



SANTA BARBARA BMW RIDERS NEWSLETTER

[HTTP://WWW.SBBMWRIDERS.ORG](http://www.sbbmwrider.org)

BMW MOA CLUB #165

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Member News and Rides

Deb, Jeff, Marten and Tanja went to the Geico Adventure Rally & Camp in Julian. (November 8-11). The rally offered easy, medium and hard rides. Test rides were available on the Africa Twin, which Tanja rode at the rally, and liked. It's about 100 lbs lighter than an R1200GS and can have a lowered seat (standard height is 34.3"; low is 33.5").

Phyllis, John and Harvey rode south along the coast and along Las Posas Road and Potrero Road, but the road was closed at the Ventura County/Los Angeles County lines. They saw a lot of other roads closed due to the Woolsey Fire.

Deb attended the Babes Ride Out rally in Joshua Tree in October. She did not camp this time but stayed with a friend. She rode the Palms to Pines Scenic Byway, which starts on Highway 74 south of Palm Desert and continues for 67 miles to end at Highway 243 south of Banning. This is a great route that goes through multiple ecological zones, has big views and lots of curves.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Member News and Rides
- 2 Technical Topic: ATGATT
- 2 SB BMW Riders Calendar
- 3 Upcoming Events
- 3 Club Christmas Party
- 4-5 Reasons to Ride Across the Country
- 6-10 Alps The Easy Way

Steve and Fran traveled across the country to the southern Appalachians, aiming for about 400-500 miles per day. But due to the weather, they found that 300-400 miles a day was a good day. They spent about a week riding in the mountains, and then they returned home. Part of their return trip was along the southern border of Arizona, through Sierra Vista and Fort Huachuca. Their trip was about 6000 miles. See more of their trip on Pages 4-5.

Michael and Veronica went to the Mike Lightfoot Vintage Motorcycle Classic in Hollister to watch vintage (bikes made prior to 1975) motocross.

Technical Topic for November: ATGATT

ATGATT, or All The Gear, All The Time, was the discussion topic for the November meeting. What it means is that helmet, gloves, riding jacket and pants, and boots are worn any and all times while on the motorcycle. No shorts and flip-flops for this crowd! However, it's probably a common practice to wear helmet, gloves, jacket and boots but just jeans when doing a short test ride after bike maintenance.

Part of the discussion covered the different clothing manufacturers. Klim gear is made from Gore-Tex fabrics, which is not necessarily water-proof under really heavy rain conditions but is breathable and waterproof under most conditions. Aerostitch is water-repellant, but tends to leak at the crotch seams, so seam sealing is imperative for those garments.

Both Klim and Aerostich offer a women's line of jackets and pants and the one-piece Roadcrafter (Aerostitch).

Randy mentioned that his daughter-in-law worked for Nike and did studies on waterproofing. The recommendation is to wear a base layer underneath Gore Tex, which will prevent the Gore Tex from rubbing and will decrease sweating. The base layer

SB BMW Riders Calendar

- ❖ Monday, December 17: Club annual Christmas Party at Cody's Café, 4898 Hollister Avenue, Goleta, CA. Come at around 6:30 p.m. for dinner and the gift exchange.
- ❖ If members want to do any pick-up rides, post them on the member email list: <https://www.sbbmwriders.org/>
- ❖ Monday, January 21, 2019: Club meeting at Cody's Café, 4898 Hollister Avenue, Goleta, CA. Come at around 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. for dinner and stay for the 7:30 p.m. meeting.
- ❖ Any other activities or rides scheduled? Let me know! djkrohn@cox.net

material should keep you warm or cool, depending on the weather.

Tanja said that Frogg Toggs don't work at freeway speeds!

Washing your gear: Aerostitch can be machine-washed, and then treated with Nikwax, Scotchgard spray or Camp Dry Fabric Protector. Bob liked his BMW gear because it is machine-washable.

For visors and windshields, Rain-X Windshield Repellant is commonly used, but it gets removed when you clean bugs from the windshield or visor.

Armor replacement: It was felt that armor should be replaced every 5-6 years.



Upcoming Events

- December 28-31: Airhead Beemers Club Last Chance Rendezvous, Agua Caliente County Park, CA, [Last Chance Rendezvous](#)
- February 15-18, 2019: 27th Annual Death Valley Rendezvous. See the adjacent ad on this page.
- March 28-31, 2019: ADV Rider 2019 Death Valley Noobs Rally, Panamint Springs Resort, Panamint Springs, CA. [2019 Death Valley Noobs Rally](#)
- March 29-April 1, 2019: BMW of Northern California Meeting and Campout, Furnace Creek, CA. [2019 Death Valley Campout](#)
- May 17-19, 2019: BMW Getaway Cambria. Lodging at the Cambria Pines Lodge. [BMW Getaway Cambria](#)

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Club Christmas Party

The annual Club Christmas Party will be Monday, December 17, at Cody's Café, starting at 6:30 p.m. For dinner, we will order off the menu. You can bring your own wine if you'd like; and bring a dessert to share with the group. There will be a gift exchange if you want to participate: bring a wrapped gift (anything between \$20-30). Watch for an email from Veronica with more details!

Reasons to Ride Across the Country

Steve Miller

Fran and I wanted to meet some friends in the Southern Appalachians to ride the roads there. Looking at flying there with riding gear and renting a bike in Atlanta was possible but more of a hassle than I wanted. When asking Fran if she would consider riding there and back she immediately said yes! I would recommend everyone ride across the country for the following reasons:

- Experiencing the various terrains first hand that each State has to offer was rewarding. It's one thing to hear about it and quite another to experience it. There are interesting sights along the way if you look for them.
- The people you meet along the way is another reason we like to ride. You are very approachable as a single bike by the locals. And, some of the best local tips come from these encounters. Also the variety of different lifestyles I find interesting as well. The national news media does not accurately reflect how most people get along and it was a pleasure to witness.
- The regional food is something to experience. I had the best ribs EVER in Memphis. The South has great food but finding a good salad can be a challenge. And the microbrewery craze has finally reached the South with some excellent local brews.
- Following history trails is easy to do in the South and I learned more about the Civil War than I ever expected. Monuments are everywhere reminding of the horrors of that time. If you are into museums, there are many. Seems like anyone with an old collection of stuff can start a museum.



The roads in Southern Appalachia were the main destination of the trip and did not disappoint. Eastern Tennessee, Northern Georgia and Western N. Carolina have the best collection. The Blue Ridge Parkway is very scenic and would be great fun even if ridden at the speed limit of 45 mph. Unfortunately, cars travel closer to 25 mph and don't use overlook pullouts much. Fortunately, there are many

roads that cross the Parkway that are great fun. We spent a week exploring many roads in the area and could have spent twice that long.

You will also get some real world testing of your rain gear. You can see from the pictures of Fran why we carry duct tape. Had some snow, rain, torrential rain, high winds and beautiful skies along the way. All part of the adventure.

I recommend getting off the bike every hour or so to take in the surroundings and stretch out a bit.

We are not as young as we used to be. I had planned on 450 to 500 mile days but 350 to 400 is more comfortable. Phil's record of 1000+ mile day is still intact.



On the Tail of the Dragon, US 129

“You see things vacationing on a motorcycle in a way that is completely different from any other. In a car you’re always in a compartment, and because you’re used to it you don’t realize that through that car window everything you see is just more TV. You’re a passive observer and it is all moving by you boringly in a frame. On a cycle the frame is gone. You’re completely in contact with it all. You’re in the scene, not just watching it anymore, and the sense of presence is overwhelming. That concrete whizzing by five inches below your foot is the real thing, the same stuff you walk on, it’s right there, so blurred you can’t focus on it, yet you can put your foot down and touch it anytime, and the whole thing, the whole experience, is never removed from immediate consciousness.”

— Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*

Alps The Easy Way: Beach's Motorcycle Adventures' Alpine Adventure West Tour

Story and Photos by Bill Stermer

Reprinted with permission from Rider Magazine



A motorcycle trip in Europe's Alps is likely on your bucket list, but such a trip is daunting. You'll have to arrange for a bike, book hotels and, possibly, convince others to share the experience with you. Finally, if anything goes wrong during your trip, who would you call?

Well, traveling with a motorcycle tour company solves all those problems at once.

Last July, I took a Beach's Motorcycle Adventures tour of the western Alps that attracted 20 participants, 18 of whom were veterans of previous Beach tours; this percentage of repeat riders speaks volumes about these tours and the support that tour leaders Rob and Gretchen Beach provide for their customers. Most members of our tour group had flown into Zurich, Switzerland, and converged upon nearby

Baden. All were from the United States except for a delightful couple from New Zealand. When our bikes arrived, we were introduced to the BMW motorcycles we had reserved from Beach's rental fleet. Besides saddlebags, each was equipped with a GPS unit programmed so that we could ride one of several recommended daily routes or explore on our own. Rob instructed us on how to use the GPS units, and we were on our way. Our 12-day tour through Switzerland, France and Italy began with a Tuesday ride from Baden southwest to Ornans, France. We first passed through an industrialized area with a good deal of traffic, but the Europeans often utilize roundabouts rather than stop lights so we kept moving regardless. The tour book we were given was filled with all sorts of historical and practical information about our two or three daily suggested routes, along with a map, all loaded into the GPS. They were often on small, local roads we would not likely have found on our own.



Above: An impromptu cruise on Lake Lucerne revealed views of gorgeous homes, hotels and mountains. Left: In Gruyères, Switzerland, we were treated to a dinner of its famous cheese fondue in an outdoor setting. Inset: Dinners, such as this salmon plate in Moustiers-Saint-Marie, France, were universally impressive and delicious.



For weeks prior to the tour we had been receiving correspondence from the Beaches enlightening us to such considerations as foreign currencies, tipping, overseas phone calls, use of ATMs, credit cards, dress codes, packing tips and more. Then a month prior, here came a beautiful luggage bag for each participant, embroidered with the Beach's logo and our names! The strong suggestion was to pack no more (other than riding gear) than what could fit in this bag. On traveling days we would set this packed bag in the hotel lobby, then van driver Henri would transport it to our next hotel and the bag would be waiting in our rooms when we arrived.

Soon our trip settled into a pleasant rhythm. European hotel breakfasts usually consist of sliced meats and cheeses, with croissants and breads, plus tea or coffee. Breakfasts and our varied, delicious dinners were included with the tour price, except for two dinners when we stayed a second night at the same hotel. This allowed us to explore the local restaurants.

On our first Wednesday we rode to Talloires, France, where our hotel overlooked Lake Annecy and a distant castle across the water. This was followed by a free day on which most

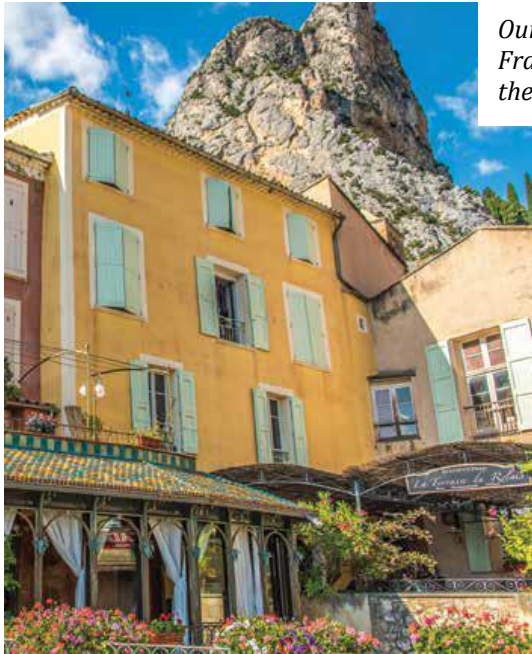
of the riders went off to explore the countryside, while our passengers stayed in town to explore the local shops.

As we gathered for breakfast Friday morning, we found Rob at a table surrounded by a stack of GPS units. We learned that the Tour de France bicycle race was passing near our intended route, roads were closed, and we would have to re-route if we hoped to reach our next hotel at a reasonable hour. Now Rob was hard at work programming a new route for our convenience.

Our route took us to Rencurel, France, passing through several tunnels and a stunning gorge in which the road actually undercut the mountain. When riding in the States, I spend most of my travel time in fifth and sixth gear. In the Alps, however, I spent most of my time in second and third gear. As a result, a 150-mile ride in the U.S. that takes three hours may take twice that long on the tight, twisty roads and first-gear hairpins of the Alps. Most of our riding days here were four to six hours, plus stops. Also, summers can be hot in the Alps and most hotels here—though delightful—do not have air conditioning.



The Alps involve very tight, technical roads that will test your slow-speed riding ability on multiple series of hairpin turns. Some were so tight that, on several occasions, I swear I could see my own taillight in front of me! For these tight mountain roads you don't need a big bike, but something more agile. I had requested a BMW R1200 RT for my passenger Frances' comfort, but had I been solo would have preferred perhaps an F 700 GS.



Our hotel in Moustiers-Saint-Marie, France, offered a charming view of the mountains.

That Sunday we came within sight of Moustiers-Saint-Marie, France, a town set high against the backdrop of a massive gray wall of rocks, the buildings painted a complementary shade. This was to be our stop for the next two nights, and we found our hotel situated next to a beautiful arched bridge, below which flowed a steep, narrow, powerful waterfall. Its pleasant whoosh would be the backdrop for our sleep those nights. Our next travel day, Tuesday, we headed for Auron, France, and were soon immersed in the sweet fragrance of lavender fields and the sight of acres of sunflowers shaking their yellow heads in the light breeze.

Now we began to enjoy the ultimate mountain experience as we rode over some of the Alps' highest passes. All the way up Cime de La Bonette, the highest at 2,802 meters (9,193 feet), were cars, motorcycles and bicycles, then a plaque at the top. I was feeling quite a sense of accomplishment for having ridden here...until I met a bicyclist from Chicago who had pedaled his way to the top.



On the next Thursday, from Sauze d'Oulx to Courmayeur, my co-pilot Frances and I encountered Rob and Gretchen who asked, "Do you want to have a picnic?" When we enthusiastically agreed they led us to a small specialty shop where we bought bread, sliced meats and cheeses. Then at an ancient bridge on the Col de l'Iseran (9,088 feet) we hiked past an old block building where, on a rocky, flower-strewn hilltop, Gretchen produced our repast as the far-off mountains shone with a necklace of glacial snow.

In Italy we were also fully immersed in the Alps experience, riding through small villages with streets barely wide enough for a car...or a wagon when they were constructed centuries ago. We encountered people strolling, flower boxes on windows from which emanated the fragrance of cooking or pipe tobacco. There is usually a war monument or two, sad reminders of those lost. Permanent glacial snow fields slump in the mountains, sending waterfalls rushing beside the road, sun so brilliant it can make you cry, rain so hard the pavement looks like a shag rug.



These tours allow one to interact with the locals on preselected routes. Rob led us to a restaurant in Courmayeur, where over dinner the friendly owner sang and mingled with our group like the uncle I used to have. I want to stress that the Alps with their narrow roads, hairpin turns and changeable weather can be daunting, but Rob, Gretchen and van driver Henri went out of their way to care for their tour participants. When one rider had a mishap four hours from the hotel, Rob and Henri drove out to retrieve him and his bike. When some had trouble understanding the GPS, Rob conducted a mini seminar in addition to the group seminar. When Frances needed a backrest, Henri rigged one up for her from a step stool and rear seat from the spare bike. Not confident finding your way around? You're invited to follow Rob and Gretchen to the next hotel.

In short, during our Alps experience with Beach's Motorcycle Adventures we were well informed and cared for, our bikes pre-arranged and we gained many new friends with whom to share the experience. With nearly 200 tours under his belt, Rob Beach has the details dialed in. And when we returned home, we found that Gretchen had posted a 23-minute video of our tour that we could show our friends via friends via the Internet. In all, a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Ed Note: You can view the video here on YouTube: [Alpine Adventure West 2018](#)