), the prototype fairing still has an unattractive dull surface. Despite this, senior Touratech designer Bart is clearly proud of the semi-finished item. The Desierto IV

is the latest product to emerge from the Touratech design studio and is one of the most complex design projects the company's creative team has ever undertaken.

"The Desierto IV was not meant to simply follow on from its predecessor, the Desierto III – instead, our aim was to create a completely new shape of fairing," the Dutchman explains. BMW Motorrad's liquid-cooled R 1200 GS represents a quantum leap in technology and design. The Desierto IV complements this achievement with its combination of rigid fairing and windshield."

The concept behind the Desierto fairings series is of pivotal importance to Touratech, not only because the esthetic and technical coup the company achieved with its first-generation weather protection for the R 1100 GS paved the way for the currently so successful Adventure model, but also because the fairing demonstrated the Niedereschach-based company's determination to produce inimitable designs even to



THE DESIERTO DESIGN CONCEPT

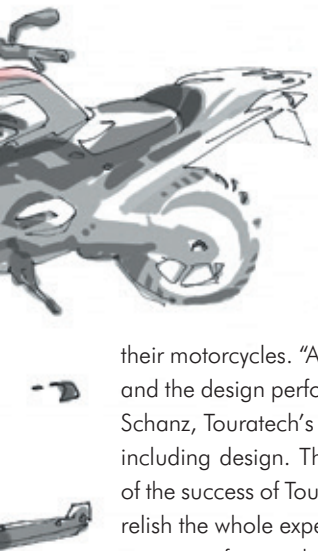
- The first version of the Desierto replaced the complete front construction of the R 1100 GS and had square headlights that took a bit of getting used to.
- The Desierto II followed suit in 2002 with the launch of the R 1150 GS. The fairing was modified in a way that allowed the original headlight unit of the GS to be retained.
- The design concept of the Desierto III for the R 1200 GS (2005) was transferred to the Desierto F in 2009 for the F 800/650 (twin) GS.
- Ten years after the launch of the Desierto III, the Desierto IV has been designed to emulate the contouring of the liquid-cooled R 1200 GS but also offer a unique interpretation of its form.

DESIERTO I



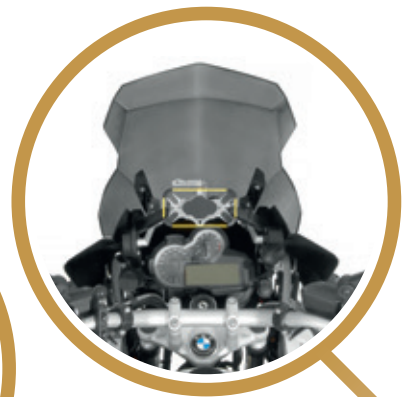
DESIERTO II





non-specialists for the very first time.

The Desierto I's resounding success on the market showed not only that Touratech could manufacture highly functional products, but that customers were willing to incorporate Touratech's design concept into their motorcycles. "At Touratech, technology leads the way and the design performs a supporting role," explains Jochen Schanz, Touratech's CEO and head of all technical aspects, including design. This statement encapsulates one essence of the success of Touratech products. "Our customers should relish the whole experience – from the moment they take the item out of its packaging and start studying the instructions through to using it out on the road. To achieve this aim, our



The Desierto IV subtly mirrors the design of the new R 1200 GS while at the same time unmistakably setting its own tone.

design emphasizes the product's functionality and intrinsic value – from the packaging to the surface finish," adds Bart, rounding off Jochen's train of thought.

After the successful completion and launch of the Desierto I and II models (the latter adapting the concept for the BMW R 1150 GS), Touratech decided to go one step further. Shortly before BMW unveiled the new generation adventure motorcycles in the form of the R 1200 GS, Touratech had produced a special ReVamp kit to enable its customers to completely overhaul their aging R 1100 GS and R 1150 GS machines. The company called in star designer Peter Naumann from the automotive industry and beyond to help create the full conversion kit incorporating a rigid fairing with dual headlights, tank and seat. This not only gave the GS models a com-

- The Desierto IV's windshield stands more upright than the original, which helps create a more majestic driving sensation, improves the sense of space and also optimizes wind protection without causing any additional vortices around the driver's helmet. The driver can adjust the height and angle of the shield whilst on the move as standard.
- In response to customer requests, Touratech will be offering two different shields for the Desierto IV – a small one that is visibly lower than the original GS shield, has more ventilation options and thus is aimed more at sporting requirements, and a much higher shield for touring and traveling. Both will be available as clear screens or with various shades of tint. In addition, the centerpiece of the easy-to-fit Desierto IV fairing can be ordered separately for use with the original shield for the R 1200 GS and at the same functioning as the headlight cover.



DESIERTO III



DESIERTO IV

pletely new look, but also thoroughly improved the vehicles' ergonomic properties. The ReVamp kit offered the driver a more dynamic riding position with its combination of sleek tank design, modified handlebar position and sporting curve to the seat – another good example of Touratech's dedication to harmonizing design and functionality.

The creation of Touratech's Streetline range in 2008 marked another milestone in the company's history. Originally part of the adventure segment, it heralded the move into producing highly functional accessories for street machines. "At Touratech, we have also always applied a profound understanding of form to our adventure products," Jochen says in regard to the new challenges they have faced. "Our products had a purist, technical look to them, which also resulted from their function. When it comes to designing accessories for street motorcycles, however, it is more important to focus on the contours and shapes of the machine and apply this principle to the design aspect once we've nailed the product's function so they clearly reflect Touratech's values," he adds.

Motorcycling enthusiast Bart had assisted with the design of the Streetline range as a freelancer before joining Touratech full-time in 2009, and in 2010 he became senior designer for all Touratech products. He brought valuable experience to the company from countless previous motorcycle

projects – including designing the tank and bodywork for an Aprilia Rally, a prototype based on a GSX-R and a hydrogen-powered scooter.

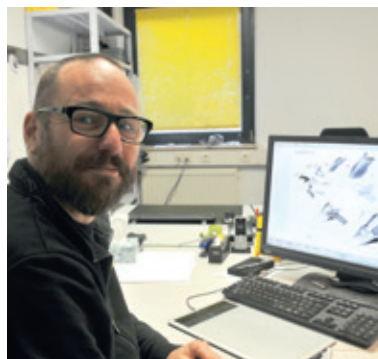
Over the years, the scope of Bart's projects has simply kept on growing. Numerous new soft luggage ideas and a comprehensive leisure range followed. Touratech has even made a name for itself in rider apparel, and the company's product portfolio now includes two helmets and the Compañero range of motorcycling suits – all sporting the inimitable Touratech touch, of course.

Even as we are working on this article, Bart carries on finalizing the design for the Destino touring boot and pondering the pannier rack for the BMW's S 1000 XR sports/enduro fusion. Bart explains that the pannier rack raises an issue that often crops up when designing technical accessories: "In order to accommodate our Zega panniers, the prototype rack has to have a very specific shape that is extremely eye-catching. Even so, its design must fit in with a luxury vehicle such as the S 1000 XR. We have to search for a way to integrate it as neatly as possible into the esthetic concept of the machine," he says. "We need to align the contours of the tubes to harmonize with the vehicle as neatly as possible." Yet it's not just a matter of outward appearance. The pannier rack has to be extremely robust – and the laws of mechanics cannot be erased with the stroke of a designer's brush. Last but not

FROM IDEA TO PRODUCT

The design process is kicked off by collecting ideas. What are the goals, and how can these be achieved most effectively? The first ideas are laid down as **sketches**. The designers then discuss these sketches and keep on refining them. Eventually, a **cardboard model** is produced to give an initial indication of how the finished product will look on the vehicle. Photos of the cardboard model can be edited digitally to simulate the finished product's look more precisely. At this point, the **clay model** is made on an actual vehicle. Tools are used to form shapes and edges in the malleable material. The clay model is an excellent medium for developing detailed solutions. The designers sketch their ideas in the clay and the model maker produces the final forms. One half of the clay model is then **scanned in 3D**. The final details can be tweaked into place on the computer before mirroring the form to produce a perfectly symmetrical full model. This data is then used to "print" the first **positive model** using a 3D plotter. If the design includes a lot of open space, the interior of the model also has to be fashioned with care as it will be partly visible on the finished

Senior Touratech designer Bart van den Bogaard gives the design ideas visual form on the computer (l.). The next step is to model these in clay.



product. This completes what is known as the **master form**. For parts produced using **reaction injection molding**, the **negative form** is created by taking a cast of the master form and milling aluminum molds for the **injection-molded parts** (high-pressure injection molding).



Whether it be a complete vehicle such as the ReVamp, luggage items from the Streetline, rider equipment or helmet – Touratech design always reflects the spirit of the brand.

least, the product has to be economically viable. “We have to consider the three aspects of design, construction and production from the outset whenever we design a new product, and strike the right balance between beauty, functionality and economic viability,” the senior designer explains.

A fair portion of pragmatism is also required in neatly dovetailing these three often contradictory factors. Hardly any other designer embodies these character traits as well as the legendary David Robb. The 60-year-old American, who describes himself as a “pragmatic visionary”, assisted Touratech’s in-house team as a consultant designer for the Desierto IV. David was the head of motorcycle design at BMW from 1993 to 2012. He subsequently went freelance and now advises prestigious companies in design, helps with team-building and compiles concepts to streamline design processes for creating successful products. Bart felt David would be the perfect partner to assist with the design of the new Desierto. David’s external view of the project was usefully objective, but he was also actively involved in the creative design process. The two creative thinkers, David and Bart, were constantly discussing things and kept sending sketches back and forth before constructing a cardboard model of the new fairing. Finally, they worked on the clay model together.

In creating the new version, the designer duo faced a challenging endeavor: “While the beak and tank form a single unit on the R 1100 and 1150 GS that the fairing could be adapted to fit, the air and oil-cooled 1200’s tank alone

already sported five optical elements. And this compartmentalization is even more pronounced with the latest liquid-cooled model,” Bart points out. “So we had to break down the design of the Desierto IV into much more distinctive components to complement the vehicle’s optics.” “The design had to suit the appearance of the latest GS, but we still had to highlight the Touratech touch,” David says. “By that time, the Desierto had established its own track record that we needed to incorporate in our design plans. So we emulated the shapes of the machine, with its numerous small air inlets and outlets, in the fairing and yet also maintained the Desierto’s typical V-shaped design. This created far more dynamic contours than on the series model, which more closely resembles a rally motorcycle. In addition, the combination of vertical and horizontal elements alludes to the aerodynamic contouring of an aircraft’s tail unit,” David says of the inspiration behind their design.

Having carefully inspected it, Bart puts the nondescript piece of plastic back down. He’s satisfied that everything is now in place. Soon the components of the Desierto IV fairing will go into series production as luxuriously finished injection-molded parts. In true Touratech fashion, they are bound to enthral their new owners with their fusion of functionality and distinctive optical flair.

AR 



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DREAM

TEAM

By joining forces with Ortlieb's motorcycle equipment section under the umbrella of its own brand, Touratech is able to offer waterproof products that are even more perfectly suited to motorcycle traveling.

Text: Andreas Reimar Photos: Ortlieb, Touratech

At the beginning of the 1990s, Ortlieb – a pioneer in waterproof bicycle luggage – took the logical step of adapting technology that had a proven track record over more than a decade to produce goods for those who prefer motorized two-wheelers. Over time, this gave rise to a small but high-quality range of waterproof soft luggage. Having gathered his own extensive experience with Ortlieb products on motorcycle tours, Touratech founder Herbert Schwarz came to the conclusion that this soft luggage range – originally made from extremely tough truck tarpaulin, later from specially coated textiles – would complement the Touratech aluminum case systems perfectly. The robust, weatherproof textile goods thus rapidly became an established part of the Touratech range. In the course of

the years, more and more ideas from the Touratech experts have flowed into developments and innovations in this range – the popular Rack Packs are just one example.

So much trust has been built up over the last 18 years of collaboration that the two companies have now decided to take their relation-

RUCKSACK The waterproof TIZIP zip fastening makes it easy to open.





PACKSACK Tight and compact thanks to air-release valve.

ship a step further. In the future, all motorcycle products using Ortlieb technology will be sold exclusively through Touratech. The new label will be known as “Touratech Waterproof Made by Ortlieb”, and this name perfectly sums up all there is to know about this product line – Touratech formulates the requirements for a product and the properties it needs to exhibit, and the product designers and textile experts at Ortlieb implement this requirement profile to the highest technical level.

High-tech “Made in Germany”

It goes without saying that all articles in this new range are manufactured in Ortlieb’s state-of-the-art production facilities in Heilsbronn, near Nuremberg, Germany. Customers can therefore rest assured that the new line will meet the usual high standards of material and production quality for which Ortlieb is renowned. Despite the best efforts of its competitors, Ortlieb is still the technology leader and is still head and shoulders above the rest when it comes to manufacturing waterproof textile luggage. For example, the company has developed a procedure known as 3D welding. While conventional, two-dimensional welding only involves laying two coated textile laminates on top of each other and welding them at the edges (the most primitive form of this is a map pouch), 3D welding joins parts together spatially. In this process, the individual pieces – such as the body and base of a luggage roll – are bonded with an overlapping seam of about 10 millimeters. It’s important here that the seam is at least as strong as the original material. This is achieved using high-frequency welding. Just as in a microwave oven, an electromagnetic field excites the molecules in the material, which generates heat. Under high pressure, the



These waterproof products are the perfect synergy of skilled workmanship and cutting-edge technology.

two pieces then melt together in a carefully defined zone – the seam.

The exact details of how this process works are a well-kept company secret. To ensure this stays within the company, the high-frequency welding machines – and all the other machinery essential to the manufacturing process – are designed and manufactured by Ortlieb’s own mechanical engineering department.

Quality guaranteed

Product quality at Ortlieb begins long before manufacturing, however – it starts with the choice of materials. Coated synthetic-fiber fabric serves as the basic material for the tex-

Technologies

- 3D WELDING** Joining textile laminates to form a three-dimensional shape using high-frequency welding.
- TIZIP ZIPPER** Heavy-duty dust- and waterproof zipper with two sealing lips and the characteristic T-shaped pull.
- ROLL-UP CLOSURE** Waterproof closure. The opening of the luggage item has one or two plastic bars sewn on. It is rolled at least three times and secured using two plastic fasteners.
- QUICK-SEAL CLOSURE** Closure using sealing lips with two elastic plastic profiles that can simply be drawn together or opened using a slider. Dust- and splash-proof.



Perfect accompaniment on motorcycle tours and all kinds of outdoor activities.

tile luggage items (see box).

Ongoing material testing in the in-house laboratory and also by external testing organizations such as TÜV ensures the raw materials are of a consistently high quality. Critical factors in the quality of the luggage items include the material's resistance to wear, buckling, ripping and tearing, and its suitability for welding. Regular tests are also conducted on the finished luggage items. These concentrate particularly on compliance with the promised protection class under IP classification – that is to say the water- and dustproof classification (see box page 75).

Sustainability and sense of responsibility

When two successful companies such as Ortlieb and Touratech decide to go into partnership on a new product line like this, there has to be more to it than simply a desire to

years, we have changed a large number of PVC products so they use PU instead, which is more eco-friendly. For some parts, however, we need the outstanding properties of PVC to ensure the longest possible service life. Where this is the case, we only use PVC that has been manufactured in Germany, so that we can be absolutely sure of compliance with the strictest environmental protection standards. Looking at the big picture, and taking into account factors such as energy and resource consumption, transport and disposal, a product that can be used for a long time thanks to its outstanding service life is more sustainable overall than a product that wears out more quickly, even if it is made from supposedly more eco-friendly materials," Bertram concludes.

Precisely this sustainability also has top priority in Touratech AG's business operations. For example, the electricity needed for production at the Niedereschach site comes overwhelmingly from renewable sources, and there can be no doubt about the long service lives of Touratech products. Taking account of sustainability right from the product development stage is anything but an

ecological luxury – it is a key unique selling point of the brand. "It is only natural that people who go on long or short journeys to explore the world want to keep the ecological footprint they leave behind on these adventures to a minimum," continues Bernd Pribil, the product manager responsible for waterproof motorcycle equipment at Touratech. "With long, five-year warranty periods – the same as we provide for many other products such as our tank bags – we are taking

a firm stand against throwaway consumption and for long service lives."

Development potential

Combining Touratech's expertise in the motorcycle segment with Ortlieb's position as technology leader for waterproof soft luggage opens up whole new avenues for product development. "Touratech simply has a much better idea of

Materials

Both single-coated and double-coated **nylon** and **Cordura fabric** is used for articles in the Made by Ortlieb range of waterproof luggage. The coating is either **polyvinylchloride (PVC)** or **polyurethane (PU)**.

The **material** and its **weight** vary depending on the purpose. A heavy-duty Rack Pack, for example, is made using double-coated PVC 620 material (approx. 620 grams/square meter), while it is quite sufficient to use single-coated 170 g/m² PU material for a waterproof first aid pack.

market the products in the best possible way. Indeed, Bertram Breitenbach, Sales Director at Ortlieb, came up with quite a list when asked about the values his company shared with Touratech. Firstly, there is the quality guarantee, "Made in Germany", long warranty periods and responsible corporate actions.

The typical supply chain at Ortlieb shows that this is more than mere lip service. "The accessories in the Touratech Waterproof Made by Ortlieb range use both polyurethane (PU) and polyvinylchloride (PVC)," explains Bertram. "In past

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IP classification

- IP 5x** Dust resistant, little dust can penetrate
- IP 6x** Dust-proof, no dust can penetrate
- IP x3** Protected against spray from an angle of up to 60° to the vertical
- IP x4** Protected against splashes from all directions
- IP x7** Protected against water penetration for 30 minutes when immersed to a depth of 1 meter

the properties that are most important when it comes to using products on motorcycles, and the products motorcyclists need,” says Bertram, explaining the new division of labor. “Our experts are then in a position to find technical solutions that will result in the perfect product for motorcycle use.” The hundreds of thousands of test kilometers covered by riders supported by Touratech every year form the basis for the vast trove of experience that makes the targeted development of motorcycle accessories possible in the first place. One example immediately springs to Bertram’s mind. “At Ortlieb, we have been gathering experience with waterproof rucksacks for outdoor pursuits for many years, and used this experience to optimize our products. When it came to using a rucksack on a motorcycle, however, we discovered that, while it is perfect for other things, it sat too high for use with certain types of helmet. It simply needs longer straps. This is the type of input that we can only get from Touratech’s own wide-ranging and intensive practical tests.”

It is often minor details that make all the difference between a good product and a perfect one, and striving for perfection is one of Touratech’s core principles. Bernd continues with the rucksack example to explain the typical two-step process comprising analysis and improvement: “Motorcycle packcloth stuff sacks are much larger than those used for outdoor pursuits. If all we did was increase the dimensions of an existing product, we would soon run into problems. Even if you pack carefully, the enormous volume means that a large amount of air would be trapped. This soft cushion makes it almost impossible to strap on securely. We have

Tried and tested – the range only includes items that have proved themselves on the road.



BAGS OF SPACE Duffel bag and rack pack provide all the waterproof storage space you could need.



therefore fitted our packcloth stuff sacks with an air-release valve that enables them to be compressed tightly.” Fastenings and material quality also need to be thoroughly re-designed to suit the high loads encountered on a motorcycle. “Articles for motorcycle use require much stronger material qualities such as double-coated 350 PVC fabric (see box). We also need totally different fastening solutions than those used for bicycles. We therefore have special flaps with belt loops welded onto the packcloth stuff sacks to ensure the straps are secure,” explains Bernd.

New opportunities

The potential of the closer cooperation between Ortlieb and Touratech does not begin and end with the further development of tried-and-tested products, however. “We have a whole host of ideas that we hope to turn into products in future,” says Bernd. “For example, we would like to offer our customers completely new possibilities with model-specific waterproof interior bags for our tank bags.”

While the waterproof luggage items that have previously been available in the Touratech portfolio have been in the classic adventure colors of black and yellow, a variety of colors will be added to the range in future so as to increase the appeal to riders in the touring and touring sport segments. “There will also be an increase in dual-use products that are perfect for use as both motorcycle luggage and for other outdoor pursuits,” says Bernd, giving an indication of what the future holds. ▲

LONG LIVE EVOLUTION!

The Compañero World 2 heralds the first major overhaul of Touratech's revolutionary touring suit. Fine adjustments to design details and new materials in some sections ensure the suit will continue to set the standard in functionality and comfort.

The key principle behind Touratech's Compañero World textile suit is actually so simple that it's hard to imagine why it took until 2010 to appear. All the team of designers led by Touratech CEO Herbert Schwarz did was to place the layers used in functional motor- cycling wear in the correct order and embellish the concept with a series of practical details.

As with its predecessor, the waterproof, breathable Compañero World 2 jacket (All Weather Add) is only worn as a top layer over its extremely airy inner suit in adverse weather. This keeps the "fair weather suit", including the entire protective element, completely dry. That clammy, clingy feeling so familiar to wearers of suits with internal membranes is



Diagonal leg seams improve the fit (l.). The new Cordura Air ensures increased air flow.

ONLY THE VERY BEST – MATERIALS AT A GLANCE

Only the finest materials are used to manufacture the Compañero World 2 suit made in Germany (selection).

SUMMER SUIT

Cordura 500 base material **Cordura Air** ventilated zones
Dynatec Reflex reflective shoulder patches **Cordura 2000** reinforcements on the shoulders and elbows **Faux leather** knees (inside) **Kepratec** reinforcement to the leg seam

ALL WEATHER ADD

Gore Tex triple-layer laminate
YKK Aquaseal zips, Reflective overprint with reflection values certified to EN 20471

gone for good in the Compañero World 2. What's more, the All Weather Add can be used on its own as a regular jacket if so desired.

The key 3-in-1 principle was always going to remain an untouchable feature of the new Compañero World 2 design as well. Instead, there are plenty of changes to detail that stem from the experiences of thousands of wearers all over the world in the space of the last five years or so. Further developments in textiles have also been incorporated into the new Compañero World 2.



NEW TEXTILES

Thanks to the use of a new fabric boasting even higher permeability – Cordura Air – the ventilated zones of the Summer interior suit are now even airier as well as being more robust than before. Its base material is high-quality Cordura 500, and the shoulders and elbows are reinforced with the stronger Cordura 2000.

The All Weather Add outer jacket has also had a “material update”. An even lighter, extremely durable triple-layer laminate from renowned manufacturer W. L. Gore now adds a special finishing touch. Starting in 2016 on, the outer jacket



The All Weather Add for the Compañero World 2 is stored in a rucksack zipped onto the jacket. There are also shoulder straps for heavier loads.

PLAY IT SAFE – PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The Compañero World 2 is fully equipped with high-quality protective elements, which all comply with the latest level 2 standard (= top protection class).

Shoulders EN 1621-1:2012 / S, level 2 **Elbows** EN 1621-1:2012 / E, level 2

Back EN 1621-2: 2014 / B, level 2 **Hips** EN 1621-1:2012 / H, level 2

Knees EN 1621-1:2012 / K, level 2

will sport two vents on the front, which can be closed and made watertight with their YKK Aquaseal® zippers. An outlet vent is situated on the back of the jacket at shoulder-blade level. This can also be closed with its well-protected zipper.

The reflective fibers woven into the new material used for the reflective patches also create a pleasant texture.

FINE TUNING FOR OPTIMUM USER-FRIENDLINESS

The cut of the suit has also been modified in certain details so as to further optimize the fit, with particular attention paid



In warm, dry weather, the All Weather Add is stored in the rucksack (l.) and can simply be pulled over the summer suit in bad weather.

to the diagonal leg seam. The slanted openings to the diagonally placed cargo pockets on the legs of the pants provide easier access, especially when seated. Donning the all-weather pants is as easy as pie, even in cumbersome boots, thanks to the extended zippers that now run right to the waistband. The two-way zipper makes it easier to reach the inside pant pockets, too.

The inner and outer pants of the latest model are both fitted with drawstrings for an even sturdier hold where required.

The ladies' jacket has also been anatomically optimized at the joint between the shoulder and upper arm.

INTELLIGENT CARRYING SYSTEM

The biggest difference between the Compañero World 2 and its tried-and-tested predecessor is the way the All Weather Add is carried – instead of the zip-on back pocket, a slimline backpack holds the waterproof, which can also be zipped to the back of the jacket to carry light loads. A compression strap provides a snug, flutter-free fit. The backpack can accommodate more contents, such as the entire All Weather Add plus optional extra drinks pouch, by zipping open its reserve volume. There are straps to distribute the weight optimally on the rider's back and secure the load safely. These can be stored well out of the way when not required, but also mean the backpack can be used for small excursions.

TWO DESIGNS IN A WIDE RANGE OF SIZES

The technical modifications were accompanied by some new design details. Both the black-gray-yellow and entirely black versions of the suit have been preserved. The wide range of sizes – with authentic sizing including long/short options and men's and ladies' cuts – has been extended even further to include men's size 64.



Waterproof, zipped ventilation opening (l.). Leg zippers that run right to the waistband make light work of pulling on the waterproof trousers, even with boots.

ALL-WEATHER VERSATILITY

The latest Compañero World 2 touring suit from Touratech is the top choice for motorcycle touring enthusiasts who are keen to experience all the wonders their native country and the rest of the world have to offer. The Compañero World 2 suit is your perfect companion for riding on the crest of these challenges – always ensuring unbeatable comfort and maximum safety, from desert climates to relentless sub-Arctic rain.

AR 

MIX & MATCH – COMBINATION ZIPPERS

The Compañero World 2 naturally sports zippers to attach jacket to pants. They are an identical match with the previous model's length, serration and position so that the zippers on the World 2 suit can be paired at will with jackets and pants from different generations. This versatility comes into its own if, for instance, just the pants need replacing after an accident.



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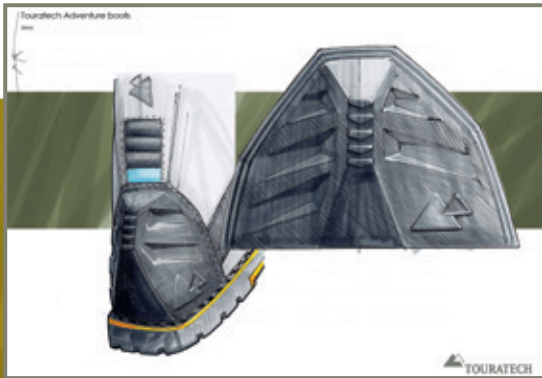
THE NEXT STEP

The Destino Adventure might change the way you think about touring boots. This rugged off-road boot features a revolutionary inner shoe that encourages riders to explore beyond the bike.

Just imagine you're out and about on your adventure motorcycle on a very ordinary day. You zip in town for a quick espresso before setting off, then start with a sporty first leg along a winding country road. Luckily, you've dried off again following the shower on the highway before heading off on foot to do some sightseeing around town. After that, the foray into the mountains turns into a demanding off-road adventure that will fuel conversation over an evening beer in the bustling historic town center.

Nothing out of the ordinary, but if you wanted the right footwear to suit a day like this with optimum protection and comfort in each of the different scenarios, the list would be long – calling for leisure shoes, street-bike boots and dirt-bike boots.

No motorcyclist is realistically going to cart all that around. As a result, there is bound to be some kind of shortfall in either comfort or protection, depending on the choice of footwear.



Universal concept

This set the Touratech designers in search of an all-round ideal for the Destino Adventure. Rather than focusing their attention on tuning the boot for a specialized use, they wanted to meet riders' needs in a range of different situations.

This approach enabled them to avoid unnecessary specializations but without making the many compromises so typical of all-round footwear. In the true fashion of the touring enduro, the Destino Adventure combines the special functions required by different classes of motorcycle boots into an innovative single design.

Protection and comfort in one

As with any motorcycle boot, the Destino Adventure clearly has to protect the rider in case of a fall – hence the built-in protectors of the waxed, full-grain leather Destino Adventure. The particularly vulnerable toe area is fitted with a cap made from the same shock-resistant polyurethane as the heel guard. The boot is supplied with an additional metal cap that off-road enthusiasts can screw onto the toe if desired. A plastic shield in front of the shins protects against impacts.

Robust insoles effectively stop the rider's feet from twisting or bending in a fall, but are soft enough to allow for flexing the sole of the feet when walking. The thick tread of the oil- and gasoline-resistant rubber sole ensures a firm grip even on slippery ground. The Destino Adventure with its extra-wide opening is fastened

with three robust buckles that are accurately adjustable in length thanks to the straps' fine mechanism. The close-fitting, soft Cordura finish to the shaft of the boot prevents water splashes and dirt from penetrating inside.

The novelty is the boot interior's sneaker alter ego

The exterior element of the Destino Adventure is not waterproof for good reason. This might come as a surprise to touring boot wearers, as they are well used to their footwear being just that. But as the Destino Adventure touring boot is meant to cover an extremely broad spectrum of uses, it is also designed for off-road tours. This calls for special design solutions such as a sewn sole that prevents the use of a membrane in the exterior boot. Apart from that, any membrane directly below the upper would hinder the shoe drying out should any water get inside. It's a predicament enduro tourers tend to know all too well.

Of course this doesn't mean anyone wearing the Destino Adventure for a tour has to forgo the comfort of a climate membrane. The water- and windproof layer is simply integrated into the inner element of the boot instead. Thus the membrane not only ensures a pleasant foot climate while riding but, on top of that, takes the interior boot to another level. It turns the inner element into more than just part of the boot by making it wearable on its own as a separate shoe. With its secure Velcro closures and solid sole, the Destino Adventure's interior forms the perfect footwear for even lengthy walks. And to make sure the outer boot doesn't go astray while you go walkabout, there's an extendable, coated stainless-steel cable stowed behind the top buckle for attaching the boots to your motorcycle.

This is an utterly unique feature only Touratech offers as part of its explicit mission, which first stunned riders with the launch of the Compañero touring suit – the ability to use elements of its rider equipment as high-performance outdoor clothing.

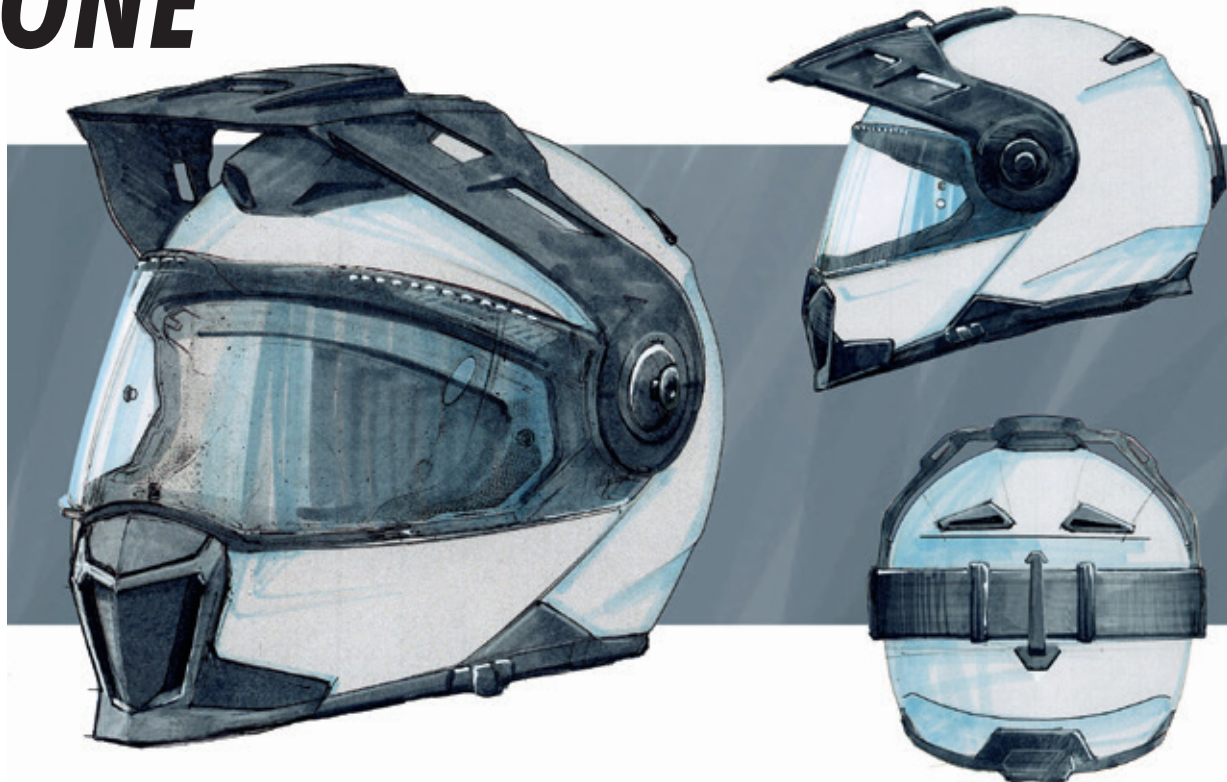
It goes without saying that the boot's interior is washable, which we strongly advise after extended wear or if dirt accumulates on long walkabouts! The anti-bacterial insole can be replaced as required or swapped for the alternative comfort insole, which can be ordered separately.

So, if we return to our original scenario, the list of footwear that journey involves has shrunk quite dramatically – right down to a pair of the new Destino Adventure boots.

AR 

FLIP-UP, TAKE ONE

With the look and functionality of a true adventure helmet and the comfort and convenience of a flip-up helmet, Touratech is offering demanding motorcyclists the perfect combination in the form of the Aventuro Mod.



If you ask motorcyclists about their best experiences on the road, the answer is very often, "Meeting people!" However, there is one barrier to communication that has to be removed before this desired interaction can take place – the helmet. Many of the people they encounter – and not just those with a well-developed sense of etiquette – find it impolite and even threatening to be addressed by a muffled figure riding high on a motorcycle. In this kind of situation, it is much better to release the chin section of the helmet, flip the front up, and greet people with a friendly smile. This was also the experience of Touratech founder Herbert Schwarz, who used to wear a flip-up helmet on his tours. "As a photographer, I also found that some wonderful images were gone by the time I managed to squeeze my camera into the face opening of an integral helmet," adds Herbert.

Even so, in recent years, he has almost always used off-road helmets on his trips. The outstanding ventilation, robustness and visor were among the features that led him to choose an enduro-style integral helmet when he goes on his travels.

Well-ventilated adventure helmet or comfortable flip-up helmet, and never the twain shall meet? Not necessarily. "Instead of an all-round solution, we decided from the start to go with a modular solution. With its interchangeable components, a modular helmet can be equipped with the desired functions without having to compromise as much as with an all-round helmet that tries to cover too many uses at once," says Herbert about the thinking behind the Aventuro Mod.

However, Touratech didn't have to start from scratch when it came to developing the Aventuro Mod. The Magdeburg-based helmet manufacturer Schubert has been gathering

experience with modular design since the 1990s. Contact was quickly made, and Schuberth is excited by the idea of a contemporary re-invention of the modular concept.

Schuberth has the perfect basis for the project in its range – the C3Pro, one of the best flip-up helmets currently available. This helmet brings with it a number of outstanding characteristics. The shell is made from S.T.R.O.N.G. fiber laminate, a technology combining strength with low weight that was developed by Schuberth for processing glass-fiber reinforced plastics. The inner shell is fitted with skin-friend-

ned, the first possible solutions formulated, and design sketches created.

It quickly becomes clear that the new helmet needs a peak that can be easily attached when necessary. This protection from glare and stone chips enables the helmet to be used without a visor. Of course, this has to be easily detachable. The face opening has to be a bit larger to allow the use of enduro goggles, so the chin section is more solid. The goggle strap mount that has proved so valuable on the Aventuro Carbon is also essential.



7 SIZES, 7 DESIGNS

The Aventuro Mod will be available in seven sizes from XS – XXXL with two helmet shell sizes. In addition to the standard version in matt black six coloured decors with a gloss black helmet shell will be available. The helmet is certified to the latest ECE and DOT standards.



ly Coolmax and has particularly good damping values. It also has an adjustable micro-lock fastener system, a practical integrated sun visor, outstanding aerodynamics, variable and effective ventilation and the added safety bonus of the anti-roll-off system, which prevents the helmet slipping off.

With Schuberth – one of the world's best helmet manufacturers – on board, brainstorming can start in the Touratech development department. The specific requirements are defi-

To achieve the best possible cooling effect around the head, the large amount of air that streams in through the face opening in enduro mode has to be able to exit through the back of the helmet. The opening is therefore larger than on the C3Pro. It goes without saying that the ventilation openings in this premium-class helmet can be adjusted and closed.

In addition to effective ventilation, the only way to ensure vision through the visor is as good as possible and free of misting no matter what the weather is by using a dual-pane system. This is fitted as standard in the Aventuro Mod.

Rain or shine, track or highway – no matter what the conditions, the Aventuro Mod provides the very highest level of comfort. "With our new Aventuro Mod, we can provide a touring- and adventure bike helmet whose clever solutions easily bridge the gap between off-road and on-road requirements," explains Herbert with a broad smile. Thanks to the flip-up chin section of the Aventuro Mod, this smile will now be seen more often on the road.

AR 

The Aventuro Mod provides a level of head ventilation unprecedented in flip-up helmets and can be used even on the most challenging of off-road terrain.



AWARD

This is now the second time Touratech has won Motorrad magazine's "Best Brand" award for tank bags. So what is it that makes the soft luggage from Niedereschach stand out from the crowd?

useful in providing consumers with reasonable, objective criteria on which to base their purchasing decisions. But what happens after that? Does the product really meet the customer's expectations?

To answer this question, ten years ago Motorrad magazine adopted a different approach. In its "Best Brand" awards, readers are invited to vote for the brand of their choice on the basis of their personal experience. The competition includes numerous categories that cover all the relevant aspects of motorcycling.

Touratech came out on top for the second time in the "tank bags" category of the latest awards in this prestigious series.

And it's not just Motorrad readers that are convinced of the superior quality of the soft luggage made in Niedereschach.

The makers themselves also place their full

faith in the long service life of these legendary tank bags – hence the new five-year guarantee on all Touratech tank bags.

For manufacturers, winning the benchmark tests conducted by top magazines is an advertising gift from heaven. These tests are also very



DAYTRIP



**NEW STYLE
FLAT**



D W I N N E R

Handcrafted in Germany

Many interlinked factors go into achieving the exemplary quality of Touratech tank bags, one of which is the "Made in Germany" stamp. Touratech soft luggage isn't just cobbled together by any old supplier depending on the level of demand, but is rather crafted by specialists who have spent dec-

ades honing their skills. Specially trained professionals take the utmost care and invest the full sum of their expertise in this work, which is mainly completed by hand.

High-quality materials

The material a bag is made from naturally plays a key role in achieving a high degree of functionality and longevity. Ultra-robust 1100Dtex Cordura is the main material used to manufacture Touratech tank bags, with the lighter-weight 560Dtex reserved for pockets and small components. High-tech Cordura textile differs from regular nylon in a number of significant ways. A Teflon coating protects the synthetic fibers from fading and ageing due to UV rays, is also dirt-repellent and avoids the formation of water marks. In order to achieve a high level of weather protection, the inside of the 1100Dtex Cordura is also covered with a waterproof coating. If motorcyclists want to ensure 100-percent protection against moisture, though, they should use waterproof bag liners or

AMBATO PURE



CRAFTSMANSHIP • HIGH-TECH • EXPERTISE

Decades of experience in development, the use of the very latest high-tech textiles and careful attention to finishing during the manufacturing process all go into guaranteeing the unrivalled quality of Touratech tank bags.



GOOD FIT Meticulously hand-finished seams ensure a robust shape, good fit and durability.



WATERTIGHT Covered zipper closures and coated textiles keep moisture at bay.



ROBUST Solid components with an extra-robust finish can withstand even the most extreme conditions.



maximum precision



unique quality



guaranteed durability



NEW STYLE



HIGH END

tried-and-tested rain covers. There are other components that also contribute to the legendary durability of Touratech's tank bags. These include the extra-robust, top-name zipper closures that are even specially water-repellent in most models.

Functionality and fit

Opting for high-quality materials is the starting point from which the Touratech specialists design the functional concepts of the company's different tank bag series. The first concern regarding luggage that will be subjected to extreme strains, such as the tank bag, is a firm anchoring on the motorcycle. Base plates manufactured to fit the specific vehicle provide a close fit onto the tank, and then robust straps and eyelets are



TOURING



AMBATO TOURING

used to lash the bags tightly in place. Matching the tank bag with the vehicle in question achieves another important aspect – the perfect ergonomic effect. The shape and position of the tank bag allow the driver unrestricted freedom of move-



CLEVER The wealth of ingenious details comes into its own on the road.



CLICK & CLIP Solid fasteners and practical quick-release catches.



THUMBS UP Practical arrangement of openings with plenty of top-quality zippers.



5 year guarantee



repair service



personal advice



ment on his machine.

Touratech tank bags have a wide range of features that vary according to the series – zipper closures to offer extendibility, ingenious organizer inlays, special interior bags, accessory mounts, map pockets and a whole host of subtle solutions that really pay off on the road. Water-repellent inlets for charging cables, loops for small components and practical elastic draw-strings for briefly stowing gloves are good examples of the loving attention to detail.

Purpose-made

Motorcyclists are individualists who have their own very specific requirements, and that also applies to any luggage on board. Accordingly, Touratech has also developed a special range of tank bags to meet this broad range of customer wishes. From the super-slimline "Pure" model for carrying all the essentials for short excursions and the conveniently equipped "Ambato Exp" right through to the extra-large VP 45, all the requirements for extremely variable usage are met by a full range of products that are purpose-made for very specific needs. Besides the model-specific versions, Touratech also makes universal tank bags that can be adapted to fit any machine. Photo tank bags form part of this category, as do extra-slimline bags for sports enduros.

AR 

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Searing heat on the journey through Gambia



The Yamaha workshop in downtown Marrakesh



It wasn't long before I met them

ROAD TO DAKAR

Without anyone for company or support, Vicente Jimenez from Barcelona set off on his Super Ténéré to travel through West Africa. His destination? The mystical Lake Retba, the former finish of the Dakar Rally.

Text and photos by Vicente Jimenez



Crossing the Western Sahara took many hours



Police check in Gambia



Typical Senegal "taxis"

It all started on the morning of February 1st. I loaded my motorcycle in a leisurely, relaxed fashion – quite different from my usual approach. Had my wanderlust petered out? No more itchy feet? Maybe I'd gotten too used to these kinds of tours? Actually, it wasn't any of those things. I simply had no idea where this adventure would lead us and what lay in store. When I say "us", I do so on purpose. Although traveling all on my own, my faithful two-wheeled companion forms an intrinsic part of the story.

The day had finally come after two months of preparations, and off we set on the first leg to Algeciras, where the ferry would take us to Tangier in Morocco.

We simply sped our way through the country. The new highway enabled us to cover the same distance in a single day that we'd needed three for in 2012. It's a good thing that all fast roads end at Agadir. From there on, our journey took us along rather more interesting country roads – although, if I'm honest, that only applied to the first 125 miles or so. You become accustomed to everything in the long run, and I can assure you it eventually gets quite monotonous around the 600-mile mark of desert, after the novelty has worn off.

I fitted the Super Ténéré with deep-tread tires in Laayoune. The guys in the workshop were nice, and although the effort involved didn't really warrant it, I was happy to hand them 200 Dh, around 20 euros, for their services.

After another long and monotonous day's drive through the Western Sahara, I spent the night in the famous "Hotel

Barbas" that also goes by the nickname of the "Error in the Desert". It's a complex in no man's land that reminds me of the film "From Dusk till Dawn" – only instead of vampires and babes it stars a bunch of sweaty men watching a Champions League match on TV. Being just 50 miles from the Mauritanian border, the hotel's a magnet for travelers passing in and out of the country. Which is just what we ourselves did the next morning.

I have to admit I was incredibly nervous about crossing into Mauritania. Not because of the infamous no man's land, which is nothing more than a lousy two-mile stretch littered with battered old tires and the odd ransacked automobile, but at the thought of the paperwork. I hate customs, but it's the time it takes up I mourn even more. Straight after the door with the green flag and yellow half-moon, a soldier armed with an AK47 and guard dog signaled us to one side. After the typical toing and froing – "Where have you come from? What's your destination? Passport? Stamp?" and "Our dogs didn't find anything to smoke on your motorcycles" – a pair of dubious chancers pounce on me, hoping to make a couple of bucks changing currency.

Mauritania. Not much more to see other than sand, stones and a couple of wrecked vehicles. Each time I was stopped for a police check, I was glad to talk to them. I have never felt so utterly lonesome in my entire life...

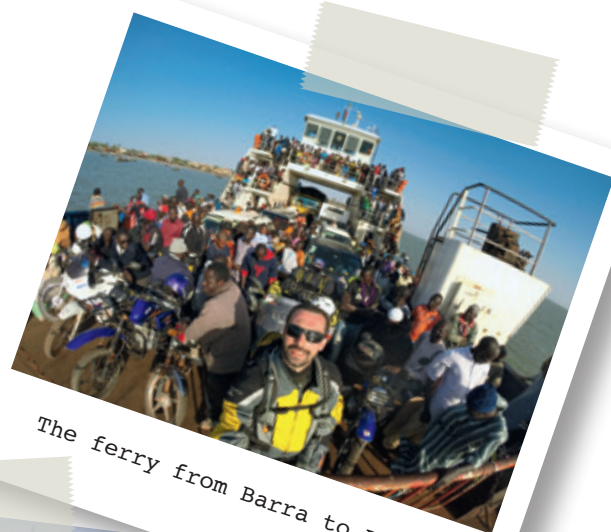
A second day in the middle of nowhere. Looking back, I can't say which was more difficult – finding my way out of the crazy traffic in Nouakchott or trying to find a single lousy filling station with anything other than diesel... In any case, somewhere along the line I managed to fill the tank and continue to Senegal – certainly not via the “Rosso” border crossing. We had planned to go via Diamna, a less bustling and “corrupt” customs post further to the south – only to be told its opening hours are just 8 a.m. to 12 noon. So we had some time to make up.

Crossing the border to Senegal ran like clockwork and, above all, was a very polite affair. Just one small omission came to light – the temporary insurance for the motorcycle. The insurance company has no branch in Diamna, so I would need to sort it out in St. Louis, where we planned to spend the night.

St. Louis lies 18 miles from the border. I had seen a few photos of the place on the Internet and thought it looked nice – everything in Colonial style with colorful, low-rise houses, fishermen and a pleasant atmosphere. It was Saturday evening and everything was closed, which it would also remain on Sunday, of course. This presented me with a huge problem. I couldn't afford to wait till Monday for this insurance certificate and thus lose a day in St. Louis. The owner of the hotel made a couple of calls and a pair of locals

immediately turned up. More calls. I didn't understand a word, but I eventually learned that the owner of an insurance bureau in the street behind the hotel would come and open it up just to arrange my insurance. As simple as that. It just goes to show, yet again, that telephone calls can work wonders here in this country – a friend of a friend has a friend, and everything's hunky-dory.

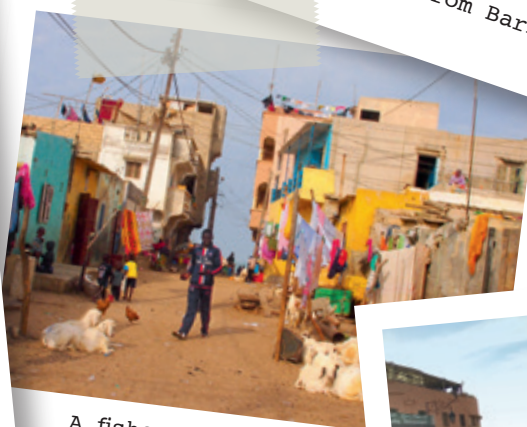
On the second day of our journey through Senegal, we were set to arrive in Dakar, but of course we couldn't pass up the chance to see Lake Retba en route – the finishing post of the African Dakar Rally, where adventure is worth more than gold. After a thousand diversions because we were unable



The ferry from Barra to Banjul



Tire change in Morocco




A fisherman's hut in St. Louis



Jemaa el-Fna market square in the heart of Marrakesh

to find the right route to start with, we finally reached it. What a mind-blowing place! It's called the pink lake for a reason, and I was lucky enough to see it at its very best. It's not always that color – it depends on the season.

From there, we traveled on to Dakar, where the crazy traffic drove me into a full-blown panic. Luckily it was a Sunday, so some sort of progress was possible. I only visited La Pointe des Almadies – the western-most tip of Africa – and then fled the capital as fast as I could along the coastal road. There was a mission I had yet to accomplish before heading back home – I had a package to deliver in Gambia (see box). 

While planning the tour, I started to feel the urge to give something back to the continent and its people. I decided to put together an aid package for needy children that would be small enough to transport on the motorcycle. So I got in touch with Yamaha Spain. They liked the idea, too, and came up with a package of 25 T-shirts, caps, backpacks, track-suits and 50 ballpoint pens. I threw in three soccer balls on top – pure gold in these rural areas. All I still needed to work out was the most important aspect – where to hand over the goods? Researching the tour, I had come across some videos made by people from Madrid and other Spaniards who lived in Senegal and Gambia. One of the guys in the videos was Luis from Madrid, who had already been in Gambia for ten years and founded an aid organization called “The Future is Our Country”. It's an NGO that supports children's schooling and training for women. I got in touch with Luis and explained what I had in mind. We agreed that the package should go to the children in the impoverished village of Berefet, where the organization helps run a number of vegetable plots and bee colonies.



Children from the village of Ibel, Bassari country



Red earth in Gambia







2
COUNTRIES

This year, the traditional
Touratech tour at the start of the
motorcycling season ran from
Barcelona to Orange.
Destination – the French Travel Event.
Between the two lie more than 600 miles,
covering some of the most beautiful
scenery Spain and France have
to offer.

Text: Andreas Reimar
Photos: Herbert & Ramona Schwarz

4
REGIONS

LA GARROTXA

Volcanoes in Spain? Who would have thought?

OK, so the most recent eruption happened around 11,000 years ago – but on a geological scale that’s kind of the day before yesterday. And even if there are no fire-spewing mountains towering before us into the virtually cloud-free sky of the Pyrenean foothills, the natural park of the Garrotxa volcanic area still exudes its own special charm. Gentle woodland scenery has replaced the smoking piles of lava that left behind countless dome-shaped hills – the extinct volcanoes.

There is plenty of scope for exploring the Garrotxa on very minor, quiet roads for anyone who prefers things that way. Indeed, there’s something to suit every taste in motorcycling – from well-maintained asphalt to rough tracks. The magnificent gravel trail that runs alongside the Susqueda Reservoir, a little to the south of the region, is an absolute must. Rivulets trickle

down the rock faces onto the road surface, which is deeply rutted in places. The sudden transitions between sand, gravel and rock demand complete concentration. “This reminds me of our tour of Bolivia,” Herbert says, capturing the long-distance touring vibe of this leg. The inhabitants of the small farming villages and the wonderfully preserved medieval towns, such as Santa Pau and

Sant Feliu de Pallerols, prove to be very hospitable when it comes to finding somewhere to stay and good company. Rustic country inns and small bodegas serve hearty local dishes accompanied by the region’s potent wines.

However, the main attraction of the Garrotxa is its natural volcanoes – above all, the magnificent El Croscat, on whose north-eastern slope a widely visible open-pit mine exposes the volcano’s innards to daylight, Santa Margarida with a little church resting on the floor of its crater, El Traiter and El Racó. The most impressive lava formations, which tell tales of the volcanoes’ original force, can be found at the town of Castellfollit de la Roca, with its historic heart perched high on a ridged basalt rock face.

“I was particularly enthralled by the mountain villages. Spotlessly neat and well cared-for, each is set in its own little world.”

Dominique

The Garrotxa is easily reached from Figueres, Girona or even Barcelona and is always worth a visit as part of any tour of Catalonia or the Pyrenees. By the way, if you tune your senses finely enough, you might just feel one of the good hundred mini earthquakes that occur every year to remind us that the rocks underground still haven’t quite settled.





The road along the Pantà de Susqueda reservoir (very top). Bright red volcanic earth (left). Castellfolit de la Roca high up on the basalt crags.



Arriving in picturesque Carcassonne (top). Tight bends and good traction on the asphalt – crossing the Pyrenees on its side roads (left). Rapid descent into the valleys to the north.



THE PYRENEES

STAGE

Once we've completed our scenic tour of the Garrotxa, a look at the map reveals an exciting mix of terrain that promises to put our various motorcycling skills to the test as we cross the Pyrenees. Once we've finished our hearty breakfasts, we prepare our dew-soaked machines for an early start. We still have to capture the picturesque view of Castellfolit de la Roca from an easily accessible vantage point. After that, we enjoy a relaxing half-hour cruise along a smooth asphalt road until we finally have to wake up and pay attention! You could well imagine the designers of the Circuit de Catalunya race track in nearby Girona going for practice runs up here in the mountains, the way the C38 wends its way around the breathtaking twists and turns along the slopes and flanks of the

bends to get even an easily maneuverable machine around them at a halfway decent speed.

We emerge from the dense woodland that has pervaded the trip so far to enjoy more distant views and can even make out the glistening blue Mediterranean across the now open terrain as we approach the main ridge of the Pyrenees.

However, the most spectacular views remain hidden from sight on this trip, as the still snow-covered peaks of Très Vents and Pic du Canigou are swathed in thick cloud. And although we have just come from summerly warmth, the onboard thermometer shows a frosty 39 degrees Fahrenheit as we cross the Col de Jau pass at almost 5,000 feet. We hasten back down to the valley! During the rapid descent into the département of Aude,

we quickly warm up again, though. Not only does the sun regain the upper hand, but the road construction guys have clearly pulled out all the stops. The relentless bends on this stretch of road teeter on the edge of turning the thrill of sporting motorcycling into sheer hard work.

Each leg surpassed the last in beauty – there was hardly ever anything more than a two-hundred-yard straight. Simply wonderful. *Herbert*

valleys. One-hundred-and-eighty-degree hairpins crop up more regularly than randomly along the route.

We cross into France through a deserted border station at Col d'Ares. According to the road categories on the Michelin map, we will be going down a notch in Prats de Mollo la Preste. Some determined steering will be required in the

Considering the non-stop mass of impressions bombarding our senses along this very mixed leg, it's no wonder that we are only able to recall some of the fine detail much later on. This also helps explain why the "debriefing" lasts well into the night – combined with the excellent several-course meal and accompanying wine at the Domain Michaud.



STAGE

3 HAUTE LANGUEDOC

Our engines have barely warmed up before the whole group comes to a halt again to marvel at the first highlight. However often we might have seen the view in photographs and in TV documentaries, the medieval city wall of Carcassonne with its intricate turrets is still overwhelming in real life. The perfectly restored construction, perched in fairy-tale-fashion on top of the hill, readily conjures scenes of its early inhabitants fighting off marauding assailants from behind the crenellated walls.

We've hardly left modern-day Carcassonne's furthest northern outreaches onto the plain before the enticing mountain vista of the Montagne Noir looms ahead. But before we finally dive into the maze of lowest-grade roads, a waypoint on the GPS reminds us of our mission – an important photo opportunity. In fact, the landmark would be pretty hard to miss, even without the aid of a navigation system. The castles of Lastours, four pictur-

esque ruins which adorn the steep cliffs high above the village of the same name, reveal our destination way in the distance.

Constructed during the 11th and 12th centuries by the Cathars, the castles soon met the same fate as their builders. Denounced by the Catholic Church as heretics, the Cathars were relentlessly fought and eventually defeated in a twenty-year crusade.

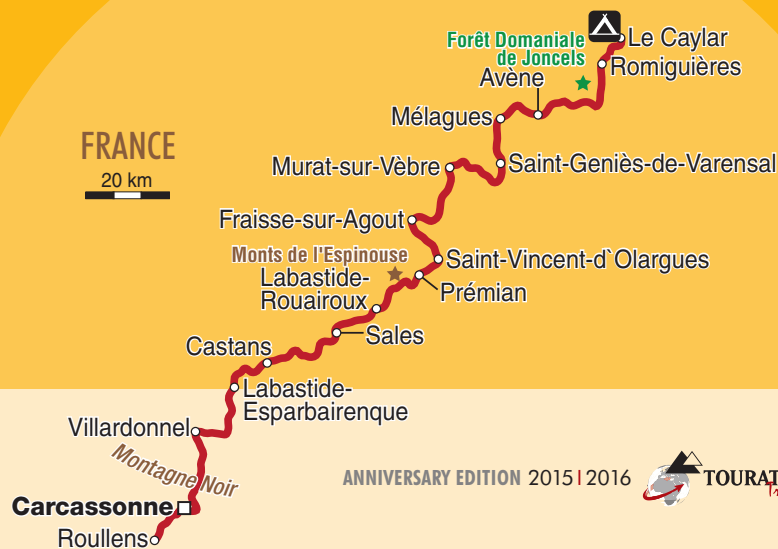
After revitalizing ourselves with a café au lait, we leave the "Black Mountains" and the dark Middle Ages behind us – and promptly tackle the next range of mountains, the Monts de l'Espinouse. As we cross the Col de l'Espinouse at an elevation of around 3,600 feet, we move away from the Mediterranean setting of the Hérault and enter the rugged landscape formed by the harsh climate of the Massif Central. Densely forest-

ed ridges and barren, windswept plateaus dominate the scenery from here on. The land is sparsely populated, as only the soils in the valleys yielded any sustenance for former generations. At times, we feel as if we've been transported to the Scottish Highlands, and it's only upon closer inspection that the vegetation reveals our true location in the South of France. We don't have to drive on the left here, either, so we

"In Spain and France alike, the locals were always unbelievably welcoming to us." Alexander

can really throw ourselves into the never-ending serpentine.

Eventually, we find ourselves on a karstic, moor-like plateau in the lee of a small ridge of hills – the perfect spot to pitch our tents. The landscape has changed so radically in the space of one day's drive that by the time the gasoline stoves are hissing, the campfire is crackling nicely and the crown caps popping, we can hardly believe it was only this morning that we left our luxury bed & breakfast near Carcassonne.





Countless castle ruins adorn the hilltops in Haute Languedoc (top). There's very little traffic on the small country roads (left). A staple part of every tour – the cozy campfire.



The curious rock faces of the Cévennes gorges are utterly fascinating (top). Celebrating a successful tour (left). Castelbouc at the very bottom of the Tarn Gorge.



4

STAGE

THE CEVENNES

If the landscape throughout the latter parts of our trip through Haute Languedoc was already marked by rugged beauty, the mountainous scenery of the Cévennes on our way north is even more barren, vast and unpopulated for miles on end. Every now and again, our eyes scan the horizon for a small hamlet, perhaps, but to no avail. In contrast, the river valleys with their almost vertical limestone sides cut hundreds of yards deep into the Causses plateaus are mild, green and fertile.

Mankind has always found a way to use even the tiniest nook and cranny in the region's protected valleys. The villages nestle closely into the steep slopes and castles daringly planted on rocky outcrops watch over the gorges that were once only navigable by boat.

riously eroded cliff walls glide around testing the thermals that rise from the dramatic abyss of the gorge.

The highest peak of the Cévennes is the Sommet de Finiels, which reaches up to 5,574 feet at the very northern end of this mountainous region, most of which is designated as a national park. Although its counterpart in the south, Mont Aigoual, is about 430 feet lower, it has the major advantage that a road runs right up to the top. Constructed for ferrying supplies to the 19th century observatory at its peak, the winding route offers the most enjoyable drive imaginable on our powerful touring machines. On a clear day, it is said that the view from the top encompasses a quarter of France – even Mont Blanc is supposed to be visible in good conditions. But Mont Aigoual also has another, much darker

side. The Latin word “aqua” forms part of its name with good reason, for the Massif is one of the wettest regions of France. We could well have done without experiencing this fact quite so directly, but the mountain did its name proper justice

“In just four days, you get to hear completely different dialects, sample a wide range of foods and encounter totally conflicting mentalities.” Sofia

Having just watched cascades of driving rain pour down from heavy storm clouds into the Tarn Gorge from a distance, no sooner do we arrive at its edge than the sun casts glistening rays into the purified air that illuminate every last detail in the travel photos we take along the serpentine descent. As our demonstration riders give it their all on the road, the vultures that nest in the cu-

and bestowed us with the only drenching we experienced during the entire journey. Almost 4,600 feet in altitude and countless bends lie between the summit of Mont Aigoual and St. Jean du Gard, where we finish our journey. We will arrive at Touratech France's Travel Event by tomorrow lunchtime – with plenty of stories to tell.



FRANCE
10 km

THE TRAVEL GROUP



Herbert Schwarz
Touratech CEO and general manager



Ramona Schwarz
Photographer



Wolfgang Danner
TV journalist and video editor



Jan-Peter Sölter
Camera man



Andreas Reimar
*Print and multimedia journalist,
planning and documentation*



Bernd Pribil
*Product manager Touratech, product
tester and demonstration rider*



Sofia Lemaire
*Touratech Canada,
demonstration rider*



Dominique Lemaire
*President of Touratech Canada,
demonstration rider*



Melanie Fararuni
*Motorcyclist and
demonstration rider*



Alexander Fararuni
*Motorcyclist and
demonstration rider*



Taking photographs, shooting video footage and motorcycling – in just a matter of days, the motley crew of motorcycling enthusiasts forges a winning team.

INFO

Travel season:

Pleasant enough motorcycling weather can be expected along even the higher parts of this tour from the beginning of May until partway through November, although severe downfalls might occur in the rain shadow of the mountains outside of high summer. This is most likely during early fall along the southern flanks of the Cévennes.

Even if it might already be pleasantly warm at low altitudes in spring, if a mistral whips up things can suddenly change for the worse. This downwind is icy cold and its haphazard gusts can take the fun right out of the motorcycling experience.

Motorcycling:

Even if the tour includes occasional gravel track sections, all of the recommended route is negotiable by experienced motorcyclists on regular road machines. Because the non-asphalt sections are all short, they can also be bypassed quite easily. Conversely, extra gravel tracks can be added at will, especially in the Pyrenees and Cévennes, although drivers should observe the restrictions that apply in the national parks.

Accommodations:

All of the regions of this tour have a very good tourist infrastructure. There are plenty of accommodations to be found in all price categories — including numerous campgrounds, especially in the vicinity of the Tarn Gorge.

Stage 1:

Hotel Cal Sastre, Cases Noves 1,
17811 Santa Pau, Spain
www.calsastre.com

Stage 2:

Domaine Michaud, 1 Michaud,
11290 Roullens, France
www.domainemichaud.eu

Stage 4:

L'Hôtel Les Bellugues, 13 rue Pelet de la
Lozère, 30270 Saint Jean du Gard, France
www.hotel-bellugues.com

Maps:

- World Mapping Project: Pyrenees.
Scale 1:250,000; ISBN 978-3831771554
- Michelin Regional Map 525 —
Midi-Pyrenees. Scale 1:200,000;
ISBN 978-2067135161
- Michelin Regional Map 526 —
Languedoc-Roussillon. Scale 1:200,000;
ISBN 978-2067135178

GPS data:

The GPS data for all stages of this tour can be downloaded free of charge at:
http://tourate.ch/testtour_2015



PORTUGAL'S HIDDEN PATHES

An exciting mix of offroad training and enduro excursions on challenging tracks through Portugal's hinterland can experience, who goes on tour with the team of Touratech Nordic.

Text: Mads Skyttegaard Photos: Johan Ahlberg / www.fastbikes.se

Hi Mads. We have a flat tire. Anders had a puncture. Where are you now? We are in the bottom of the gorge on the way to the cork-oak. Can you get here fast? »Yes. I'll be there in about 20 min«

We are in the sunny south Portugal, riding the lovely gravel roads on the Algarve coast. The phone call I just received was from Touratech Tour Guide Per Wallin, who is guiding a group of Norwegian and Swedish riders through an amazing network of challenging tracks.

I had just parked the support truck underneath the big before-mentioned cork-oak on the highest point of David Johansson's favourite ridge-track, getting the lunch ready for the again before mentioned group of riders. But I have all the

spare wheels and must assist as soon as possible. Five minutes later, I meet the group of eight happy guys using the 20 minutes break to catch their breath. Some of them were on the same track last year, so we know that they can ride it.

Janne, our other tour guide has taken the rest of the group and is leading them up the easier track towards the lunch site. Anders gets a new rear wheel, and they are off.

David Johansson, CEO of Touratech Nordic and







Touratech Adventure Travel, has spent quite a few years to get this arrangement just right. Many kilometres ridden, tracks given up, resorts checked out and many chances taken.

We set up our camp at Alba Suites Spa and Resort, right on the cliffs on the Atlantic coast. Next shoreline – Africa. You can almost smell the desert.

Day one. Since almost everyone hasn't been riding for the better part of six months, we start off with some lovely 230 kilometres of nice twisty tarmac riding. Everyone gets to know his bike, which was issued to them during the morning, and get settled into the zone. We ride out to the south-western-most corner of Portugal. The lighthouse of Cabo de São Vincente. After the most celebrated »fika« (Swedish for coffee-break), we head off into the mountains on some twisties, and end up at the top of mount Foia from where we can almost see »home«, even though it will take the rest of the day to get there.

It is a good way to get you »bike-legs« working again. And a relaxing way to get to know the group and the dynamics of the group.

Tired and happy we all meet up in the ocean-view restaurant for a lovely dinner. After dinner everyone goes to bed with a full stomach and excited about the coming days.

Day two is offroad training for the guests, where the basic techniques and skills are fine-tuned, so that everyone will be prepared for the days to come. Balance, braking, steering with your foot pegs, uphill full stop and downhill braking are the most important exercises, but the sentence »Remember to look ahead« is repeated over and over again. The training takes place about 20 kilometres from our base just outside the old city of Silves. A true playground with steep hills, flat gravel areas, water crossings, mudholes and all.

Just opposite the training area there is a long steep hill with a very old windmill on the very top. »Let's go up there«, David says with a sparkle in his eyes. »Who is coming with me?« Knackered or not, almost everyone takes themselves up that hill. At the beginning of the day, no one thought they would go up that hill. But the build up and enormously self-confidence boosting training from Per, David and Janne results in everyone tackling this very steep hill with poise and style. Back at the resort, the after-bike drink is enjoyed at the deck, and some hit the spa.


The next four days passes way too fast. The extended and very meticulous track-planning from David and his crew, takes the guests out on some really awesome tracks and roads.

The level of difficulty rises as the days are passing. And the tracks gets harder and harder, the hills steeper and the water

crossings deeper. But always with the possibility to make an alternative route for those who want.

Over the course of the next four days the group gets to ride every type of terrain that the area can throw at them. The »dynamic tarmac« twisty road where even the outer edges of the tires will be worn. »Djupa vattnet« water passage, where some might even get the helmet soaked.(!) »Steijers backe« decent where it is crucial to go slow, the epic ride up the ridge to the windmill, and I could keep on mentioning tracks that will get your heart-rate up.

All is finally wrapped up in the »Aguas Bellas« track where all the days training accumulates into the best track I have ever ridden.

Nevertheless, all of this must come to an end, and Saturday is departure day. However, for those who just can't get enough, David has a short track, just long enough to be challenging, short enough to make it back in time for the bar-beque-lunch on the deck where we all sit down and reflect on the week. It is always emotional and very fulfilling at the same time to say goodbye to every group of guests. Hopefully to see them again on some of our other adventures! 

Facts

The tours are arranged by Touratech Experience that is a part of Touratech Nordic (Scandinavia). Touratech Experience is an Official BMW Motorrad Partner with certified Tourguides and Instructors. All nationalities are welcome on the tours, our tourguides speak fluent Swedish and English. Transfer, accommodation, bikes, bike insurance, spare bikes, fuel, most meals and full support is included in the 8-day tours that starts at approx. 2.800 Euros. Flights and dinners are not included.

Dates for 2016:

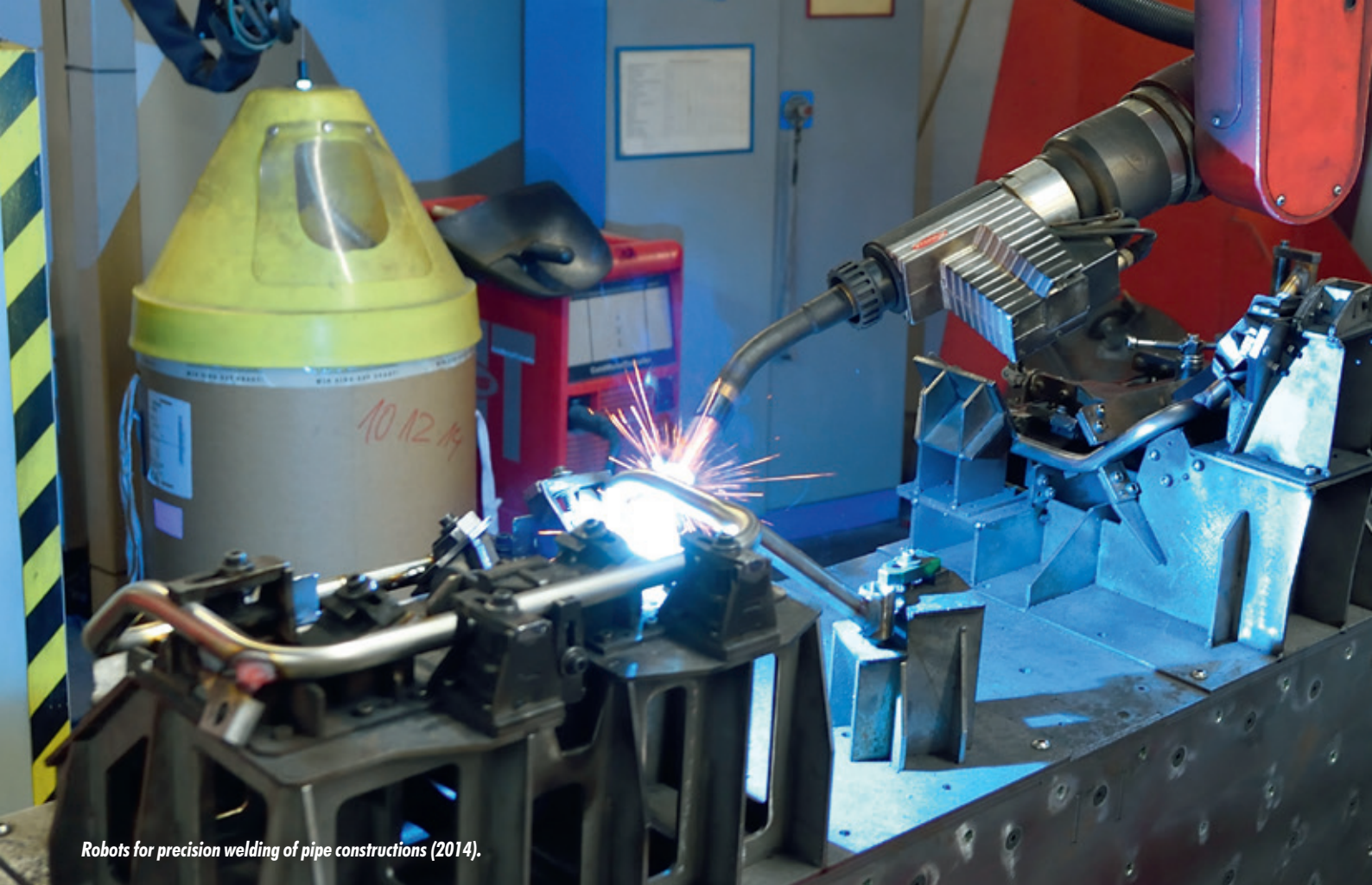
February 13 - 20

February 20 - 27

February 27 - March 5

Detailed information at www.adventuretravel.se/en





Robots for precision welding of pipe constructions (2014).

MISSION ADVENTU

Over the course of a quarter century, Herbert Schwarz and Jochen Schanz have succeeded in turning their two-man business into a company of global standing that has had a lasting influence on a whole generation of motorcyclists with its innovative products and stringent quality standards in motorcycle accessories. Text: Andreas Reimar Photos: Touratech

Anyone who thinks Silicon Valley is the only place businesses born in the garage metamorphosize into successful international companies must have missed Touratech's rising star. Even though a garage is only involved on the sidelines of our own story, a kitchen table, living room and flower store after-hours all play important roles as the initial production sites. And the ending certainly befits this kind of success story – with the emergence of a cutting-edge, trendsetting enterprise.

But let's start at the beginning. It must have been another one of those demoralizing rides in the rain that left Herbert Schwarz having to junk yet another bicycle computer. Herbert can no longer precisely recall how many of these electronic devices that he'd adapted for use on the motorcycle suffered fatal rain damage or mechanical shock on his BMW. All the same, these handy gadgets that first started appearing in the



tic casing still needed finishing by hand to save money, so the entire first series of the IMO 200T was milled in a friend's garage. The wiring and final assembly then took place on Herbert's kitchen table and in his living room.

AHEAD OF ITS TIME

By 1990, a fair share of Herbert's savings were bound up in those hundred glistening new IMOs. Despite his enthusiasm for his technically brilliant device, he underestimated one key aspect – the marketing. The main accessory outlets showed no inter-



Modest beginnings: Assembling the original Chala 12HD tent lamp series in the living room at home.



Inspiration and experimentation: Adventure trips still remain a key source of inspiration.



1980s were packed with plenty of functions that Herbert also found useful for his motorcycle. This was how the professional electronics engineer gradually formed the idea of adding motorcycle-specific gauges to the existing functions of a bicycle speedometer – and then packaging the entire device into an illuminated anti-vibration and waterproof casing.

Yet it would be a long road from the birth of this idea to the finished product. Herbert's aim was to create an utterly reliable device of professional standard. But in the electronics industry in particular, the manufacturing processes required to achieve this high standard are geared toward producing astronomical batch sizes. Eventually, Herbert located a company that was willing to produce one hundred units at the rate normally reserved for runs in the thousands – thus heralding the first breakthrough. All the same, the plas-

est in what, back then, was a completely unheard of display unit.

Herbert had no option other than to market the product – which he believed in more than ever after extensive tests – directly himself. He put together data sheets, wrote press releases, placed tiny ads in the relevant specialist magazines and got in touch with their editorial teams.

Today, Touratech employs an almost 40-member team to manage its marketing, advertising and sales activities. The elaborate catalog, which by now fills 1,924 pages, is



produced every year; press releases need publishing on a regular basis for the trade magazines and the Travel Time customer magazine covers all the thrills and spills to be had alongside the factual product information.

Now, back to 1990. Herbert's determined commitment, which he had to muster out-of-hours while earning a living as a hardware engineer, reaped rewards. Seminal German motorcycling magazines such as "Motorrad" and "Tourenfahrer" started to recognize the potential of Herbert's invention and report on the IMO. Sales slowly took off, but it would still take a full two years for the first IMO series to sell out.

News of the innovative motorcycle computer spread beyond touring circles to capture the attention of motorcycle sports enthusiasts as well. This led Richard Schalber, a professional endurance rider and organizer of the very popular "Transdanubia Ride" amateur rally of that era, to Herbert's door. He didn't need much prompting to design the IMO 100R, a version with a larger display and fewer functions to perfectly suit rally motorcycles' limited cockpit space. When Schalber started entering his own team (which later became the BMW works team) in the Dakar Rally in 1996, Herbert kitted him out with a specially designed roadbook mount made of carbon. The ultra-light, dependable device was also onboard the victorious BMW works machines in 1999 and 2000.

In 1990, Herbert founded a company so as to provide an "official" sales platform for the IMOs. The catchy name of the original civil law partnership ("GbR" in German) run by himself and a co-worker from the electronics sector stood – and stands to this day – for touring, rally and technology: Touratech.

A UNITED FORCE

It was in 1992 that Jochen Schanz started lending Herbert a practical and creative hand. The two motorcycle adventurers had gotten to know each other at a tourers' meeting and then spent several months traveling to-

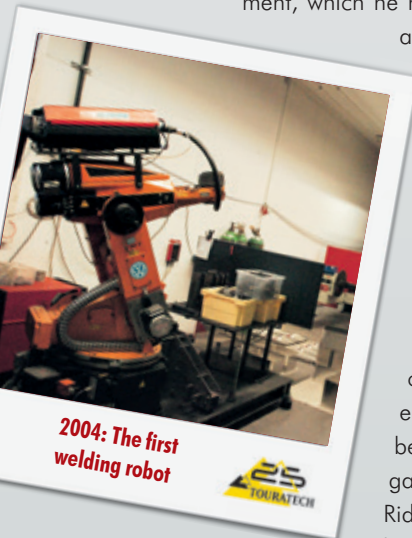
Technical defects, injuries, almost un-navigable road surfaces – it was on a three-month motorcycle tour across countries in Western and Central Africa that Touratech bosses Herbert and Jochen learned they could depend on one another.

Photos: H. Schwarz

Herbert and Jochen welcomed in New Year 1991 in a simple but heartfelt way. After starting out in Lomé, Togo, they had just completed the first short leg of their motorcycle tour to Cotonou, the capital city of Benin. There, they pitched their tent in the garden of a rather ramshackle hotel. Their festive dinner consisted of spaghetti cooked by their own fair hands, after which they headed off to celebrate in the street bars of this exuberant West African city. While the locals were still giddily celebrating, the thoughts of the two travelers were already completely elsewhere. They would be setting off to continue their journey without delay – on a 15,000 kilometer tour that would take them through some of the most difficult countries to travel in all Africa.

Starting off from the West African states of Togo and Benin, the small convoy of four fit-for-duty enduros would traverse Cameroon and penetrate further and further into the heart of the dark continent. Herbert on his R 100 GS was accompanied by Jochen on a converted Yamaha XT 600 and two of Jochen's mates on solo machines. Herbert and Jochen had formed a partnership of convenience with their fellow travelers for this trip. They know each other vaguely from various motorcycle gatherings and had got talking in touring workshops. Back then, Herbert was working as a hardware developer for timekeeping systems and Jochen was a mechanical engineer at Daimler. They both devoted every waking minute of their free time to their hobby – motorcycling. This involved relentlessly adjusting, tinkering and fine-tuning the motorcycles – but each man for himself at that point.

The group was to experience authentic Africa in the Central African Republic, as yet almost completely untouched by tour-

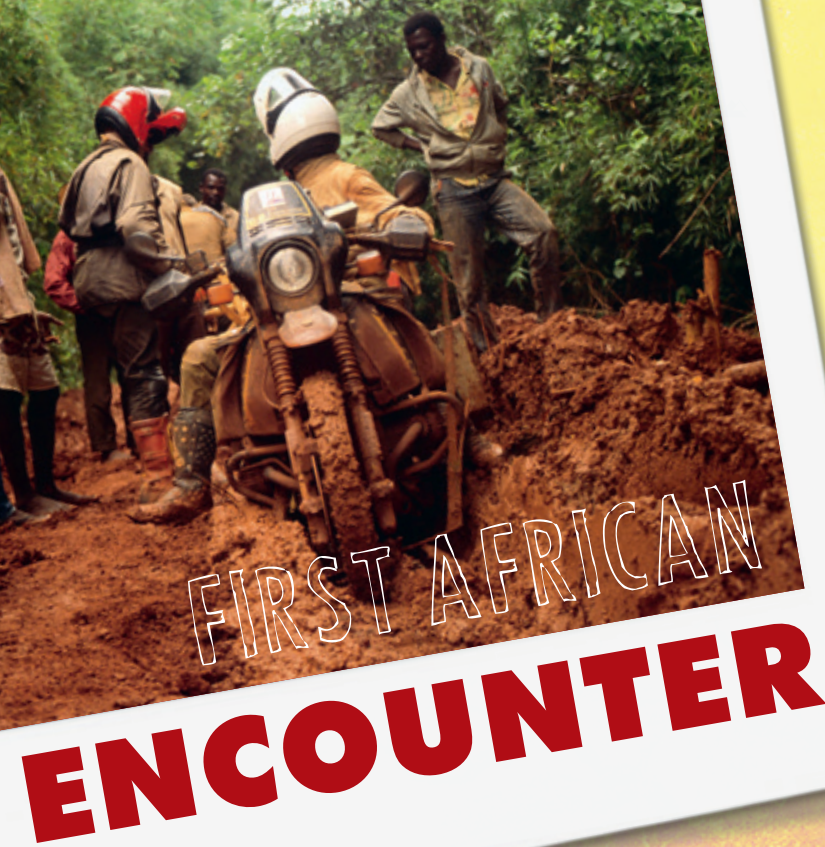


2004: The first welding robot



MISSION ADVENTURE





FIRST AFRICAN ENCOUNTER

ism. The wonderful encounters with locals and nature's unspoiled magnificence would unleash Africa's unique magic on the group more and more with every passing day.



The experienced travelers first realized that this journey might turn out quite differently from previous ones upon crossing the border to Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo). Nothing seemed to function as it should in this country. Fuel was only procurable on the black market, and was extremely poor quality and exorbitantly expensive at that.

So when his not even completely empty 43 liter tank supposedly swallowed 50 liters of gasoline, Herbert confronted the vendor. However, when the latter, knowing very well who had the upper hand, simply blanked Herbert, they ended up syphoning all the fuel back out of the tank. This left him searching for ages for what eventually turned out to be even more expensive watered-down fuel.


All the same, these encounters are only harmless anecdotes compared to what still awaited them. The un-tarmacked leg through the jungle between Lubutu and Walikale was only around 50 miles long, so the experienced off-road enduro tourists had no reason to expect any problems. But it proved very rough going indeed. Even their deep-tread tires failed to get much grip on the completely sodden ground. All that was left of any bridges was the steel framework, so the group had to laboriously wrestle wooden boards and beams into place each time in order to cross. The ferry service across a broad stretch of water was out of operation when they arrived and sure wasn't going anywhere until someone from the group conjured up the necessary fuel.



An unfortunate tumble suddenly saw matters go from bad to far worse as it broke Herbert's fibula. A local medicine man's attempts to heal him by laying leaves on his leg and massaging it only succeeded in causing him unbearable pain. Herbert was left with no other choice than to clench his teeth and bear it. He didn't remove his enduro boot for three whole weeks, as its rigid form held the broken bones together like a plaster cast.

He managed to maneuver his GS through the mud for most of the stretch despite the injury, and his friends navigated his machine through the roughest parts, carrying him on theirs where necessary.

The journey through Uganda and Kenya felt like a walk in the park after the trials and tribulations in Zaire. But just as the finishing line came into sight, Jochen's XT packed in. An electrical fault is nothing out of the ordinary for this generation of Japanese single-cylinders, but this one was serious enough to rule out a repair within the time they had left. They had no alternative but to tow the wrecked Yamaha along with Herbert and Jochen hitched side-by-side for the final 180 miles or so to Nairobi.

Even if several years were to pass between these formative experiences and Herbert and Jochen founding Touratech together, along with the countless impressions they took home with them from Africa was also the certain knowledge that they could always depend on each other whenever the going gets tough. 





Herbert always takes his professional photography equipment with him on test trips. He not only produces images for use in the catalog but also compiles reports for top-name magazines.

gether through Africa (see the box on p. 42/43). In early 1995, Jochen Schanz seized the courage of his convictions and switched from spare-time to full-time work at Touratech. Having recently graduated in mechanical engineering majoring in manufacturing automation, Jochen was able to contribute valuable specialist knowledge to the design and manufacturing of mechanical components at the fledgling company. But nothing could beat the IMO motorcycle computer as the company's front runner throughout Touratech's early years. A major contract for Austrian sports motorcycle manufacturer KTM prompted the appointment of the first salaried employee in 1997. KTM ordered 1,000 IMOs per year for the instrument panels of its groundbreaking 620 Adventure rally and touring machine.

Touratech has continued taking on staff for a wide variety of roles ever since. Nowadays, most of its over 300 employees from 30 different countries work in mechanical production, but back at the start it was mainly electronic manufacturing and sales that were constantly looking to expand their workforce. The IMOs required manufacturing and careful packaging for shipping to customers. The range of products kept on expanding to also include the Zega aluminum

case that has since superseded the IMO as the company's flagship product. Once again, it was one of Herbert's original designs that paved the way for the Zega series. The launch of the Zega case in 1992 – expertly worked and chamfer-edged, with robust rivets and a waterproof finish – marked the dawn of a new era in motorcycle luggage transportation. Previously, touring motorcyclists had either had to make do with modifying materials meant for other uses or painstakingly construct their own aluminum boxes; but the Zega case finally offered an indestructible aluminum case specially designed for use on motorcycles that met industrial quality standards. The root of its huge success lay in getting the concept just right, and it wasn't long before the Zega was being sold all over the world and had established itself as the baseline for transporting luggage on touring enduros.

A NEW ERA

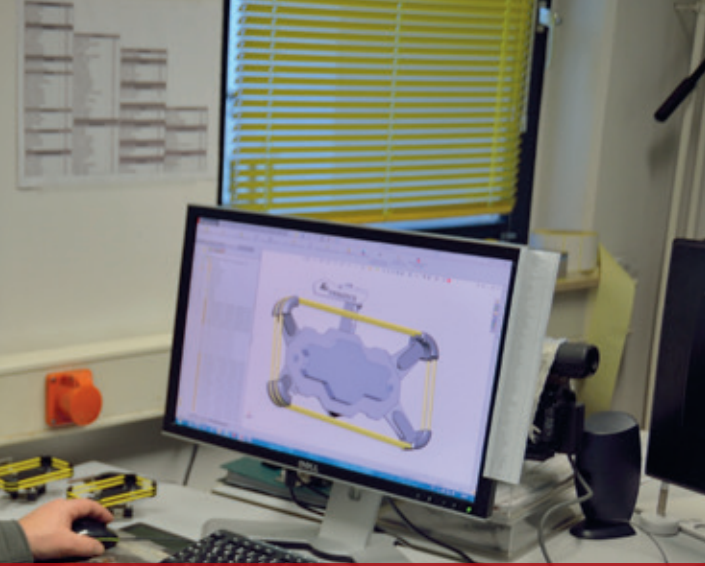
As a luggage system is only ever as good as its individual parts, additions were soon made to the original case. Production of ultra-strong tube racks commenced in 1994, starting with a design to fit the revolutionary new BMW R1100GS, which had just hit the road back then. Derided by the touring scene at its launch as ostensibly too heavy and technically complex, Herbert and Jochen immediate-

THE CURRENT RANGE

FULL PROGRAM

Touratech products cover all aspects of motorcycle travel. Developed from first-hand experience and equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, Touratech equipment sets new standards in terms of functionality and quality.





From the development stage right through to production, Jochen knows the status of all Touratech products and understands the relevant processes in fine detail.

ly recognized the machine's potential to pioneer a whole new generation. And indeed this motorcycle became one of the most important trendsetters of all time for the development of accessories at Touratech. Besides the luggage system, the company went on to develop a completely new kind of accessory series for this particular vehicle. The self-explanatory name "Hard Part", now synonymous

The annual Touratech Travel Event in Niedereschach is a highlight of the European motorcyclists' touring season (l.). Trial of strength: Products in use in Bolivia (r.)

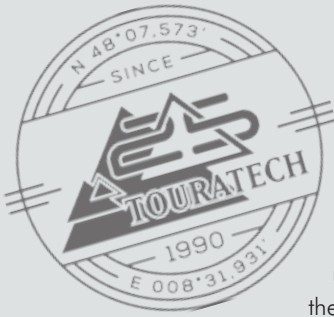


2004: New production capacities are created in Niedereschach.



Touratech enters its own team for Dakar 2002.





and well equipped operational facilities. As more complex products and larger batches drove investments in new manufacturing technologies, this improved equipment then itself encouraged the development of more elaborate parts. The company changed premises a number of times to accommodate its constant growth and kept on channeling investment into development and production.

Touratech has always continued to draw new technologies into its business. This approach, which is basically the antithesis of outsourcing, helped Touratech significantly reduce its dependency on suppliers. However, an even more important factor was the way the company maintained full control over the entire production process thanks to its great manufacturing depth, which enabled it to uphold its own particularly high quality standards.

The Zega case series provides a prime example of bringing skills back into the company. While the original Zega was manufactured externally to Touratech's specifications, the aluminum cases have been produced entirely in-house at the Niedereschach site ever since the evolution of the Zega Pro. The sheets for the body, bottom and lid of the case are chamfered by robots, and state-of-the-art welding robots ensure the best possible seams. The Zega Pro case was also the very first Touratech product to be assembled on a production line. "At Touratech, automation is always used to benefit people and the quality of the product," says Jochen, who is responsible for production, about the company philosophy. "We use machines to perform the less pleasant tasks or error-prone processes, and instead reserve the really skilled tasks for our employees."

After aluminum, stainless steel is the next most important material in Touratech products. The company uses state-of-

the-art technologies for processing this exacting medium and possesses some quite unique expertise in bending, cutting, welding and surface treatment. Exquisite radii, perfect seams, high-precision fits and lavish surfaces suitably reflect the team's keen desire for perfection. Touratech uses the best technologies available to manufacture more economically, to maximize quality and to develop even more attractive products. The logic behind this approach enables the company to keep on producing in Germany and constantly appoint new staff instead of rationalizing the workforce.

THE IDEAS FACTORY

Besides production, co-manager Jochen has also constantly upgraded the development department with the very latest technologies over the course of the last quarter century. Where they used to painstakingly take measurements by hand, nowadays 3D measuring systems are used to capture a vehicle's details to an accuracy of a fraction of a millimeter – thus ensuring an optimum fit. In order to speed up the process of putting ideas into practice, Touratech employs rapid prototyping, where a 3D plotter creates a plastic prototype directly from the digital model, which can then be used as the basis for assessing new solu-



1997: Motorcycle computer IMO 100R for KTM



Direct customer contact: The shop in Niedereschach, 2002.

Touratech's own series of aluminum cases and those it produces as original accessories for major motorcycle brands remain a centerpiece of its portfolio to this day (l.). Company premises 2012 (r.).





1993: Aluminum case Zega case



1993: Tent lamp Chala 12HD



Brand essence: The uncompromising focus on motorcycling applications was already evident in the earliest Touratech products.

tions. Whether designed with the aid of computers or produced by conventional means – constructing prototypes has always been one of Touratech's strengths. Nowhere near everything that originates in the development workshop will end up for sale. Many ideas are initially produced as a one-off or in short runs for extensive trials. And many dry-runs are rejected as non-starters at this stage – while others are pursued, and tweaked and modified until the blueprint delivers an optimum product. "The short distances between design and practical trials are part of Touratech's recipe for success," Herbert reveals. "When I hit upon an idea, I run it past Jochen to discuss what I have in mind, and if it seems like a goer we can sometimes even start with initial testing the very next day," he continues. "This is the way we worked as a two-man partnership, and it's the way we still do it today."

TRANSPARENT PROCESSES

Besides continuously developing the company's technology, its organization also regularly needed a rethink. One of the most far-reaching overhauls in this respect was prompted by the need for ISO certification in 2004. Touratech's increasingly close collaboration with major motorcycle brands over the years made it necessary to meticulously standardize processes. The high quality of Touratech's products had caught the interest of major league manufacturers such as BMW, and Touratech now manufactures numerous accessories for these made-in-Munich motorcycles, such as its aluminum case system with stainless steel rack for the Adventure series. Major manufacturers such as BMW call for complete supply chain transparency, which can only be achieved using certified processes. Even though manufacturing accessories for the motorcycle industry only accounts for around

25 YEARS OF TOURATECH

MILESTONES

- 1990** Electrician Herbert Schwarz designs the IMO 200T motorcycle computer for his own use. Registration of the motorcycle equipment company "Touratech Motorradausrüstung".
- 1993** The IMO 200T, Tripmaster IMO 100R, tent lamp Chala 12HD and aluminum Zega case form the mainstay of Touratech's product portfolio.
- 1995** Publication of the first 12-page catalog. Jochen joins the company full-time.
- 1996** Construction work in Niedereschach – a great deal of personal initiative goes into the new hall that provides 3,200 square feet of floor space. Further products are added (roadbook mount, pannier rack and GPS).
- 1997** KTM incorporates the IMO 100R into the standard equipment for its 620 Adventure.
- 1998** The company has already outgrown the new hall. A manufacturing and display building is purchased at the company's current premises in Niedereschach (17,545 square feet of floor space).
- 1999** Founding of Touratech AG.
- 2002** Annex and extension of the premises (37,000 square feet of floor space). Touratech enters its own team in the Dakar Rally.
- 2004** Certification to DIN ISO 9001:2000. Inaugural Travel Event at the company's site in Niedereschach.
- 2005** Touratech manages an astonishing 5th place with its heavily customized BMW F 650 GS – the Oryx extreme – in the Torgau 24-hour race.
- 2006** Touratech develops and produces the new aluminum case system for the BMW R 1200 GS Adventure. Founding of the company's race team "Touratech Racing".
- 2007** Touratech expands its premises and buildings. Its sales, distribution, warehouse and shop move into a neighboring hall (approx. 32,000 square feet), and the shop is expanded to 8,600 square feet.
- 2009** Market launch of the new generation Zega Pro cases. The BMW Motorcycle GS Challenge (now Trophy) takes place for the first time as part of the Touratech Travel Event.
- 2010** Touratech celebrates its 20th anniversary. The Compañero motorcycle suit is unveiled. Touratech Racing secures a double victory at the 24-hour "Endurance Day" event on a BMW G 450 X and also wins the international twelve-hour "Dawn to Dusk" race in Wales.
- 2011** Launch of the Touratech Suspension series.
- 2012** Change of offices and a new building.
- 2013** Launch of the Zega Pro2 case with innovative fastening system. Way over 10,000 people attend the Travel Event.
- 2014** Reorganization and extension of the entire production area and modernization of the machine park. By now, the Touratech catalog has grown to fill 1,860 pages. The Compañero Boreal motorcycle suit is unveiled.

MISSION ADVENTURE

FULL CONVERSIONS

Fully converted motorcycles are a fruitful source of new ideas for Touratech, and some involve entirely new concepts for motorcycles. For instance, the 1998 “Desierto” was the forebear of all contemporary adventure enduros. Touratech also set new standards in the sporting segment with creations like the “Oryx extreme”.

1998: Desierto I
based on the BMW R 1100 GS



2000: F 650 Rallye
based on the BMW F 650 GS



2002: TT39
based on the BMW F 650 GS



2002: Oryx
based on the
BMW F 650 GS



2003: Revamp
based on the BMW R 1100/1150 GS

2005: G 450 Touratech Racing
based on the BMW G 450 X



25 to 30 percent of overall sales, Touratech still benefits from complying with the strict regulations attached to certified process management. Its OEM – Original Equipment Manufacturer – status obliges the company to keep up with the latest developments in production and development and constantly improve cost-effectiveness. Ultimately, this is for the good of all Touratech products.

TRENDSETTING

Touratech enjoys productive relationships with vehicle manufacturers in other areas, too. A good example of this is the by now legendary full conversions Touratech performs, especially on Desierto series machines. The first De-

sierto conversion, which Touratech performed in 1998 on an R 1100 GS – adding a large tank, rigid fairing, aluminum case system and numerous protectors – set the blueprint for a type of machine that is now extremely successful: the adventure enduro. Whether it's the BMW or KTM adventure models, the Yamaha Super Ténéré Worldcrosser or other kinds and makes of large touring enduros – the Desierto laid down the defining set of characteristics for all adventure enduros.



TOURATECH  **25 YEARS**

2009: F 800 ScrambleR
based on the BMW F 800 R



2011: F 800 Racing
based on the BMW F 800 GS



2002: Desierto II
based on the BMW R 1150 GS

2009: Desierto F
based on the BMW F 800 GS



2011: UrbanX-Over
based on the Suzuki DL 650



2005: Desierto III
based on the BMW R 1200 GS

2012: Nuda X-Cross
based on the Husqvarna Nuda 900




2013: R 1200 Rallye
based on the BMW R 1200 GS (LC)

AND SO THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Touratech sees traveling by motorcycle as a lifestyle. So it's only befitting for the company to supply products that serve all facets of motorcycle travel, in line with the founders' philosophy. Besides its reputation as a leading supplier of technical equipment from luggage systems to navigation device mounts, since 2011 Touratech now also stands for top-quality motorcycle wear. The innovative "Compañero" touring suit immediately set Touratech up as a new standard bearer for textile motorcycle clothing, as countless winning test reports in the trade press confirm. And hot on the heels of the Compañero comes the next step, with the 2015

launch of the "Aventura Carbon", the first ever bespoke touring motorcycle helmet, which once again promises to set new standards.

And the aim is to stay that way: "Touratech strives to set trends as a specialist in the adventure and touring segment and to inspire even more people to enjoy this wonderful way of exploring the world. So Touratech wants to project an image of the possibilities motorcycle touring can offer now and in the future with its innovative products and media," says Herbert, as he explains his vision for the future of the company. "We will have done our job well if it's Touratech that immediately springs to mind whenever motorcyclists think about touring," adds Jochen. 

MISSION ADVENTURE

A Lesson in Humanity

During their four-month journey from Seattle, USA to Ushuaia at the tip of South America, Matt and Brayde Willson were profoundly affected by the people they met on the road and the experiences they shared with the locals.

Text: Matt Willson Photos: Matt and Brayde Willson

What does English sound like?" "Why are you so tall?" "What kind of food do you eat?" Talking to the children in small towns quickly became our favorite part of the journey. Kids ask the best questions, and with our limited Spanish skills, they're also the easiest to talk to.

PEOPLE MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Since returning home after four months on the road, everyone asks about our favorite part of the trip. It's a tough question, but over time we've come to realize that while the riding, food, history, and culture were all amazing parts, it was the people we met along the way that really made the trip special.

From friendly police officers in Colombia to welcoming families in Mexico, we were continually blown away by the gene-





Fun times with the kids in rural Peru (top). Beautiful blue water along the Carretera Austral, Southern Chile (bottom).





rosity and hospitality of the people we met. There is so much bad press about Latin America in the media, but we experienced the complete opposite of what is portrayed. Friends and family ask us if we ever felt in danger during our trip, and while there were a few exceptions, generally we felt as safe as at home. No matter where we were, we felt looked after and cared for by locals. It's just part of the culture in these countries to take care of guests. Countless times during stops, we were invited by complete strangers to share dinner or stay the night in their homes.

GETTING BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS

Somewhere between Peru and Argentina, we were contacted unexpectedly on Facebook by a "friend of a friend." David lived near Cordoba and was excited to host us if we'd come see him. While it wasn't on our intended route, the lure of country living and a traditional Argentinean "Asada" (traditional BBQ) was irresistible. Somewhere outside of Cordoba, disaster struck: Brayde's F 650 GS overheated on the side of the road and refused to run. Her bike's water pump seals had

*Brayde rides through the clouds in the Andes Mountains of Peru (bottom).
Getting help off a wooden barge in Bolivia (right).*





*Overlooking the Sacred Valley, on the way to Machu Picchu, Peru (top).
Backyard water pump fix in Argentina (right).*




failed again. We were no stranger to handling this problem, but the timing couldn't have been worse.

From a small roadside shop, I made a call to David with a borrowed cell phone. Within a few hours, David and his friend arrived to rescue us with a car and trailer. After an hour's drive, we were in the small town of Alta Gracia, with our bikes parked in the backyard of David's 80-year old mother, Berta's house. We'd spend the next four days in Berta's backyard working on the bike, eating homemade meals, and talking about family in Spanish. By the time the bike was up and running,

we had become family. Oddly enough, the 650 breaking down on us in that exact spot was one of the luckiest parts of our whole trip. We now have a Grandma in Argentina that we'll never forget. This wasn't the first, or last, time that we had been adopted by a family during our travels. By the time we got home, we had acquired an Argentinean Grandma, an entire Chilean family, and multiple sets of parents, siblings, and cousins from just about every country we passed through.

MATT WILLSON
is Product Line Manager at
Touratech USA.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

After four months on the road in Latin America, our best advice isn't about motorcycle prep or riding gear; it's about interaction with people. Before you go, learn as much Spanish as you can. Don't be afraid to talk to people. The best route information, guidance, and connections we received on the trip weren't from internet forums but by stopping and talking to the locals. No matter where you are or what the situation, smile, be friendly, and make conversation. You can't get better, more accurate advice than from the people who live there, and you never know where it'll lead. The best stories we have from our trip started with a simple, "Hola. ¿Como está?" 





Probably more than any other, Ted Simon has influenced generations of motorcycle travellers. With his legendary journey around the world, he set the standard for the ultimate adventure on the bike. The sprightly 84-year-old visited the Travel Event 2015 Niedereschach, Germany.

Interview: Jon Bentman, Photos: Tilman Seel

Guest of honour at the 2015 Travel Event was Ted Simon, an original among adventure riders. Simon rode around the world in the 1970s (1973-77) on a Triumph Tiger T100 (500cc twin-cylinder). A Fleet Street journalist, Simon was able to evoke the sights, sounds (and smells!) of his journey probably better than any writer before, or since, and his book of his adventures, *Jupiter's Travels*, became a worldwide bestseller, not just within the motorcycle community, but with all manner of society and cultures (it's still in print to this day). He made a second, three-year, circumnavigation starting in 2001, then aged 70, retracing his original route, witnessing the changes in the world that three decades had brought (to be found in *Dreaming of Jupiter*). For many he is the Godfather of the current adventure motorcycling phenomenon.

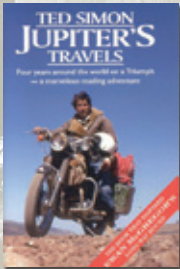
Travel Time Could you have imagined in 1973 that adventure motorcycling could ever become as popular as it is today?

Ted Simon *When I started out on my travels I had no idea anything like this would happen. I have received so many letters and now emails from people telling me I've done something that's changed their lives, and that's an extraordinary thing to live with. But I don't think I can take credit for people going adventuring, it's already there in the nature of people.*

To see the full Ted Simon interview, on video, go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ3-KcCamcE>





BOOKS BY TED SIMON

- Ted Simon: Jupiter's Travels. Penguin.
ISBN 978-0140054101
- Ted Simon: Dreaming of Jupiter. Little, Brown Book.
ISBN 978-0349119601

our own satisfaction. So I'm not all envious of Herbert and Jochen, but I do feel we've come from the same place, in that we love the world and we love the idea of people going around it. I try to help by making some kind of inspiration for others to do it. Herbert and Jochen do it by giving them the means to. I think we're both on the same side, no question about that!

Travel Time Before your travels you'd never ridden a motorcycle. We take it the motorcycle was the right choice?

Ted Simon That's true, I knew nothing about motorcycles and I hadn't even ridden one when I decided to make the trip. I did also have an idea to make the trip on a donkey, but the motorcycle is more practical. I could put it this way – there is more petrol to be found around the world than grass! Even to this day I don't think there is a better means to seeing the world, the motorcycle is the perfect vehicle, cheap, flexible, you can take it apart, pack it onto a boat, a truck or a plane. And you sit on it, not in it, so you see things, smell things.

OLD

HAND

Travel Time Obviously much has changed. With your Triumph you had to make your own travel equipment, now people can choose from thousands of items from a 1,924-page catalogue!

Ted Simon Yes, when I was travelling I was trying to invent the very things Herbert has made, just for myself. I recall thinking, 'my goodness, there is so much one could do, it's a tremendous opportunity'. But I'm a writer, not an engineer or a businessman, so it was for someone else, like Herbert, to do it. I'm full of admiration for him for what he has done.


Travel Time Do you think then that there is a link, or a common attribute between you and Herbert and Jochen?

Ted Simon We all have multiple possibilities in our lives and if we are lucky we get to choose the ones that suit us the best, and bring out the best in us creatively and in terms of

Travel Time In all your travels what would you say is the single most significant aspect, the one thing that makes the journey worthwhile?

Ted Simon Making contact with people as you travel – I think that is one of the main things about travel.

Travel Time Thanks for coming to the Travel Event Ted, and for answering our questions. We'll see you next year!

Ted Simon I've really enjoyed it, I've been impressed by the enthusiasm and enjoyment I've seen here, it's been wonderful meeting all these people – and yes, I'd really like to come back! 

TRAVEL EVENT 2015
INTERNATIONAL | DE 78078 NIEDERESCHACH



EUROPEAN DREAM

Since becoming motorcyclist, Paul Guillien, CEO of Touratech USA, has dreamed of riding the legendary mountains of Europe. The dream became reality, when he rode from Alicante, Spain, to the Touratech Travel Event in the Black Forest region of Germany.

Text: Paul Guillien Photos: Bill Wiegand



We enjoy a cappuccino and a tour of Touratech Spain with Alessandra Brita then find ourselves on high-speed curves winding through steep, terraced hills as a warm sea breeze reminds us to look up and enjoy the turquoise Mediterranean glimmering in the distance. Eventually, hunger pains distract us from the meandering curves on the coast and we find ourselves dining outside at a seaside restaurant where I am unable to convince Bill to sample the local squid.

BUZZED IN BARCELONA

As we descend into the centre of Barcelona, the sight of scooters becomes overwhelming. With every green light, the

buzz of small displacement engines at full throttle fills our helmets. Like the starting grid at a Moto GP race, everyone is on-the-gas, weaving in and out, fighting to get ahead of the next bike.

Local ADV guru, Vicente Jimenez, joins us for dinner and we thank him for helping to prepare the GPS tracks that are leading us on his favourite roads from Spain to Germany. Vicente also worked for Touratech for several years.

Left: Paul is mesmerized by the Mediterranean Sea. Bottom: Getting lost in the Pyrenees. Right: A stony bridge near Andorra.





Left to right: French countryside, Col du Petite St. Bernard Pass, Paul visits Herbert & Ramona Schwarz, Farming in the French Alps.

LOST IN THE PYRENEES

We wander around old stone buildings in tiny mountain towns, ride stone archway bridges and enjoy narrow mountain roads. On the GPS, I see a dead-end road that goes 6km up the side of a mountain and we take it. High atop a mountain, we find an old town that appears to be clinging to the side of a steep hill.

After a quick snack, we give in to our desire to see where a certain high-mountain dirt road leads. We are soon off the GPS maps and unsure if we're headed in the right direction. The dirt road is rugged, very fun and gives us a great chan-

ce to test the Touratech Suspension. A thunderstorm rolls in and we descend the mountain in a downpour with standing water 1" deep on the road and sheer cliffs at every corner. A hotel in Andorra provides shelter and we call it a day.

FRENCH CONNECTION

Twisting mountain roads lead us out of the Pyrenees and we stop a to explore a walled city. Reaching the ancient city of Orange, we stop to visit my good friend Yvon Bodelot of Touratech France. We are enamoured with the Roman ruins, town square and farmers market. We sample the French lifestyle with Yvon and his family who treat us to a gourmet dinner on the patio.

Yvon gives us a map of the French Alps and highlights some of his favourite roads. We head out on the bikes and discover these roads are as twisty and majestic as anything one could imagine. As we head deeper into the Alps, the roads gain elevation and alpine vistas become more amazing. We pass through Gap, Albertville and finally ascend Col du Petite Saint Bernard.





DETAILS

Fly into Alicante · Rented bikes at Moto Levante (Touratech Spain)
Countries: Spain, Andorra, France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany
Distance: 1300 miles (2100 km)

ACCIDENTALLY IN ITALY

The road becomes steep, narrow and the height and exposure starts to make Bill feel uneasy. We're both exhausted and decide to stop at a lookout to take in the views. We park the bikes, layback in chairs and are both snoring in our helmets within minutes. I wake up first and study the map. When Bill awakens, I say "Guess what Bill? We're in Italy." We find an 11 km tunnel which transports us back to France and we emerge beneath Bossons Glacier in Chamonix / Mt. Blanc.


STORYBOOK SWITZERLAND

Impossibly, Switzerland seems even more perfect than the French Alps. It's so iconic and gorgeous that you won-

der how it can be real. The magic of Switzerland is tempered only by the excessive government regulation. A 40 Euro motorcycle pass is required, the speed limits are low and the penalties for small infractions are outrageously expensive. Also worth noting-they use Swiss Francs and won't take those two-Euro coins in your pocket. Despite the challenges, it's worth it to ride Switzerland.

BLACK FOREST BASH

You notice a difference when you cross into Germany because the cars and motorcycles are going twice as fast as in Switzerland. After a high-speed entrance to the Black Forest we roll into the Travel Event at 6pm on Friday.

Festivities at the largest gathering of adventure motorcycles on the planet are in full swing as we savour the feast of steak, potatoes, and beer while enjoying the scene of 5,000 travellers who have made the trek to Touratech headquarters by motorcycle. 

TOURATECH-USA RALLIES 2015

The Touratech-USA rallies are undoubtedly the two events that the Touratech-USA staff look forward to most each year. They are the chance for the staff to go ride and hang-out with our loyal customers. 2015 was the fifth year for the west-coast rally, and the first year for the east-coast.

Words by Eric Archambault, Photos by Angela Goodman

The west-coast rally began five years ago with 60 or so riders gathering in the Cascade mountains, two hours outside of Touratech-USA's headquarters in Seattle, WA. This year, at the end of June, over 500 motorcyclists gathered for the rally. It was a weekend that offered 11 different GPS guided rides, from easy pavement though tough, but passable on a large adventure motorcycle single track. There was something for everyone. In the afternoons classes could be attended, with subjects ranging from travel stories, field medicine, and motorcycle repair. In the evenings a skills challenge or slow

race drew crowds as the daring tested their skills in competition.

Finally everyone wrapped up each night with beer and socializing around the fire. Old friends were reunited, and new friends were made. Everyone left glowing from a weekend of good times on the trail, warm weather and some new stories to tell.

This was the first year Touratech-USA ventured the 3,000 miles to the east-coast to hold a rally. In the rolling farmland of Pennsylvania, two hours from Philadelphia, the venue was found. From the other side of the country ar-



Touratech staffers compete at the slow race.



Classes happen all weekend at the rallies.



Vendors offer many different products and services.

rangements were made, and a local riding group was recruited to help find the best places to ride.

In the middle of August Touratech-USA staff descended upon Pennsylvania for the rally, rides were fine tuned, and the rally site was set up. Over 150 riders arrived for the inaugural east coast rally. As with the west-coast rally the days were filled with rides, afternoons with classes, and beer and camaraderie at night. I am sure, as with the west-coast rally, this will rapidly grow too.

The dates for next year's rallies are now posted, we'll see you there! [More Info at www.touratechrally.com](http://www.touratechrally.com)



The field is filled at the West Coast Rally.



The Adventure begins.

THE YEAR AT TOURATECH-USA



2015 was a busy year for Touratech-USA! After debuting the beautiful, light and versatile Aventuro Carbon helmet to huge crowds at the Long Beach IMS show we eagerly awaited their arrival. Our customers were clamoring for them and when the helmets arrived it was a very exciting day around the office!

Words by Matt Lewis,

Photos by Angela Goodman

Another terrific new Touratech product arrived in 2015 in the Zega Mundo pannier system. We had a great time building a drum set to create a soundtrack for the video we produced for the boxes. We wanted to highlight not only the ruggedness of the Mundo panniers, but their unique qualities as well.

With a BMW F800GS and a Yamaha Super Tenere with equipped with the new Zega Mundo panniers, we headed to the San Juan Islands off of the Washington state coast and spent two days riding through every kind of terrain we could find. We were very happy with the video and when we released it, it got thousands of views online!

Much of the spring was spent planning our summer events: The Touratech Rally West in Plain, WA, our booths at the BMW MOA Rally in Billings, Montana and the first annual Touratech Rally- East in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. We have a team

of staff members that spend many hours scouting and planning the riding routes for our west coast rally and they did a terrific job again! The rally was a huge success with over 500 motorcycles attending even though it was over 100 degrees each day. Our east coast rally was a challenge because we planned it from over 3000 miles away (in Seattle), but our team worked very hard and the event was well attended and a lot of fun. We can't wait for next year!

This fall CEO, Paul Guillien will be taking part in the next Backcountry Discovery Route expedition in New Mexico and a few of us are going to attend the 2015 AIME Expo in Orlando, Florida before the massive Long Beach IMS show.

We're also very excited about the arrival of the Plug & Travel ESA Upgrade shocks for the R1200GS and we can't wait to share them with riders everywhere!

Touratech-USA Seattle Headquarters (right). Cultures clash at TT Rally East (below). Bikes of all sizes are welcome at the TT Rally.

The KLR 650 goes through its paces. Get a custom branded side-stand plate at the Touratech Rally (opposite page).



Experience

Twelve years traveling around the world

For over 12 years Simon and Lisa Thomas have been traveling around the world. Nonstop. Technical accessories for their motorcycles and the rider equipment is provided by Touratech. This unprecedented partnership is much more than a long-term test of products – it is an expression of a deep affinity.

Text and Photos: Simon and Lisa Thomas

1996 Looking back, 1996 seems like only yesterday. Lisa and I sat at home in the UK would flip through, the then, much thinner Touratech catalogue. Christ, compared to today's Touratech catalogue it was damn near anorexic.

We'd lustfully peruse each page in search of accessories that would make our machines truly ours and transform them into the riding-weapons we envisioned in our imaginations. Turning the pages of the Touratech catalogue with a fresh coffee in hand became our weekend meditation; our Sunday morning escape. We could lose ourselves in those pages, imagining that we were those riders cresting mountaintops in exotic countries or riding across the sandy corrugations on the edge of the Sahara. In the end we knew every page, every part and number and we still went back for more.

We were just client's, but it's funny, I remember even then, when I'd order a part and hand over my payment, I felt like I was investing not just in my bike, but in something bigger, something that I desperately wanted to be a part of.

'People buy other people, you never really buy just a product or a brand'.

2001 Back in the day Touratech UK was headed up by John Hill or 'Bunny' as he was better known. What

Bunny didn't know about a Touratech part wasn't worth knowing. I swear he had every part number memorised. His BMW R1100GS looked 'the business', and he rode the balls off that thing. For Lisa and I, John's professionalism and friendship set the foundation of the relationship we enjoy with Touratech today.

After we'd ordered a ton of parts, having decided to make our 'big world ride' really happen, John took me aside and explained that I was suffering from 'spendytricky-modification-itus', the symptoms he explained are a delusional sense that every accessory imaginable can be justified and must be clamped to the bike because of the 'what-if' scenario.



The beginning: Simon and Lisa boarding the ferry to Belfast. At that time it was not in sight that they would be still on the road twelve years later.



Fantastic panorama with flamingos at the Laguna Hedionda in southwestern Bolivia.

2002 John set us both straight and made sure that the Touratech parts that we ordered were the ones that were really going to work for us. 14-years later and I can tell you his advice was absolutely spot on and many of the parts we bought and fitted back then are still on the bikes and doing what they were designed for. John, sadly passed away before we left but there's so much of him in our bikes that he's never too far from our thoughts.

2003 In May 2003 Lisa and I locked the front door of our Somerset home and quietly rode into the darkness, a full year before Ewan or Charlie set out on their now famous 'long way round'. We'd committed ourselves to leaving on May 18th and so a few minutes before midnight and with zips and pannier lids straining to bursting point our journey began.

Having ridden to Nordkapp and western



Changing the clutch in Austria: That defect deepens the contact to Touratech.

Russia we'd reached Vienna in Austria when the clutch of my R1100GS began to slip. We'd priced up a new OEM clutch plate, and the thought of handing over enough cash to buy a new kidney wasn't helping our anxious state of mind. "If you don't ask, you don't get" my father had told me sagely when I was growing up. With that thought ringing in my ears I shot off a politely scribbled begging letter to Touratech in Germany. The general gist of the note was "we're at the start of an around the world journey, please sponsor us a new clutch plate". I'd been lusting after one of these legendary, near to unbreakable clutch plates since I'd first seen them in the catalogue. To be honest my hopes weren't high. My background is in sales and marketing and I knew that Touratech must receive hundreds of letters and emails per month from people asking for support.

Three days later I ran yelling from the small office of our Austrian host's apartment and into the courtyard, with a print out of

the email I'd received from Herbert Schwarz. "Lisa, Touratech have said yes", I blurted like a kid on Christmas Eve. Seven days later my first clutch plate installation began. I anxiously stripped out the old worn BMW plate and installed the new ceramic one. The entire process had taken me 14-hours and I'd sweated bullets. I had no clue what I was doing and yes, I did end up with a few spare nuts and bolts left over. That first Touratech clutch plate saw me through Europe, the length of Africa twice, through every country in South America, Central America and Mexico. When it did finally begin to show signs of wear in the USA, I simply removed the eight spacers that had been supplied with the kit, this re-tensioned the clutch springs correctly and I was set for another 150,000 miles.

2005 We were given our chance to thank Herbert in person whilst in South Africa. Good friends made up one third of the three interested parties who'd all applied for the Touratech import license for South Africa. Herbert had flown down to meet with the three par-

ties before awarding the license. We'd been invited to dinner at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town and were thankful for this opportunity to thank him in person. Herbert was due to arrive at 6:00pm to start the meeting. Two hours later and he'd called to apologise and explain his delay. He'd been given a courtesy R1150GS and was having a tough time pulling himself away from the ride he'd been enjoying up and around Table Mountain. Far from being upset, the four of us that sat at the waterfront restaurant, laughed and enjoyed the fact that a businessman like Herbert was still so passionate about what got him into the business in the first place.

2006 A continent and a year away from our Cape Town meeting, we'd again written to Touratech, in the hopes of obtaining a little support. The OEM seat of my R1100GS had died and the new single-piece racing style Touratech seat looked to offer the perfect solution. Asking for the extra high option would also solve my niggling knee issue and accommodate better my long legs. Whilst scribbling away our lat-



Box after box with Desierto parts arrives in the States.

est sponsorship note, we'd also asked for a new GPS bracket and a chain-guide for Lisa's F650GS. We'd kept our expectations realistic, but a week later we'd received another wonderfully positive response from Touratech in Germany.



Dakar Motos, Buenos Aires anno 2007: Martin Wickert, Javier (Dakar Motos), Simon Thomas (back row. 2nd, 3rd, 4th from left) and Lisa, Sandra (Javier's wife) and Katja Wickert (front).

2007 Inside the locked gates of the famed Dakar Motos in Buenos Aires, Argentina, we'd sat with Martin and Katja and gulped down mouthfuls of Argentina's delicious Malbec wine and retold stories of our recent narrow escape from Brazil's Amazon jungle. The Titanium souvenirs holding my neck together were still a novelty.

Martin and Katja had been riding for almost two years and were about to set off for home in Germany. Parked next to our GS's their two battle scarred Honda Africa Twins told a thousand tales and hinted at their own incredible adventure.

It was refreshing to just hang out with Martin and Katja, they were the only other husband-wife team we'd ever met and conversation was effortless and only broken by bouts of out-loud laughter. Martin's background had been in marketing. I'd pushed him to speculate on what he'd do for work when he got back to Germany. He answered, "I'm not sure, but it has to be something worthwhile

and something with soul that I can really believe in.” I thought his answer was as honest as any I could have come up with.

2008 A year later, as Lisa and I were leaving South America for Central America, we got an update from Martin via email. He and Katjia had found the best of both worlds and had both

2009 In cool Seattle, west coast USA the Touratech USA offices were still buzzing from hosting our digital presentation the day before: It had been standing room only and we’d shared our journey to a full house. Tom the owner of Cyco Active and the man responsible for importing Touratech into the US strode towards Lisa and I, a huge grin smeared across his

bolted to our machines. The Touratech Desierto fairing had been on my wish list since I’d first laid eyes on the factory prepped BMW R900RR, which BMW Motorrad had raced in the Dakar. The Desierto fairing completed the front of my bike and new Touratech lights were a substantial improvement of the BMW OEM headlights.

Needless to say that when we came to ship



Always in explorer mode: Simon drives his Desierto on a track in the jungle of Borneo.

started working for Touratech. Today Martin is the Director of Global Sales for Touratech. I know they must be working the poor guy hard; it’s made all his hair fall out. On a more serious note, it’s refreshing to know that there are firms like Touratech who still appreciate the importance of real world experience. I get a kick out of knowing that one of the lead professionals responsible for product development has actually been ‘out there’ and completed a big ride and really knows what it takes for a product to make it from concept to design, then into production and then finally to actually function.

face. “What’s up?” I asked.

“It’s official, you’re now sponsored by Touratech”, he blurted as if unable to contain his excitement any longer.

“That’s fantastic, what does that mean?” I asked nervously. “Basically if we make it, you can ask for it” Tom continued. Now, Lisa and I knew that Tom had enjoyed our presentation and had even told us that he’d planned on talking with Touratech Germany, but this news was beyond our wildest imaginings. If I’m honest I don’t think either Lisa or I really believed it until the parts we’d asked for started to arrive in the US and got

from the US to Japan to begin the Asian leg of our journey, we were in pretty good shape thanks to Touratech Germany and Pieter de Wall the then VP of BMW Motorrad North America who’d generously donated two partly used motorcycles to the cause. Worn parts were swapped, kit was upgraded and new parts were painted and bolted down. The bikes looked and felt bloody fantastic!

Both bikes got a full rattle-down testing in both Siberia and Mongolia and performed admirably through the Stan’s, along the Silk Road, Iran, Pakistan, India and Nepal. We flew from Kathmandu into Bangkok Inter-



Atop their TT39 Lisa enjoys in the gentle tarmac in the Southern Alps.

national airport to begin what we presumed were going to be some complicated days of form filling to clear Thailand's stringent customs process.

At Touratech Thailand's large premises, Khun (Sir) Peera strolled through the showrooms, his usual broad smile in place. "So, we go for a ride and then we order you the new Touratech suits, yes." He stated forcefully. I truly had no idea if this was a statement or a question. Needless to say 3 weeks later and stood in the Touratech Thailand offices, we were swapping our tired BMW suits for what has now become our riding suit of choice, the Compañero World suit. The grey and yellow suits fitted like a glove and came with a water-proof over suit: A far better option than using a liner in any real-world riding situation. Our beaten system 5 helmets were retired in favour of Airoh's new and stunningly light Aviator enduro helmet and goggles replaced our scratched visors. Five hard riding years later and our pre-production Compañero suits are still getting the job done and looking after us every day.

2011 It was on the Island of Borneo that the shit fairy came to say "hi" and we'd find ourselves calling on our friends like never before.

Cresting a slight rise in the road in the early morning we were riding back to Kuching to fly back to Kuala Lumpur. It was a few seconds before I'd realized that the black Toyota Hilux in the middle of the road ahead was actually stationary and parked directly opposite the broken down truck heading up the hill. With the engine off, the driver had killed the electrics and provided no sign that he was parked. There had been an



Blessing in disguise: Almost only property damage after the crash with an SUV.

easy car's width of gravel track to the side of the road and pulling off there would be simple enough. What I was to find out weeks later was that this was an insurance scam. The Toyota driver created 5 accidents in one day. I was about to number two. The bikes wheels locked up under breaking several times before it became painfully apparent that with the road still wet from earlier rain, there was no way I was going to scrub off enough speed before I hit. The gravel track to the left wasn't an option as pedestrians were occupying the full width. I found out later these guys were the drivers family and in on the rouse. At about 45 mph I lay the big GS down and slid head first into and under the Hilux.

Back in Kuala Lumpur at the local BMW dealer, the news wasn't good. The cost to replace the damaged BMW OEM parts was going to cost around \$10,000 US. We'd put up a brief message on the 2ride The World Facebook page and Martin had replied instantly, his message simply read, "Don't worry we'll replace and ship out to you any Touratech parts that need replacing, stay strong!"

"Lisa and I looked at one another in disbelief and reread the email a dozen more times. True to their word a few weeks later and boxes of both Touratech and BMW OEM parts started arriving at Sunny Cycles where I'd

begun the rebuild. For good measure there were also new panniers and parts for Lisa F650GS TT39. The rebuild took four months. We then waited for the list of Touratech demands to arrive, it never did. I wrote to Martin and asked “what do you need to see from us in return for this huge investment from you? Monthly videos, rave equipment reviews, a double black triangle tattooed to my left butt cheek ... name the price.” This is the response that came back...

“Guy’s don’t worry we don’t need anything from you, just carry on riding and sharing your journey with the rest of us ... all the best your friends in Germany.”

In today’s hard and cynical ‘grab what you can world’, this level of support and those simple few words, have confirmed for Lisa and I what we believe to be behind the global success of Touratech. Integrity, passion and enthusiasm are strong corner stones on which to build any organization.

2012 Martin’s email was pretty emphatic. It was clear that Touratech Germany wanted us to bolt on their latest product, the Touratech suspension. This wasn’t an easy decision for us; for years a few simple mantras have guided us. “If it ain’t broke don’t fix it” is was one we’ve lived by. I’d been running Ohlins



Short break with friends: Simon and Lisa enjoy the hospitality at Touratech Thailand and retaliate with travel lectures.

on my bike for over a decade and thought I was happy. My Ohlins were a ‘know quantity’ and had served me well. I gently broke my reluctance to change to Martin. With a few more email sent and received I conceded to make the change, but explained that if the new suspension didn’t deliver, well, that’s the review we’d share on our website. Martin’s response was wonderfully confident. “These shocks are going to change the way you ride!”

How could I not rise to that challenge? My

old Ohlins were removed and the new Touratech front and rear suspension units were bolted on in 2012. They’ve now been doing a stunning job for over 30,000 miles. Are they better than anything else I’ve used, that has to be the million dollar question?

“Yes”, pure and simple! Designed specifically for the heavier adventure bikes, they’re built exactly for the type and style of riding Lisa and I tackle day-in-day-out. Our load and body weight are all taken in account ensuring the perfect fit. If the Touratech suspension wasn’t absolutely the best option for our bikes, we’d be forced to change, but believe me, these babies aren’t going anywhere. If you’re thinking about how to substantially upgrade your ride, then you need to be seriously considering the Touratech suspension. After note: Lisa’s F650GS TT39 got fitted with the Touratech suspension in 2013.

2015 In a word Lisa and I feel indebted. In a world that has seen an explosion in the popularity of adventure riding and the numbers of riders taking to all corners of the planet, to know that we still have the support of friends like Touratech, means the world, literally.



Fast travelling on the Plenty Highway in the Northern Territory / Australia thanks to the brand new suspension elements from Touratech Suspension.

Find further information about Simon und Lisa Thomas at <http://2ridetheworld.com> 



HANDMADE MEETS HIGH-TECH

The custom-designed Touratech Aventuro Carbon motorcyclists' touring helmet offers a unique combination of versatility, lightweight design and maximum protection. This is just what you can expect when a Touratech expert design is manufactured using highly specialized carbon technology.

Text and photos: Andreas Reimar

Checking, testing, improving

All Touratech products are subjected to comprehensive, stringent practical tests – without exception. Throughout the manufacturing process, each and every helmet is tested around 60 times. A finishing process closely related to the Kaizen concept, which aims at continuous improvement, ensures a high and consistent quality of product.

What's more, helmets are regularly removed from the production process for testing in the in-house laboratory to ensure all the criteria stipulated in the stringent ECE directive are met. This includes a drop test from several yards high onto a steel base

to simulate the behavior of the helmet's shell in a fall. Test drives are also conducted regularly with random helmets removed from the production process so as to always be sure that all components are functioning optimally. Back at the design stage, different material samples were constantly tested to the limit in the laboratory so as to achieve the ideal mix of constituents.

It's no great surprise, then, that the Aventuro Carbon passed all the tests conducted in third-party laboratories for ECE and DOT standard certification with flying colors.

While the speedometer's needle is stuck at the 30 mark and refuses to budge any further, the mercury just keeps on rising. The sun has been beating down relentlessly from the sky for hours now, and you are lucky to keep the heavily laden machine upright for even a couple of hundred yards at a time on the deeply rutted track.

Adventure riders are very familiar with situations like these, when the perspiration is pouring and you relish even the faintest breeze. They are also well acquainted with the end-



Laminating Specially shaped cuts of carbon-fiber mat with different densities are placed into a steel mold. The mold replicates the external form of the helmet's shell. Synthetic resin is then poured over the sheets of carbon fiber. Once the mold is closed, compressed air is used to inflate the rubber balloon, which presses the structure against the mold's heatable walls. The layers of carbon-fiber fabric and synthetic resin are then baked at around 170 degrees Fahrenheit (75°C) to achieve the laminate end product.



less days of continuous, freezing rain that can turn even the most harmless routes in central Europe into misty refrigeration chambers. It's just as well that there are also clear days when the temperature is just right and the fresh air streaming through the half-open visor is full of the scent of summer.

If we could only always have the perfect helmet to hand in our luggage for the different, and often very changeable, conditions on motorcycle trips this would certainly ease some of the challenges we encounter. Yet however tempting this thought might be, it's downright unrealistic. This conundrum led bright minds to devise the hybrid helmet, which was aimed at covering a fairly broad spectrum of scenarios but often ended up as a compromise in all directions – too heavy and not specialized enough to suit extreme conditions.

When Touratech sought to develop the Aventuro Carbon helmet especially for touring motorcyclists, company founder Herbert Schwarz's team of touring specialists had no compromise in mind. Instead, the aim was to construct a helmet that would not be a jack of all trades... but a master in almost every respect. What they had in mind was an extremely well-ventilated, lightweight cross helmet that would keep pace with quickly changing enduro conditions and yet go easy on the neck muscles and hearing on the highway thanks to smart aerodynamics.

It's only natural that the numerous features this versatility demands pile on extra weight, too. Tampering with any of



Development & prototypes Ideas were turned into sketches and drawings and CAD files into models and prototypes – it took almost two years of development to complete the final version of the Aventuro Carbon.



Cutting An industrial robot uses a high-pressure water jet to remove superfluous material and cut all the required openings and holes in the helmet's shell.



Deburring All the edges are deburred by hand. The dimensional conformity of all the openings has to be checked carefully at this point.

the safety features of a top quality helmet is a total no-go, of course, so the only option is to come up with an unbeatably lightweight construction that still offers maximum safety. The answer to these requirements lies in a very strong high-tech material that's as light as a feather – carbon.

The term encompasses a group of compound materials made from carbon fiber mats and synthetic resin. Manufacturing the high-tensile structures so vital for the outer shell of helmets from carbon fiber laminates requires an immense level of expertise that only few companies possess. Cheap manufacturers simply press a couple of large carbon-fiber mats coated with synthetic resin in a mold, but the process used for the Aventuro Carbon is far more complex than that.

The first challenge lies in selecting the right material, as not all carbons are the same. "Differences in the density and texture of carbon-fiber mats really affect the properties of the laminate structures," Victor (aged 33) explains as he runs his fingers over a shiny black mat. A doctor of engineering, he has overseen the technical development of the Aventuro Carbon from the very start. "In order to stand up as well as possible to the forces a helmet is subjected to in an accident, any cuts must be utterly precise and at the prescribed locations. What's more, different densities of material ensure that certain elements are more flexible and others more rigid," he explains regarding the technical considerations.

Carefully conceived – right down to the finest detail

Detailed micro solutions that fit together seamlessly into the stringent overall concept make the Aventuro Carbon unique.

ADAPTABLE

- Well-ventilated off-road
- Adaptable to varying conditions
- Aerodynamic on the road

SAFE

- High-tensile carbon shell
- ECE-/DOT-compliant
- Removable cheek pads (Emergency Cheek Remove System)
- Wide face opening
- Double D-ring fastening
- Pin-lock visor

COMFORTABLE

- Lightweight
- Ergonomic padding system
- Easy-to-operate
- Tools-free adjustment
- Ingenious ventilation
- Skin-friendly, washable lining

SMART

- Integrated goggle-strap guide
- Intercom-ready
- Camera mounting
- Accessory holder

Numerous complex tests were required throughout the development process in order to perfect the material's characteristics and shape along with the arrangement of cuts to the laminate.

And it's not just the construction of a perfect helmet shell that requires immense expertise. Laminating the complex



Smoothing and coating Fillers and protective lacquers are applied in several stages. The helmet is re-polished between each step.



Decoration Decoration is applied to the finished helmet. A steady hand is needed to piece together the individual foils.

Rugged and versatile

The Touratech Aventuro Carbon's five distinctly different designs are each geared toward a very specific motorcycling lifestyle.

"Core" Clear-varnished carbon, 499 euros

"Sky" Plain white varnish, 499 euros

"Compañero" Yellow/gray/black design with visible carbon parts, 549 euros

"Rally" White/yellow design with visible carbon parts, 549 euros

"Vision" Neon yellow design with visible carbon parts, 549 euros



structure calls for specially skilled craftsmanship, which is why only very experienced helmet-making specialists were involved in this key process for the Aventuro Carbon.

When asked how long he's been making helmets, Sérgio smiles: "I've been doing this for seven years now – and I'm still improving," the good-humored Portuguese technician concedes before returning straight to work. He carefully lays the cuts of carbon-fiber fabric layer-by-layer into a steel mold and pulls the fabric into place with a pair of tweezers to smooth out even the tiniest irregularities. Finally, he mixes together some two-component epoxy resin in a measuring

cup – but won't reveal the ingredients. Besides the stratigraphy, which is the special term used for the layering of the helmet's shell, the precise recipe the company uses for the resin remains a well-kept secret.

As soon as the resin is in the mold, Sérgio covers it with a huge lid that he swings into place with the aid of a crane arm. Something resembling a bedraggled balloon hangs from the bottom of it, except its material is tougher. On closer inspection, it turns out to be the shape of a helmet interior. The lid is closed and locked firmly into place. A brief burst of compressed air inflates the balloon and the fabric and resin



Lacquering The helmet shells are given their final clear lacquer finish in a fully automated lacquering line. This also fixes the various decorative foil elements.



Final assembly This is where the lining is put into the helmet's shell. The polystyrene calotte is glued in and the chin strap riveted in place. Then the lining and padding are added. Rubber seals and the many functional elements are carefully put in place. Once the visor and peak have been added, the Aventuro Carbon is complete.

are injected into the walls of the heated mold. Then it needs “baking” for six minutes at around 170 degrees Fahrenheit (75°C). The lid comes off – and the two halves of the mold spring open with a loud pop. Sérgio proudly holds the carbon shell in his hands.

You can already tell what it will become, but there’s still a long way to go to reach the finished helmet. The excess material, which sits around the edge like a collar, needs removing, as does the space for the face along with all the other holes. The drill holes have to be utterly precise. While the prototypes are all worked by hand, once the model goes into series production, these steps are performed by computer-controlled robots in a state-of-the-art processing center.

Once he’s programmed the system, engineer João (25) monitors the progress of each individual helmet. “Even though our technicians are superb, humans simply cannot match the speed and precision of our computer-controlled system,” he explains in regard to industrial robots.

And yet there is still plenty of call for handcrafting certain parts of the complex Aventuro Carbon.

Not only do the gaps and holes need deburring carefully by hand and checking for dimensional accuracy, but a number of manual polishing procedures must also be carried out before the helmet is coated with Gelcoat (a hard lacquer made from synthetic resin) and the fillers and undercoats are added that each make the helmet appear that bit more sumptuous.

So smoothly that it hints at well-versed routine, Claudia calmly lays the graphic onto the lacquered carbon surface and presses the shapes into place with a spatula. She graphics the decorations together according to the design, as if she were doing a jigsaw puzzle that she clearly knows by heart.

Once the helmets leave Claudia’s workstation, it’s back to automated technology. The Aventuros travel side-by-side along a conveyor system and disappear into a fully automatic lacquering line.

A dazzling array of helmets adorns the trolleys that roll along behind an electric carriage right through the midst of the plant on their way to the final assembly point.

From meticulously marked compartments, hands swiftly grasp all the screws, rubber strips and other little bits and pieces that go into completing the Aventuro Carbon’s wide range of functions. The chin strap must be riveted to the shell and the polystyrene calotte glued precisely in place. Attaching the rubber seals with extremely strong special adhesives



Sewing *The textile interior of the Aventuro Carbon is entirely hand-sewn. High-quality materials such as Coolmax are kind to the skin and extremely comfortable. The lining and padding can be easily removed and are washable.*



Testing *Checking doesn’t end at the development stage, but continues throughout the production process in the form of detailed, regular testing of helmets sampled at random. This includes ECE-compliant tests and test drives.*

calls for a steady hand, and inserting the completely hand-sewn textile lining is a delicate task that requires some finesse.

After this, the plastic elements are added for ventilation and mounting any accessories, then the visor has to be locked into place and the peak attached to the helmet’s shell – and it’s off to the final inspection.

Each individual helmet has been checked around 60 times before it reaches this stage, from weighing the blank shell at the very beginning right through to the final visual inspection. These thorough checks ensure the same standard of quality throughout.

The perfect balance of high-tech and handcrafting that goes into producing the Aventuro Carbon perfectly complements its unique functional concept. It takes close interplay between all these factors to make the Aventuro Carbon what it is – the ultimate helmet for touring motorcyclists.



BACK TO ITS

The new Zega Mundo nicely rounds off Touratech's aluminum pannier series. Pared down to its essence, this pannier is the perfect companion for all travelers who appreciate slick functionality.

These indestructible panniers with **optimum protection against dust and damp** are simple to use and smartly finished – the new Zega Mundo combines all the essential characteristics of an aluminum pannier. The

Zega Mundo incorporates all the authentic functionality of the original Zega pannier, which set new standards for transporting luggage on motorcycles a quarter of a century ago.

In order to maximize its stability, the 1.5 millimeter-thick



ROOTS

aluminum sheeting of the body is secured with special rivets to the seamless base. This special technique makes the pannier considerably more rigid. Its generously dimensioned sealing band ensures **optimum impenetrability** along the join.

The same applies for the uniquely

Manufactured using the same technologies and materials as the tried-and-tested Zega Pro, the new Zega Mundo combines all the main functions of an aluminum pannier into the most cost-effective product around.



formed profile of the upper edge of the pannier's body. This stiffens the pannier, while the integrated sealing lip, which fits perfectly into the form of the lid, provides a **weatherproof closure**.



The robust aluminum profile and high-quality, stainless steel closures ensure the lid's perfect fit and maximum weather protection.



Further developments: Originally milled, the interior securing bolts now have an easy-to-grip shape that makes thorough tightening even easier.



High-quality rivets fix the body to the floor of the pannier. A sealing band ensures the contents remain dry, even on long, rain-battered journeys.

Its manufacturing and materials combine more than two decades' worth of experience accumulated on adventure and expedition tours along the world's toughest trails. The material has to withstand hours and days of relentless vibration on corrugated road surfaces coupled with the enormous loading spikes caused by fast drives across deep ruts in the ground. High tensile strength and impermeability is required from the material whenever it comes into contact with obstacles or – in the worst case scenario – the bike falls to the ground. Touratech's very own alloy aluminum sheet is designed to fulfill precisely these requirements.

The Mundo has the same high-quality stainless steel catches as the rest of the Zega series. These not only allow for the complete removal of the lid, but also work as hinges for flipping the pannier lid to the front or rear, as required. To protect the pannier's contents from theft, the catches can be fitted with locks – the same key can be used for the entire luggage system and even for other Touratech accessories on the vehicle.

Manufactured at the Niedere-

The lid can be opened to either side or removed completely. It remains attached by a wire to guard against loss.

**NEW
MODELL
COMPLETE
LUGGAGE
SYSTEM AT AN
AFFORDABLE
PRICE**

The Zega series

The **Zega Mundo** is available in 31, 38 or 45 liters and exclusively in unpolished aluminum. Its robustness and sleek design make it the perfect choice for traveling motorcyclists looking for an indestructible transportation solution at an affordable price. The Zega Mundo costs 199 euros, or 249 euros with the Touratech ready-installed kit; a complete luggage system comprising two panniers, mounting kit and trail-safe, model-specific steel-tube rack starts at 699 euros.

The **Zega Pro** is an extremely versatile pannier that has already sold in the tens of thousands. Ingenious details provide unbeatable versatility for any conceivable scenario. Three sizes are available – 31, 38 and 45 liters – and there's a choice of finishes in either unpolished aluminum, anodized silver aluminum or anodized black aluminum.

The high-end **Zega Pro2** is based on the Zega Pro and includes all the features of the tried-and-tested aluminum pannier, but with added extras and extensive standard equipment. This model comes factory-fitted with a webbing handle in the lid and universal dock for the Touratech accessories mount. The Zega Pro2's unique fastening system is also a clear plus – allowing single-handed locking and unlocking of the pannier onto/from the trail-safe steel-tube rack. The Zega Pro2 combines maximum convenience with unbeatable durability. The top end of the range is available in the usual Zega sizes – 31, 38 or 45 liters – and a choice of finishes between unpolished aluminum, anodized silver aluminum or anodized black aluminum.

A huge range of **accessories** is available for all three models in the Zega range, which open up additional practical uses and pave the way for fascinating individual touches.

schach site, the Mundo benefits from the advanced technologies it shares with the Zega Pro and Zega Pro2. Fashioned from the ultimate precision-cut material in state-of-the-art production centers, the cases are subject to ongoing stringent quality checks throughout the entire manufacturing process. The aluminum sheets are rolled from Touratech's own specially designed alloy. The precision of computer-controlled machines and the profound expertise of intensively trained, highly skilled workers come into play as the elements are fitted together.

The pannier is secured to the trail-safe rails made from 18x2 steel tubing and customized to the





The practical interior pockets can be used to carry the contents without having to remove the pannier itself from the vehicle.

specific model of machine. This is done using the special Touratech system that's already proved its mettle tens of thousands of times.

The large (formerly milled) securing bolts used in the interior of the Zega Mundo now have an ergonomic form that enables even simpler operation. Its quick assembly and firm hold, even after thousands of kilometers off-road, have made this system the first choice of long-distance tourers.

Yet there's far more to the Zega Mundo than just reliably transporting luggage from A to B. The extensive range of Zega accessories turns the Mundo into a fully personalized transportation system. Robust holders can be used to fasten canisters or bottles to the outside of the pannier; special lid bags are available for carrying addition-



al pieces of luggage; and the interior fittings can be arranged however the traveler wishes.

Made-to-measure textile bags help transport the luggage from motorcycle to hotel room and back, and there are three sizes of net – 31, 38 or 45 liters – to make the most of the storage space in the lid and help keep things tidy and organized inside the pannier.



The large interior bag inside the lid helps make maximum use of the Mundo's entire volume. As well as its practicality, it protects the contents from wear. Numerous external extras such as canisters, lid bags and first aid packs offer additional functions.

Zega accessories

Made-to-measure accessories turn every Zega pannier into the hub of an ingenious system that provides intelligent solutions for the countless demands motorcycling presents.

Produkt	Art.-Nr.
Ambato pannier lid bag	055-1469
Zega Pro interior bag	050-0815
Carrying handle with lashing strap	050-0802
Zega Pro Table	050-0822
Base plate	050-0830
Canister holder	050-0858
Bottle holder	050-0850
Reflective strips, white (x2)	050-0806
Screw-on eyelet	050-0200
Padded seat	050-0805

THE CONVERSION



Nick Sanders rose to fame not only for the top speeds he completed his tours in, but also because of his choice of motorcycle. However demanding the conditions, Nick had always stuck with his Yamaha R1 – through thick and thin. But out of the blue, the Brit suddenly switched to a Super Ténéré. How come?



The kind of tours others consider the “trip of a lifetime” and savor at leisure over several months are but a brief intermezzo for Nick Sanders. Alaska to Tierra del Fuego in the space of a month? Or what about Around the World in 19 Days? No problem for “Quick Nick”!

Since circumnavigating the globe on a bicycle in 1981, Nick Sanders has kept on upping the speed he travels at. The Brit has already set numerous records – on his bicycle, but even more so on motorcycles. For many years, Nick Sanders’ trademark lay in covering even the roughest roads in the world with a Yamaha R1. Rock-hard, short spring elements, crouched seat position, its handling designed for racing – and yet nothing could prize the record breaker from his sports machine. Nick once said that he loved the R1 for its reliability. But there must have been more to it than that...

Then, in 2011, he suddenly switched to the XT 1200 Z Super Ténéré ABS. What had changed his mind? Nick beats around the bush a bit, says something about not having anything really exciting left to do with the R1. But then the old daredevil explains in more detail: “Making the change wasn’t easy, as the Super Ténéré is a full-sized motorcycle. It’s a really heavy, stable ride on the road. It accelerates like a sports motorcycle while being extremely robust. You have to experience playing it around the bends for yourself to believe it.” As far as reliability goes – a crucial issue for someone like Nick – the XTZ has earned a good reputation over the last four years. “I’ve driven the 15,500-mile journey from Terra del Fuego to Prudhoe Bay in Alaska three times on this new motorcycle, twice breaking the record. And the XTZ never once let me down.” The six trouble-free times he traversed the United States look like short trips in comparison.

Nick has ordered a new Super Ténéré for the coming season. He is planning to have it flown in to Buenos Aires. Instead of trying to set a new record, Nick has plotted his route to take in the most spectacular scenery. First he will drive to Patagonia, before heading north toward Peru and Bolivia. He wants to gather film footage and stories on this tour and maybe publish a new book.

This means the equipment Nick will need on board for

Unbelievable: Before switching to the Super Ténéré, Nick Sanders completed many of his daredevil record-breaking journeys on a Yamaha R1.



this project will be a good deal more cumbersome than the minimalist luggage on his record attempts. So the ample carrying capacity of the Super Ténéré is just right for the job. There’s plenty of well-protected space in the Zega Pro panniers from Touratech for all the video and stills cameras along with the many accessories that are needed for professional shoots. “Packing the soft bags for the R1 was an art in itself. The aluminum pannier system on the Super Ténéré ensures the entire equipment is tidily stored and I can access whatever I need in an instant.” So maybe there were a couple of additional motives for Nick’s switch of allegiance after all?



The 69 HP XTZ 750 set a new touring enduro performance standard in 1989 (top). The current Super Ténéré produces 112 HP and scores points with its bullish characteristics (left).



Nick is clearly impressed with his Touratech-equipped Yamaha XT 1200 Z Super Ténéré.

SUPER TÉNÉRÉ TOURER MEETS ENDURO

Yamaha has always been a pioneer in the touring enduro segment. The Japanese manufacturer's XT 600 Z Ténéré, launched in 1983, paved the way for a completely new kind of motorcycle back then. With its long spring strokes, large tank and respectable motorization, the Ténéré opened up completely new horizons on the touring scene. In the same way that customers' enthusiasm for genuine off-road credentials waned during the 1980s, so the

desire for greater performance and better road-holding properties increased.

Yamaha's response to this shift in tastes was the XTZ 750

Nick Sanders Replica set for the XT 1200 Z Super Ténéré

Touratech has developed a wide range of accessories to equip the current Super Ténéré for off-road exploits and long-distance touring. An extra special treat is the "Nick Sanders Replica set". This package bundles together a range of parts that "Quick Nick" used to kit out his XTZ for extreme tours in South America. All the pieces are perfectly tuned to one another, and the set represents a saving of almost 200 euros compared with the individual prices.

Super Ténéré. The 69 HP produced by its five-cylinder twin engine instantly shot the machine right to the top of the market. Its rigid fairing, 6.8 US-gallon tank, 405 pound maximum load and 91/4" (front) / 815/32" (back) spring strokes rounded off a pretty impressive set of vital statistics.

The second generation

When production of the XTZ 750 was halted in 1996, its fan base felt sure an updated successor would follow. So they waited...and waited. It wasn't until 2010 that Yamaha recognized that launching a new model would be in its own interest and came up with another cutting-edge Super Ténéré in the form of its XT 1200 Z. The drive concept was maintained in the form of a two-cylinder parallel twin engine, but the displacement was increased to 1199 cc – and with it the machine's performance, with the Yamaha engineers coaxing 110 HP out of the twin. However, it was even more important to the designers to achieve a powerful, linear torque for a relaxed driving style. The motor uses a 270-degree crankshaft and it fires at between 520 and 840 degrees Fahrenheit (270-450°C). The 90-degree offset between the two crank webs cancels out the mass inertia effect caused by the two forged pistons so that the twin system almost carries the clout of a single-cylinder, but without the annoying jolting effect at low revs.

The combustion processes in the two-cylinder are controlled with the aid of contemporary electronic motor management. The electronic YCC-T throttle control (Yamaha chip-controlled throttle system) that stems from the company's super-sports machines is as renowned as its multistage traction control. The driver can also choose between two set-ups for the motor to suit the prevailing conditions. The transmission to the rear wheel occurs via a maintenance-free cardan shaft drive.

With 7 1/2 inch travel apiece, the spring elements strike a good balance between off-road requirements and road holding. The combination brake is an unconventional ABS-supported safety feature.

The 2014-model updates

Yamaha has come up with numerous updates for the 2014-model Super Ténéré. The motor has been overhauled to run more quietly and crank up the power to 112 HP. The windscreen is adjustable between four positions, a cruise control allows the driver to relax on long, open stretches, and the cockpit is kitted out with a multi-function display. Other highlights include the tapered aluminum handlebars, dual-colored seat, new rear fairing, LED indicators, silencer protector and one-piece aluminum side-stand.

Besides the standard model, Yamaha is also producing a ZE version with electronically adjustable suspension (see Travel Time 01/2014). The standard and ZE are both also available in "Worldcrossover" format.

The price for the standard Super Ténéré has been lowered by 1,300 euros for 2015 – a considerable saving that drivers might wish to invest in extra accessories or boosting the coffers for a tour.



- Hand protectors with spoilers
- Number plate splash guard
- Enlarged brake lever support
- Set of ABS sensor shields
- Set of shin guards
- Covers for the rear axle
- Daytime running lights
- Extra set of LED headlights: fog and high beam lights
- Cardan crash pad

- Headlight protector
- Side-stand switch protector
- Stainless steel crash bar
- Set of frame plugs
- Long distance foot rests
- Top-case rack (stainless steel with black coating)
- Zega Pro pannier system: 38/45-liter pannier, pannier rack (stainless steel, with black coating)

- Comfortable driver* seat
- Comfortable pillion* seat
- Manifold guard
- Tank bag
- Pillion bag
- M8 end cap, anodized titanium colors

*breathable
Art.-No.: 046-0880

RADICAL REV



A conversion kit with perfectly matched components turns the modest BMW F 800 GS into a radical sports machine. The resulting twin is perfectly equipped to handle the roughest of conditions with its high-end suspension, off-road ergonomics, protection package and enduro wheels.

The Touratech race team was bound to attract affirmative looks and speechless shakes of the head when the off-road enthusiasts pushed their radically customized BMW F 800 GS to the starting line of the 2011 “Dawn to Dusk” twelve-hour endurance race. The riders in this race – one of the toughest and best-known in Europe – always try to shed every spare ounce from their sports machines. And then along come the Touratech guys with a two-cylinder...

And the fact that it was an F 800 GS off-road racer actually wasn't very apparent at first glance. Stripped-down front, extra-slimline rear, thumping great wheels, high mudguard – most unsuspecting on-lookers could easily take it to be a rather oversized sports enduro. Once again, the Touratech prototype builders had come up with a fine result based on the

combined brainstorming efforts of CEO Jochen Schanz's development team.

The Touratech technicians had considerably refined the design and exchanged lots of parts since the memorable test run on the hard

Conversion kit BMW F 800 GS Sport

Front: High mudguards, lights cover, headlights, LED indicators

Ergonomics: WRP handlebars, raised handlebars, hinged brake and clutch levers, hand protectors, sports seat (custom-made), Pivot Pegz footrests, hinged gear shift and brake levers

Suspension: Touratech Suspension “inline extreme” shock, Touratech Suspension “cartridge kit extreme”, Excel 21/18 inch wheel rims

Protectors: Pinion gear guard, chain guard, Hard Part cooler, motor protection Racing, oil filter guard, manifold guard (flexible)

Exhaust system: AC Schnitzer “Stealth”

Art.-No.: 048-0389



VAMP

ground around the Walters Arena motorsports complex in the Welsh mountains. They had invested all their experience together with Kohl Motorrad from Aachen and AC-Schnitzer to start by producing a project prototype.

The sensational reception the vehicle earned at the Intermot and Eicma trade fairs in Cologne and Milan didn't pass Touratech by, so there is now a ready-to-roll, completely roadworthy twin conversion that goes under



A prototype F 800 GS Sport made a great impression at its first ever outing in the legendary 12-hour "Dawn to Dusk" enduro race in Wales, 2011.

the name of the BMW F 800 GS Sport. Whether it's sport or ambitious enduro touring, the sturdy two-cylinder set on its new chassis is the perfect machine wherever the going might just get tough.

High-mounted, off-road sports handlebars from WRP form the first step toward a pleasantly ergonomic driving experience, which is nicely complemented with a specially shaped seat. While the driver's feet rest securely on thick-cleated, pivoting foot rests, he has enough freedom of movement to keep full control over his machine whatever happens. It should go without saying in conversions as seri-



ous as the “Sport” that the brake and clutch levers are both hinged along with the foot brake and gear shift.

The design team succeeded in freeing the front from extraneous ballast without having to disturb the original BMW cable harness in any way. The pleasantly light, standard speedometer also remains in place, but now hidden behind an extra-slim headlight cover.

One brake disk has been sacrificed from the front so as to reduce the unsprung mass. Sufficient brake power still remains, though, even for on-road use, and the ABS functions are not impeded in any way. The professional sporting wheel rims from Excel are also lighter, but far sturdier at the same time. Opting for 21 and 18 inch diameters means exceptional stability off-road and allows the driver to choose from a huge range of genuine enduro and even some motocross treads. Fittingly for an off-road machine, the F 800 GS Sport has a high front mudguard.

THE 600+ MILE MOTORCYCLE F 800 GS

Good news for long-distance tourers and Iron Butt guys! A new Touratech parts package enables the BMW F 800 GS to cover huge distances and provides exceptional comfort on long journeys.

“Over 600 miles – on a single tank!” This catchy slogan for the latest Touratech conversion nails it on the head. The large Touratech front tank boosts the standard fuel capacity of the BMW F 800 GS Adventure to an impressive 11 1/2 US gallons. The promised 600+ miles shouldn’t be a problem for the economic twin-engine. A newly designed adapter allows the use of a robust 51/4 US gallon tank on both the Adventure and standard model F 800 GS.

To make such marathon stretches an enjoyable reality, Touratech’s comfortable seats take the strain out of long-distance sitting. The Touratech Suspension spring elements add to the comfort factor while improving the road hold when fully laden and equipping the GS for rough-track conditions. From basic suspension tuning with progressive springs to professional conversions using advanced closed-cartridge technology for the forks or “extreme” range shock absorbers at the rear – Touratech’s products cater for every conceivable need.

And to round everything off, there are the company’s made-to-measure luggage systems with extra-strong steel-tube racks and the latest generation of Zega panniers for the F 800 GS. After all, every long-distance tourer is going to want a sturdy means of transporting the luggage.

For more information, go to:
touratech.de/1000km

The Touratech suspension plays a pivotal role in the conversion. The front wheel steering is optimized using the “cartridge kit extreme”. This particular conversion involved exchanging the entire innards of the forks, but without touching the tubes or bridges. The new closed-cartridge fitting has



specially tuned suspension springs and a closed damping system, which can be adjusted very precisely and combines highly sensitive responsiveness with maximum bottoming resistance.

The "inline extreme" shock built into the rear also protects against bottoming out. The fluid reservoir in these monoshocks, which are manufactured exclusively by Touratech Suspension, is integrated into the suspension housing instead of externally, as with other shock absorbers. This special shock provides high reserves in the hydraulic PDS bump stop coupled with a wide choice of tuning options for the suspension characteristics across a broad range. The entire tuning of the F 800 GS Sport's suspension was determined by intensive tests.

Numerous mechanisms protect the sensitive parts of the machine during off-road use and sensible improvements to detail, such as a shorter secondary transmission, improve the handling of the machine.

The conversion was performed in Touratech's workshop and suspension center in Niedereschach. The original basis was the F 800 GS from 2013 onward.

Incidentally, Touratech's pilot Lars Würdemann achieved a feat on the F 800 conversion in the "Dawn to Dusk" race that no one would have thought possible – a top ten placing, and that in the highest class.



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MEETING THE NEED FOR SPEED

In its Competition Line, Touratech Suspension offers amateur riders what they need for fast lap times. Complete, ready-to-install kits for forks and shocks upgrade the suspension of superbikes to a winning level.

Every move is perfect. Just three more clicks of rebound adjustment on the fork, a turn of the hand wheel on the shock, a slap on the shoulder, and all that can be seen of Stefan Nebel's Suzuki GSX-R 1000 is a rear view of the

before finally coming into the pits for the next stop. The transponder registers great lap times. Lars Würdemann, head of the Touratech Suspension division, and therefore responsible for all suspension developments, withdraws to analyze the data with Stefan.

As a rider who has proved his ability by claiming top spots both in the International German Motorcycle Championship (IDM) and in numerous international races such as the Suzuka 8 hours and the 24 Hours of Le Mans, Stefan Nebel is the ideal test rider to provide valuable input for optimizing the new spring elements that will soon be enriching the Touratech Suspension range under the "Competition Line" label.

"Competition Line is targeted at ambitious racing drivers who want to squeeze an extra touch of performance out of their machines by perfecting the suspension," explains Lars. To ensure balanced handling under racing conditions, Competition Line products are always available as fork and shock kits that are perfectly tuned to each other.

In future, the portfolio will cover all major supersport motorcycles. Development of the kit for the BMW S 1000 RR and the Su-

roaring titanium silencer. Lars Würdemann has his eyes firmly set on the right-hand bend at the end of the home straight while Stefan lays down a clean black line as he approaches the bend.

A full lap of the Sachsenring is 2 miles 495 yards long. To complete it, the internationally successful rider has to navigate ten left-hand and four right-hand bends, accelerating on the straights before braking into the next turn, accelerating again,


Fine tuning the suspension components of Stefan's GSX-R before he heads onto the circuit for another timed lap.



zuki GSX-R 1000 is already well underway. For the BMW, there will be both a mechanically adjustable version of the suspension kit and an electronic version for motorcycles that come equipped with DDA. "As has been the case with Touratech Suspension products since our revolutionarily simple 'Plug & Travel' components for BMW's ESA and DDA models in the Adventure segment, the customer does not have to do any fiddling about, but instead can continue using all the original connectors," explains Lars.

The successful tests of the components on the Suzuki GSX-R 1000 at the Sachsenring represent a major step for Touratech Suspension toward expanding the Competition Line range of suspension kits to include Japanese superbikes. "Our fork inserts work on the 'closed cartridge' principle and significantly improve performance in the Japanese supersport motorcy-

cles in particular, with their Big Piston Forks," continues Lars. "The cartridges can simply replace the original innards of the stock fork and provide tangibly more precise responsiveness thanks to significantly reduced internal friction. In addition, the three parameters of preload, compression damping and rebound damping (each on one side of the fork) can be adjusted through a much greater range than in the standard equipment. Last but not least, the damping effect remains constant over a much longer period of time," Lars concludes.

Meanwhile, Stefan is getting ready for another set of laps, while Lars casts a critical eye over the results so far and takes them down in his notebook. 

More information about Competition Line from Touratech Suspension will soon be available at www.touratech-suspension.com

FORK CARTRIDGE CONVERSION TEST

In the challenging terrain of Carbon Ridge, Paul Guillien and Iain Glynn from Touratech USA tested a BMW F 800 GS fitted with the Touratech Suspension Cartridge Kit in direct comparison to a machine with stock suspension.

I love BMW's F 800 GS and have ridden more miles on this model than on any other adventure bike. When riding off-road or with full luggage, a person quickly finds the limits of the stock forks. They feel soft and lack the damping required for control at speed. Making matters worse, the stock forks have no pre-load adjuster, often resulting in an incorrect sag setting which adversely affects handling. This is why Touratech Suspension has created a Fork Cartridge Conversion kit for this bike.

For this test, we rode a stock F 800 GS back-to-back with our Touratech Suspension test bike which is set up with the company's new Fork Cartridge Conversion in the front and its



ESA Upgrade shock in the rear. The test was conducted in the shadows of Mt. Rainier on varied terrain including pavement, gravel, dirt and embedded rocks.

On pavement, the Fork Cartridge Conversion is balanced and confidence inspiring, even at higher speeds with lug-

Before each new lap, we adjusted the compression and rebound damping settings to improve handling.



gage. The bike's notorious brake dive is completely vanquished and you find yourself enjoying twisty roads more than ever. The bike feels so planted and predictable that you forget it has a 21" front wheel. As good as it is on pavement, dirt roads are where the Fork Cartridge Conversion kit really shines.

HOW IT WORKS


- ▶ The Fork Cartridge Conversion is a drop-in solution that completely replaces the stock fork's internals with cutting-edge suspension technology. It's like putting an "Extreme" shock in your forks.
- ▶ A Closed Cartridge system separates the pressurized damping oil from the fork lubrication oil delivering a consistently high level of performance.
- ▶ The system includes hydraulic bottoming prevention that works like a pillow to prevent the fork from bottoming out suddenly.
- ▶ Years of testing and development have resulted in optimized damping for fully-loaded adventure bikes. It's ready to go right out-of-the-box.
- ▶ Correct geometry and handling can be achieved by adjusting the preload nut located on top of the fork legs. The stock fork lacks a pre-load adjuster making it difficult to set sag correctly.
- ▶ Compression and rebound damping are easily changed by turning adjustment clickers that are located on top of the forks allowing riders to make changes while sitting on the bike.
- ▶ Spring weights are selected to match rider weight, load and riding preferences to maximize performance.
- ▶ Installation is straight forward with no machining or rework required.
- ▶ Available for BMW F 800 GS, KTM 1190 R and Triumph Tiger 800 and 1200.

Off-road, the Fork Cartridge Conversion absorbs bumps and quickly returns the bike to a neutral comfortable position making the rider feel confident and ready for the next obstacle. You find yourself playing with the same terrain features that you were avoiding on the stock bike. It magically converts a challenging section of dirt into a laugh-out-loud fun road that you want to turn around and ride again. Since we were testing suspension, that's exactly what we did.

With each pass, we turned the adjusters for the rebound and compression damping to improve the handling. These adjustments are easily done with a small tool while sitting on the bike.

Getting back onto the stock bike I noticed how much the motorcycle was moving underneath me. The wallowing and extra movement was disconcerting. I began to realize how much of my energy and attention was being used to get the bike back into shape. You begin to slow down on rough terrain. When the fork bottoms out, you experience the loss of control that can result in bar slap or 'head shake'. The stock bike just feels harder to ride and less confidence inspiring the faster you try to ride it.

The stock fork wears you down more quickly and starts to detract from the overall experience of the ride, especially on long trips like a Backcountry Discovery Route or Continental Divide. In rocky or bumpy terrain, the fun factor can be quickly diminished by a fork that is too soft and lacks correct damping.

There is no question that it's an expensive upgrade, but nothing else delivers as much performance in this price range. It's hard to place a value on fun, but if you like your F 800 GS, I guarantee you will love it with the Fork Cartridge Conversion from Touratech Suspension. 

AVENTURO CARBON NEW COLORS

The Aventuro Carbon is now available in three exciting new designs, meaning that what is probably the most versatile motorcycle helmet fits even better into customized rider equipment.

With its extremely broad spectrum of uses ranging from high-speed trips on the highway to technically difficult desert sections, the Aventuro Carbon has rapidly become the helmet of choice for discerning adventure riders.

Made from very strong carbon-fiber laminate, the helmet combines versatility, high level of comfort, uncom-

promising safety and numerous tried-and-tested detailed solutions with a luxurious finish and an eye-catching design. Up till now, it has been available in five different designs, and another three have now been added.

Riders of KTM motorcycles will be excited by the “Namib” design, which shows the Aventuro Carbon’s dedication to the orange lifestyle – whether you are taking an 1190 Adventure on single-trail tracks, riding Alpine twisties on a Superduke or racing along the Autostrada on a Super Adventure.

The “Pacific” design is predominantly blue, with contrasting white areas with visible carbon. This fresh and airy look will surely appeal to fans of Bavarian motorcycles and others.

The “Dakar” version combines camouflage elements and sandy desert colors with geometrical shapes reminiscent of gravel and stone – an exciting design for sporty riders. The large logo of the Dakar rally says that this rider loves motorsports.

Every version of the Aventuro Carbon is available in six sizes from XS to XXL. AR



More information is available at
www.touratech-usa.com



ADVENTURE SILK ROAD

Helge Pedersen, one of the world's most prestigious motorcycle adventurers, guided a group of nearly 20 daring enduro riders along the historic Silk Road across Eurasia to China.

Text and Photos: Helge Pedersen



As for any journey with GlobeRiders, we start the preparations with an online forum where we discuss and prepare for the adventure. For this particular journey, there was no doubt that our ride through the country of Iran was the most debated part of our itinerary. Every day we were bombarded by news about Iran in the media: nuclear talks, sanctions, hostage negotiations and so on. Seemingly, not the most inviting place to go for a motorcycle ride.

On the other hand, our side trip to Afghanistan was also discussed, but by far not so much as Iran. That might have been because Afghanistan was offered as an optional daytrip that, at the end of the day, only eight riders chose to take.

Now, after the tour is over and we reflect on the journey, what do you think was the highlight for most of our riders? Yes, you are right, it was Iran. This is not easy to explain unless you had been on the trip and experienced riding through a country that you know very little about. We all knew very well the headlines that had been bombarding us, but very few have actually traveled to the country to be able to form their own opinions.



On the road in Tajikistan along the river border with Afghanistan. (Main photo). The faces tell their stories – funny and sad, wonderful and tragic.





The section through Iran challenged many preconceptions (top). Provisions at the side of the road. Restorations to a temple in Western China.

At home, family and friends had been warning us of the danger we would face on this journey. Not a new concept to me after having conducted tours for GlobeRiders now for more than 15 years. To be honest, it was at times ridiculous to hear some of the arguments condemning this journey. However, in all fairness, I should not compare my feelings to theirs since I have traveled more than the average person. The more you travel, the more you will understand that there is so much more to the world than what you are fed by sensational headlines. We all have a degree of fear of the unknown. Marry this with the spin media puts in the headlines these days and one can understand the paranoia. This is all a recipe for some scary scenarios for anyone venturing out in to the world. Many of you that read this travel story can relate to the feeling when those that care about you ask you not to go forward with the dream tour of your life. It can often go so





We didn't quite make it all the way to Tibet, but the influence of Tibetan culture on the surrounding regions is clear to see.

far that you start to doubt yourself, questioning your own decisions.

Fortunately, nobody cancelled the tour because of their fear of the unknown, but I am pretty sure that some people did not sign up for this tour just because of this fear and paranoia of the unknown. Too bad I say, we had a great journey from the start in Istanbul, Turkey, to the end in Xi'an, China.

The journey itself is a big commitment both time wise and economically – and very much a commitment to yourself believing that you can endure riding your own bike 8,000 miles (13,000Km) over a period of 56 days. You need to be prepared for the unknown and for that reason we call it an Adventure. The main road in Georgia was an Adventure as it was flooded so badly that we had to ride for half a mile through rushing water. The river had flooded, crossing the road, making it hard to see where

to ride without ending up in the river itself. The experience was scary, exciting, but more than anything else, it was an achievement to forge through this obstacle.

Any journey, with or without motorcycle, is all about learning more about the countries that you are transiting, enjoying their cultures, the people and taking in nature. But you also need to remember you will always be an ambassador from your home country. I always introduce myself as a Norwegian, even though I have lived in the US now for more than 20 years. My passport is from Norway and I always thought that it was good to be from a small, insignificant country that does little to stir up emotions in the international arena. This game plan of mine came to an abrupt halt on this last journey. "Norway, where is that?" and a polite smile is all that I got from people that I met while my American friends were greeted with big smiles, handshakes and treated like rock



Having passed through the “Tunnel of Death” in Tajikistan, we were rewarded with incredible views. Nonetheless, we still needed to pay close attention to the road.



stars. The difference was so big that I, too, started to introduce myself as an American. With that, I could bask in the glory of the overwhelming curiosity and friendliness everyone from the USA experienced. Quite a contrast thinking how we, according to some people, would never survive our motorcycle journey through countries like Iran.

The first time that I did this journey was 11 years ago and since then, there has been quite a change in some of the countries. As a traveler, you will see it in the availability of gasoline, more cars on the road, availability of internet, ATMs or the selection of foreign TV channels on your hotel room's TV set. Wherever you go, everyone is carrying a cell phone and these days, you are not the only one taking pictures. Time and again, we had to pose for pictures taken with Nokia cell phones or more fancy iPhones. The media gathering has shifted to a more even playing field and it is quite humorous some times. A boy on donkey does not wave as he used to do. These days, he is taking pictures or video using his mobile device as we pass him on a remote mountain road.

Riding at 15,000 feet (4,600 meters) above sea level has been synonymous with great nature and fantastic riding. My fondest memories go back to South America and the high Andes. Today, I have to say that the Andes has competition from the Himalayan mountains of Tajikistan. What a beautiful experience with snowcapped mountains and green hills, a definite highlight of our journey. The beauty came with a price: rough, hostile, cold and unpredictable terrain. Make a mistake here and it will hurt. For some people it did hurt, but we all made it and that is what counts at the end of the day.

In Tajikistan, we had a completely different experience a week prior to the high altitude riding. This time, on the way to the capital Dushanbe, we rode through the tunnel of death. Built by Iran, the tunnel had deteriorated so much that the cement floor had broken up and re-





Kyrgyzstan is the last country we pass through before reaching our destination of China (I.).

Tourists in hot-air balloons explore the strange sandstone landscapes around Göreme, Cappadocia, in central Turkey.

bar were exposed causing even more danger than the deep water filled potholes. Did I mention that the Anzob tunnel has no lights or ventilation system and stretches for five kilometers through the mountain? It was a pure miracle that all 18 bikes made it though the mountain. Do a YouTube search for "Tajikistan Tunnel of Death" and you will better understand what I am talking about. We had followed the Silk Road from West to East, experienced the

wonderful Silk and Spices Festival in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, slept in yurts in Kyrgyzstan, visited the second lowest point on earth in Turpan, Gobi Desert, China, and most of all, made new friends in an area of the world where most of our family and friends thought we were crazy to visit. It was truly a trip of a lifetime that changed the way we see the world; friendships were made and the desire to do it all over again was born. 

GLOBERIDERS SILK ROAD ADVENTURE 2015

START: May 3rd Istanbul Turkey

- 118 bikes and 19 people
- 16 BMW GS, 1 KTM and 1 Suzuki

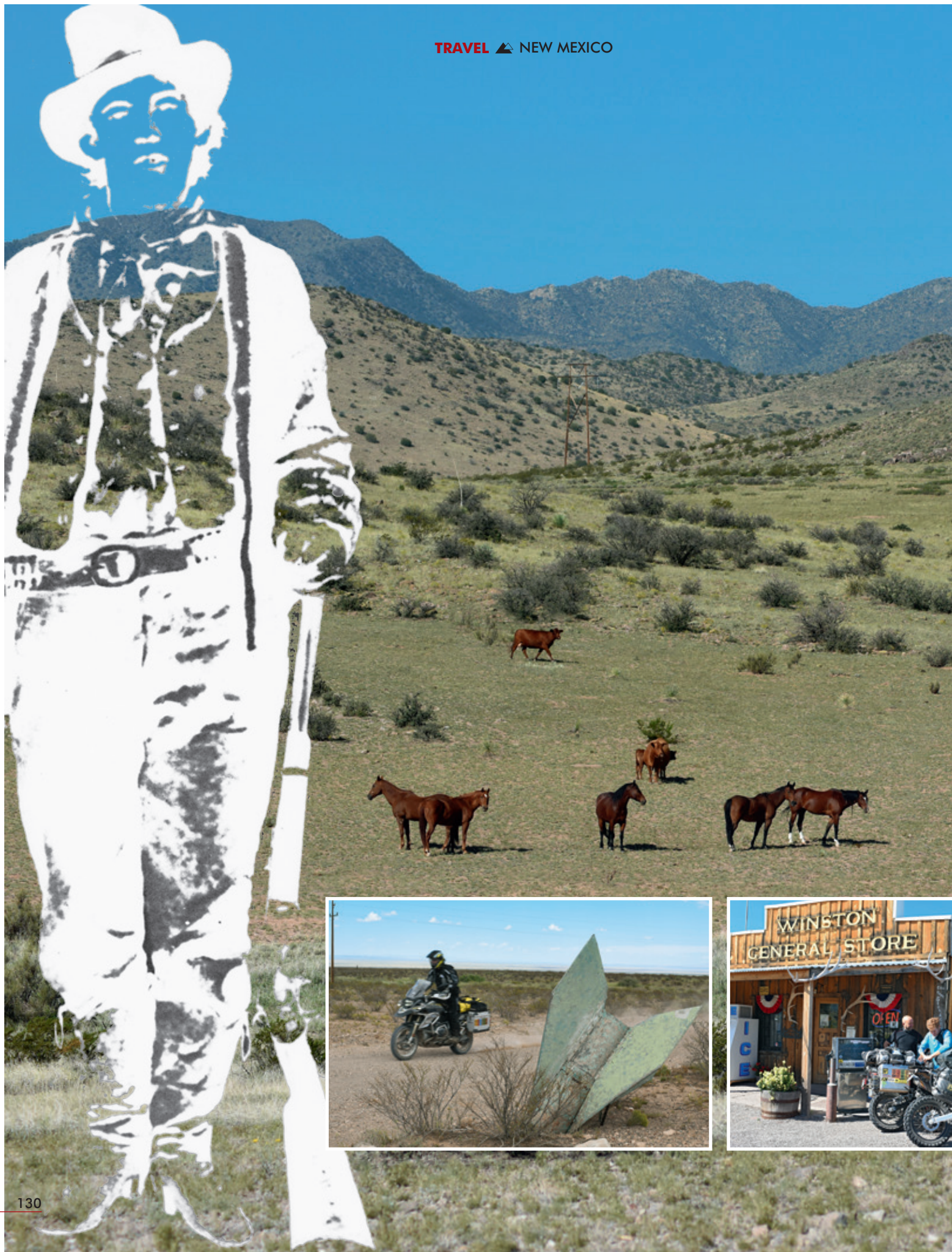
10 COUNTRIES: Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, China

Minus 154 meter below sea level to 4,665 meter above sea level. Below freezing temperatures to above 110 F or 40 C.

END: June 27th in Xi'an, China
(8,000+ miles or 13,000+ Kilometer)



- To read our archived journal from this and many other journeys with GlobeRiders from around the world visit our web page www.globeriders.com. If you are interested in joining GlobeRiders Silk Road Adventure 2016 write us at info@globeriders.com



BILLY THE KID COUNTRY

Exploring the legendary landscapes of the Wild West.

Backcountry Discovery Routes releases a 1,200 mile route across the state of New Mexico.

Text: Paul Guillien Photos: Jon Beck and Paul Guillien



BACKCOUNTRY
DISCOVERY
ROUTES







Paul finds another fun road



History lessons with locals in Chloride, NM



The tenacity of caliche mud



A Wild West sunrise



Shalmarie Wilson paddling through the mud



A magical moment (photo by Sterling Noren)



Paul Guillien in the foreground and Rob Watt in the background wrestling their R1200GS motorcycles in the New Mexico mud.



Growing up as a child in the 1980's, I watched a fair number of 'Westerns' with my father. The films featured cowboys, gunslingers, and bounty hunters wearing Stetson hats, bandanas, and spurs, using revolvers or rifles as everyday tools of survival. They rode through dusty towns and cattle ranches on horseback and usually ended up in saloons or saving damsels in distress.

It seems like every western had that 'wild west' mystique that I only saw on TV. That is, until I rode the New Mexico Backcountry Discovery Route.

We are three days into our ride across the state of New Mexico following mostly off-road tracks. Each day we stop to get fuel, water and provisions in tiny little towns seemingly in the middle of nowhere. Rolling into the town of Ruidoso, a sign announces that we have entered, 'Billy the Kid Country'.

There is perhaps no greater outlaw in history than Henry McCarty aka 'Billy the Kid'. He was a cowboy, cattle rustler, horse thief, gambler and infamous outlaw who killed many men and eluded justice for years. Although he was cornered or captured many times, he had a knack for slipping away, usually with guns blazing. His legend remains one of the most popular stories of the old west. The only photo of Billy the Kid sold for \$2.3 million dollars in 2011, making it the seventh-most expensive photo ever sold.

Here we are, passing through his old stomping grounds. It begins to sink in for me. The last few days feel like I've been riding through the set of a western just like the ones I watched with my Dad some 30 years ago.

Wild Horses

We are deep into the ranchlands of central New Mexico, where you can ride for hours without seeing a soul. As I round a corner, something appears to my left. I look up to see four horses galloping across the dirt road ahead of me. They look so magnificent and free in this boundless western landscape. This vision of freedom resonates inside me as we ride away toward the horizon.

Mud Wrestling

Rain begins pitter-pattering on my tent as I fall asleep. The next morning, we find ourselves wrestling fully loaded adventure bikes through impossible caliche mud. In minutes, enough mud collects to pack the front fender and lock up the wheel. This brings a stop to progress for even the most ambitious of riders. In my experience, it's best to quickly make the decision to turn around. Failing that, park the bikes and wait for the road to dry out.




Left to right: Rob Watt, Jon Beck, Court Butler, Shalmarie Wilson, Sterling Noren, Paul Guillien, Roger Pattison.

Deer Hunting

Fall is in the air, leaves are starting to change, and it's bow-hunting season in the Gila National Forest. Hunting camps appear along the route and we pass scores of four-wheel vehicles driven by camouflage-clad men with beards. To our surprise, however, it's one of our own that causes trouble for a deer. While riding up a rugged mountain road near the Arizona border, a large buck jumps out in front of Kevin and a collision occurs. The deer quickly leaves the scene, but Kevin is on the ground and suffering some serious pain. The bike has broken body work and Kevin has some fractured bones. Eventually, Kevin is able to re-mount his F800GS and slowly ride out to the highway and eventually to a hospital. Kevin has done a tremendous amount of work for the BDR organization and we are gutted to bid farewell to him as he heads to the care of doctors to begin his recovery. Our group of eight is now seven.

Magnificent Seven

Nearing the end of our 1,200-mile trek through New Mexico we enter a canyon along the Chama River that winds up to the town of Abiquiu. Our group of seven encounters a check point where a security guard tells us the valley is closed because "they're filming a major motion picture." We see cryptic signs marked M7 and figure out that we are on the location where Denzel Washington, Chris Pratt and Ethan Hawke are filming a remake of the 1960 western 'The

Magnificent Seven". While I am disappointed to be turned away from this beautiful road, it's ironic that a real 'western film' is being shot along the New Mexico BDR track. All week long I have felt like I am riding through the set of every western movie I watched as a kid. It's also worth noting that our group of seven is feeling pretty magnificent after riding through 1,000 miles of the New Mexico backcountry. 



www.backcountrydiscoveryroutes.com

WITH FRIENDS IN A STRANGE LAND

TEXT AND PHOTO: SIMON & LISA THOMAS

Were supernatural powers at play? That was my first thought on looking through the camera viewfinder. This was the only explanation that immediately sprang to mind for this incredible coming together of so many prominent adventurers.

Lisa and I had already been in Belize for a few weeks when we got an e-mail from Mirko and Claudia, who were spending 19 months on the road in North and South America (p. 86). We had been keeping in touch for a while through our website, but if we wanted to manage to actually meet up in person, it was going to have to be NOW. That's how it all started. The next person we contacted was Daniel Rintz. The last time we had seen him was in Laos, which now seemed a million miles and a thousand years away. In the meantime, Daniel had been back in Germany and produced the critically acclaimed adventure film "Somewhere else tomorrow" about his experiences.

That was almost everyone. We still needed Anders and Petra Stridfeldt from Sweden (Travel Time 2-2014) who were a year and a half into their world tour and at that time were just a stone's throw away on the beach at Xpu Ha on the Caribbean coast of Mexico. We were then joined by John, an old traveling companion of Mirko's who was just about to start a trip through South America.

When we finally sat down together, the atmosphere was electric, fueled by the emotions of all the adventures that we have experienced and the anticipation of what was still to come. Beer and stories flowed in equal measure.

The lemon-yellow of the abandoned hotel peering through the green of the rain forest seemed like the perfect setting for a souvenir photo of our band of Compañeros.

Once we were on our feet the next day, we posted ourselves and the motorcycles in the remains of what used to be a five-star hotel complex to capture what is certainly a unique photograph.

As you can see, motorcycle touring brings strangers together, and makes them into friends faster than anything else could.

Ride safe, ride far ... live more. See you down the road. 

CAMERA DETAILS:

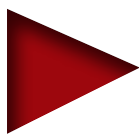
CAMERA: Nikon D3 LENS: AF-S Nikkor 50 mm FOCAL LENGTH: 50 mm

SHUTTER SPEED: 1/800s APERTURE: F3.5 ISO: 160

FORMAT: RAW SHOOTING MODE: A (no flash, tripod, self-timer)







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Headquarters & Distributors

HEADQUARTERS:

TOURATECH AG

Auf dem Zimmermann 7 - 9
DE 78078 Niedereschach
Phone: +49 (0)77 28 - 92 79 - 0
Fax: +49 (0)77 28 - 92 79 - 29
info@touratech.de

GERMANY:

TOURATECH-North
Touratech Retail GmbH
Rodigallee 234
DE 22043 Hamburg
info@touratech-nord.de

TOURATECH-East
Agnes-Smedley-Str. 5
DE 01187 Dresden
www.touratech-ost.de

TOURATECH-Middle
Zweirad Norton
Obernburger Str. 46/48
DE 63853 Mömlingen
info@zweirad-norton.de

TOURATECH-South
Gruber & Alt GmbH
Auf den Schrederwiesen 30
DE 80995 München
info@touratech-sued.de

TOURATECH-West
Kohl automobile GmbH
Neuenhofstr. 160
DE 52078 Aachen
thomas.nick@kohl.de

TOURATECH Berlin
Riller & Schnack GmbH
Schloßstraße 57
DE 12165 Berlin
sascha.rose@riller-schnack.de

TOURATECH Kassel
Dresdener Str. 1
DE 34125 Kassel
info@touratech-kassel.de

INTERNATIONAL:

ARGENTINA

Comercializadora Motouring
Argentina S.A.
Paraguay 515, P2
1057 Ciudad de Buenos Aires
info@touratechargentina.com.ar

AUSTRALIA
Touratech Australia
1933 Carboor Everton Rd
AU Carboor, Victoria 3678
info@touratech.com.au

AUSTRIA
Bierbaum GmbH
Vöslauerstraße 67-69, 73
AT 2500 Baden
info@touratech.at
www.touratech.at

ARABIAN EMIRATES
2xWheeler
P.O.Box: 65800 Dubai, UAE
shadi@2xwheeler.com
www.2xwheeler.com

BELGIUM
Grandpadman NV
Steenweg op Aalst 92,
9629 Zottegem-Oombergen,
www.touratech.be
piet@grandpadman.be

BOLIVIA
CespaMotors SRL
Visal Import Export S.R.L.
Bo. SCZ. Santa Cruz de la Sierra
AV. Cristo Redentor Nro. 950
cespa@cotas.com.bo

BRAZIL
AMSVILE Comercio de Equipamentos
Industriais Ltda.
Rua 15 de novembro, 2025 –
América-BR- 89201 Joinville SC
info@touratech.com.br

CANADA
Touratech Canada
1222 Shefford
Bromont, Québec, J2L 1C8
info@touratech-canada.com

CHILE
Comercial Tufe S.A
Avda. Las Condes 7981
CL Santiago de Chile/Las Condes
info@tagler.cl

CHINA
Hefei Tuitai Co. Ltd
Room 2105 Building 16,
West Mountain
CN 23000 ingko Garden Hefei,
Anhui
michael@touratech.cc

COLOMBIA

Autogermana
Calle 116 no. 17a-48, Bogotá DC
leonardo.rodriguez@autogermana.com.co
www.touratech.co

COSTA RICA

A uno Motorcycles S.A.
Estados Unid. Edificio Zona ind.
De Pavas
CR- San José
marvide@a1motorcycles.cr

CZECH REPUBLIC

Touratech CZ
Modletice 142
251 01 Ricany, okr. Praha-vychod
touratech@touratech.cz

EASTLAND

Ekstreemmoto OÜ
Mõisavahe tee 3
EE 76404 Jõelähtmäe
mart.lajal@ktm.ee

EL SALVADOR

Motorider, S. A. de C. V.
Centro Comercial Pinares de Suiza #5
Boulevard Sur, Santa Tecla
La Libertad, El Salvador
marior97@yahoo.com

FRANCE

SHOP 1 Tourisme Aventure SAS
ZAC Porte Sud, Rue Roussanne,
BP 124
FR 84104 Orange Cedex
info@touratech.fr
SHOP 2 TOURATECH FRANCE
60 Chemin des Boeufs
FR 95540 Mery-Sur-Oise

GREECE / CYPRUS (EU)
Makan Touratech Greece
6 Sfaktirias Street, GR 10435 Athens
info@makan.gr

GUATEMALA

Comercial Automotiv S.A.
Ruta 6 4-34 Zona 4
GT- Ciudad de Guatemala
arne.sapper@bovaria.com.gt

HUNGARY

Nyárfa u. 13, 8630 Balatonboglár
HU Balatonboglár, 8630
info@fullgas.hu

IRELAND

Adventure Motorcycles Ireland Ltd.
Unit 35 Gorey Business Park
Ramstown Gorey Co. Wexford
david@overlanders.ie

ITALY

Touratech Italia srl
Via Maestri del Lavoro 6
IT 38121 Trento
info@touratech.it

JAPAN

Touratech Japan
Matonakayama 7-8-15-102
JP 273-0035 Chiba-pref.
Funabashi-city
tjapan@atglobal.net

LEBANON

MOTOTEC store,
Nohra bldg. ground floor/Tahwita,
Furn El Cheback,
www.mototec-lb.com,
ziad@mototec-lb.com

MALAYSIA

TOURATECH Enterprise
No. 53, Jalan, Rangoan
MY 10400 Georgetown, Penang
tonylim88@gmail.com
www.touratech.com.my

MEXICO

Toluca Planta de Blindados,
S.A. de C.V.
Carr. Mexico - Toluca Km 47.5
MX 52031 Lerma, Estado de Mexico
carlos.wieda@plantatoluca.com

NETHERLANDS

Touratech Netherlands
Bert Duursma Motoren BV
Stadhoudersmolenweg 99
7317BP Apeldoorn
info@touratech.nl

NEW ZEALAND

Adventure Riders NZ Ltd.
32 Swallow Lane
NZ RD3 3283 Hamilton
Auckland, New Zealand
Auckland, 0752 New Zealand
info@touratech.co.nz

THE NORDICS

Sweden/Norway/Denmark/
Finland/Iceland, Touratech Nordic
Brantabäcksgatan 4
SE 531 33 Lidköping
info@touratech.se

PARAGUAY

BEHMAK S.A.
Av. Artigas 2100,
1416 Asunción
ceulerich@touratech.com.py
www.touratech.com.py

PERU

Motoviajeros Peru S.A.C.,
Av. Los Faisanes # 196, Lima,
www.touratech.pe,
info@motoviajerosperu.com

PHILIPPINES

HLT International Inc.,
Unit 4 Pelbel II Bldg. Shaw Blvd.,
1600 Pasig City
alvindee@highland-trading.net

POLAND

MOTOUR S.C.,
Z. Szatan, M. Szamborski
ul. Górka 1^a
PL 43-300 Bielsko-Biala
info@touratechpolska.pl

PORTUGAL

Touratech Portugal, Lda.
Rua Bernardo Lima Numero 48 2^o
PT- 1150-157 Lisboa
geral@touratech-portugal.com

RUSSIA

WikiMoto
Instrumentalnaya street 3 "B"
RU 197022 St. Petersburg
order@wikimoto.ru

SINGAPORE

Performance Motors Limited (PML),
303 Alexandra Road,
159941 Singapore,
sales@touratech.com.sg,
www.touratech.com.sg

SLOVAKIA

Touranbike s.r.o.
Zochova 13
SK 060 01 Kezmarok
info@touratech.sk

SOUTH AFRICA

4MY BIKE PTY (Ltd.)
P.O. Box 6674, Birchleigh
ZA 1621 Gauteng, Johannesburg
touratech@4mybike.co.za

SPAIN

SHOP 1 MotoCenter Levante
Avenida Hospital, 10
San Juan de Alicante
03550 Alicante
touratech@motocenterlevante.es
SHOP 2 TOURATECH Barcelona Store
Calle Nicaragua 48 local 1
ES 08029 Barcelona
SHOP 3 TOURATECH Madrid Store
Calle Ancora 23 local 3
ES 28045 Madrid
Madrid@motorcenterlevante.com

SWITZERLAND

Touratech Schweiz GmbH
Hauptstraße 1
CH 8259 Kaltenbach
info@touratech.ch

THAILAND

Touratech (Thailand) Co., Ltd
126 Moo 6,
Watsiwarenoi-Ladkrabang Road
TH-10540 Samutprakarn,
Srisajprakrahai, Bangsoothong
peera_l@touratech.co.th

TURKEY

TOURATECH Türkiye
Zümrütevler Mah. Nazmi İlker
Sok. No: 8
TR- 34852 Maltepe-Istanbul
info@touratech-tr.com

UNITED KINGDOM

Touratech UK Ltd
Unit 14 Woodlands Business Park
Ystradgynlais SA9 1JW
South Wales, UK
info@touratech.co.uk

USA

Touratech USA
4021 Airport Way South
Seattle, WA 98108, USA
sales@touratech-usa.com

URUGUAY

WERPON S.A.
Dr. Alejandro Schroeder 6433
UY- CP 11500 Montevideo
ventas@ignaciopuente.com

IMPRINT

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TOURATECH AG

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Phone + 49 (0) 77 28 - 92 79 - 0
Fax + 49 (0) 77 28 - 92 79 - 29
info@touratech.de

Editor-in-Chief

Herbert Schwarz
(V.i.S.d.P. liable for editorial content)
Andreas Reimar

Editorial Staff

Margit Rowley, Ramona Schwarz

Contributors

Jo Glaser, Paul Guillien,
Veronika Singer, Tilo Jentzsch,
Margit Rowley, Martin Wickert

Layout, DTP and Graphics

Rudolph Fischer, Claudia Werel

Photography

Ramona Schwarz, Katja Wickert

Ad Sales

Marius Griesser:
marius.griesser@touratech.de
Alex Schönborn
alex.schoenborn@touratech.de

Translation: Linguatext Ltd.

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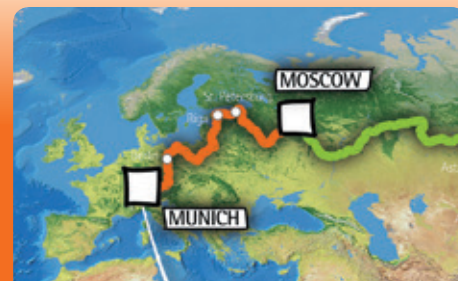
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