

The Occasional On-Line Magazine of The Northern Pan Riders

Pan Talk

December 2013

Pete's Precipitous Passes

Hard Knott and Wrynose

Brit Butt Rally 2013

Pink Balloon around Scotland



Snippets

Sorry Mate, Database,
Pinking

Tour of Spain
July 2012

Guess Who
Becoming a Pan Owner

Great Routes
Clwyd & Snowdonia

Workshop
Adding Power for Accessories

Pan Talk December 2013

Pete's Precipitous Passes.....	3
<i>Sunday 13 October 2013 - Hard Knott and Wrynose</i>	
Our Brit Butt Rally 2013.....	5
<i>Graeme and Sally take a Pink Balloon around Scotland</i>	
Snippets.....	9
<i>'Sorry mate I didn't see you', Service Database, Hot Weather Pinking</i>	
Belinda and Graham's Spanish Tour 2012.....	10
<i>Report of a 3 week tour in July 2012</i>	
Guess Who	27
<i>An NPR member shares his experiences</i>	
Great Routes.....	28
<i>Clwyd & Snowdonia - 162 Miles</i>	
Workshop.....	29
<i>Adding Power for your Accessories</i>	
For Sale.....	30
<i>Noticeboard</i>	

Many thanks to the members who have taken the time and effort to send in articles and photos.

If you have anything that you think would fit nicely into this quarterly magazine, then please send it to pantalk@northernpanriders.co.uk. I'm quite happy to do the layout, produce the maps.

All contributions reflect members' experiences and do not imply any recommendations. It is often useful to know what other people do and how they do it, but especially with the workshop and riding sections of PanTalk, it is up to each individual to make sure that they have the necessary skills and experience before they tackle something similar for themselves.

Pete's Precipitous Passes

Sunday 13 October 2013 - Hard Knott and Wrynose

A pretty grim forecast earlier in the week gradually changed its mind as Sunday approached. The ride to Skipton Market Place was damp, but the roads were drying rapidly - and they stayed that way for much of the day.

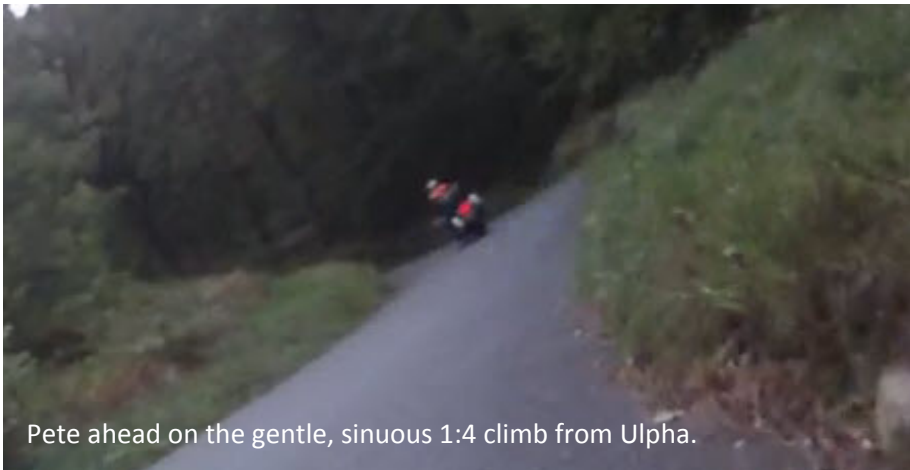
The run up the A65 to Devil's Bridge at Kirkby Lonsdale was unusually quiet and free flowing. Yes, there was traffic, but it didn't hold us up any, and the group stayed together remarkably well. Perhaps the poor weather forecast had put off the usual stream of Lake District day trippers that frequent this road during the weekends. Or maybe Pete has some magical powers that removes the traffic from the roads in front of him. We shall never know.

Sunday at Devil's Bridge. You'd be lucky to find space to find a place to put a pushbike, never mind 11 Pan Europeans, but we all rode into the car park, performed a semi-circular loop and lined the Pans up facing the road for the customary Northern Pan Riders inspection photo shoot. There were 3 other bikes in the parking place which is unusually prohibits cars from parking on a Sunday, and that was it. Tea, coffee and bacon butties were excellent. The new catering van in the field across the road looked on. He's been there a while now trying to compete with the well established hot food trailer, so I guess someone must buy from him. Today he looked rather lonely and out of place.



We continued on the main A590 towards Newby Bridge and then the excellent A5092 main road towards the Western Lakes as it weaves and undulates its way through Foxfield and towards Duddon Bridge. Here we turned off towards Ulpha and head up the twisty 1 in 4 hairpins alongside Ulpha Fell and over the top of Birker Fell. The views across to the coast are magnificent, apart that is, from the eyesore of the nuclear power station at Windscale, Calder Hall, Sellafield or whatever name the government is using these days in what appears to be a futile attempt to stop people remembering one of the biggest peacetime disasters this country has seen.

The group stream through towards Boot and Hard Knott pass:
Garry, Graeme & Sally, Alan & Jeanette, Paul & Lynne, Dick, Richard & Anne.



Pete ahead on the gentle, sinuous 1:4 climb from Ulpha.

Lunch at Boot Railway Terminus was impressive, after which the group head off to tackle the passes. Pete had reced the route the weekend before and knew of the dangers, the pothole that had developed into a ditch across the road, and the state of the tightest hairpin on the ascent of Hard Knott Pass. Sensibly, he stopped the group at the Roman Fort, and with a good view of any cars coming down the pass, set riders off one at a time to clear the hairpin without the risk of running into the back of each other.

Clutches, engines and brakes are all hot, although the descent is much easier. The tight, rubble strewn bends half way down are interesting, and the undulating rippled road surface dictates the need to brake gradually and in good time. At Cockley Bridge, Hard Knott Pass ends and Wrynose pass begins, rising much more gradually up the valley, leaving its final steep twisty bit to the top. The descent towards Ambleside is through narrow, walled country lanes and small hamlets whose houses appear to have been built in a hap-hazard manner. The road seems to have been squeezed in as an afterthought, the wall corners jutting out menacingly into the natural line through the tight bends.



Looking back at Hardknott Pass from near Cockley Bridge

A stop at the the BlueBird Cafe by the lake in Bowness and then head back home via the A590 and A65 Eastwards. ‘A grand day out Grommit.’ Many thanks Pete.



Our Brit Butt Rally 2013

Graeme and Sally take a Pink Balloon around Scotland.

This was our second Brit Butt rally having completed our first in 2012 when we came 33rd. This was an eye opener and a learning curve for future Brit Butt rallies, we wanted to improve our position.

The start was at the Premier Inn in Castleford for the 6th Annual Brit Butt Rally. We had to check in on the Friday where the bikes were inspected, along with all the paper work and documents for the bike. Once everything was in order I had to ride a pre set route to check the error in the odometer, and I returned to the Premier Inn to have my mileage recorded and entered on the Rally Master's spread sheet. This is so that every entrant's mileage is adjusted to a corrected distance. Normally when doing Iron Butt Rides you keep a log with receipts, fuel, and corners of your route, and your mileage is checked using a mapping software. It was then a case of making sure the bike was full of fuel and parked up in the secured area of the car park.

This year, 43 bikes had checked in for the rally, and we had been asked to bring a pink balloon (last year it was a bit of string 1.2m long that was checked for correct length). Our curiosity (along with everyone else's) peaked when we were told that the balloons could only be inflated after the 8pm meeting and had to be checked by the "official IBAUK Balloon Measuring Device".

After the evening meal which was laid on for all Riders and Pillions we all went to the 8pm meeting where the rally team handed out the rally bonus listings (if anyone would like to have a look at it let me know). The bonus points on the list spread all over the UK from the top of Scotland to the extreme corners of England and Wales. Last year's list had included some in France so we had packed our passports just in case. At the briefing Chris (the Rally Master) said that some of the locations had been blocked by snow the week before, but that they were clear now. Some involved riding down dirt tracks but so long as the dirt roads were hard packed and you can easily pass other cars on them you were on the right track.

Listed in the bonus book are 5 compulsory locations, which are all tidal, so you had to time your visit at low tide, luckily you only needed to visit one out of the five.

The pink balloon was a great topic of amusement and despair - it had to be blown up to a size that it would not pass through the IBAUK pink balloon measurer (a bit of cardboard with a large hole cut out). After bursting 3 balloons I got one to the correct size which was then stamped with the IBA stamp, we had to carry this with us, take photos of bonus location with the balloon on each day and bring the balloon back still in one piece. For completing this task we would get 5000 bonus points. Some ideas for doing this made you laugh, one guy had it packed in a cardboard box strapped to his bike others just tied it to their bikes which did not last long. You had to think outside the box - when I had ours checked I did not tie it in a knot but held it tight so as soon as I left the room I deflated it, I also still had a couple spare but not stamped so that I could safely put away the stamped balloon.

It was then up to our room where we had laid out our large map of the UK, two laptops and the sat navs plugged in. It was then time to put all the high value bonus locations on to the map and stand back and ponder. It looked as if 3 routes were available to us, but we thought that only 2 were viable. The easy option, which many of the first timers picked, would be to ride around the south of England and Wales and collect a lot of the lower value bonuses. It was a holiday weekend and having ridden the Southern route in last year's rally and spent ages in traffic, I picked the Northern route (plus we both love riding in Scotland).

This turned out to be the more aggressive option but with all the bonuses of a high score, missing just one bonus would mean us taking a big points hit, which in fact we did incur when we took a photo at Lecht Ski Station which should have been taken from the front of the ski station, we took ours from the side. One more lesson learned for this year that cost us 2500 points.

Map showing all of the bonus points and the route we selected



The third route was a red herring which took you on a large detour or put you on a ferry to the Isle of Skye.

I had planned our route: Newcastle was to be our first location, and this included one of the compulsory tidal bonuses. You have to read the bonus book for the rules regarding the photographic evidence. Sally had to be in all of our photos - one of the rules when you have a pillion with you. Sometimes the bike needs to be in the photo too or you have to be in the photo as well. I had entered all of the locations using Latitude and Longitude into one sat nav and I had copied all of the details of each location onto a piece of card as a back up. The second sat nav had the rally end location as its final location, with the first bonus location added as a way point. After each bonus stop I changed the via point to the next location, so that I always knew what time the sat nav could get me back to the start, wherever I was on my route. This was so that I didn't go over the deadline - something that would come into play near the end of the Rally, but not so much at the start.

It was then bed time everything ready for a 4:30am getting up time.

The bike was loaded with what we needed, sat navs fitted, both of us dressed and ready to go at 5:30am along with 42 others in the hotel car park. We had the final odometer checks and at 6am we were set off by Phil "Fazer Phil" Weston - the IBAUK President - at 10 second intervals.

For the next 36 hours we headed North, taking one compulsory 3 hour sleep bonus stop. We started with a quick ride up to the first stop on the A1, and knowing that we would be on slower roads later, we got our first balloon bonus over with by taking a photo along with our freshly blown up spare balloon.

Kielder and Lecht Ski Station

Our next stop was Kielder, so the sat nav was set and it was off again. The Kielder bonus stop involved a short walk to get the correct photo, and it was then back to the bike for a quick cuppa before heading up to Scotland and to the Lecht Ski Station. A nice 200 plus mile ride over some very nice roads. This was the area that we had been warned about as having had snow - and there were a lot of large drifts at the sides of the roads. We got to the ski station, checked the book, took the photo with Sally in but, as we found when we got back, we got it wrong and lost 2,500 points as a result. We won't be making that error this year - that simple mistake cost us dearly.

Altnabreac Station

Our next location was further north to Altnabreac railway station. This was a high value location and was linked to Rannoch station. We headed towards Inverness and then up towards Wick on the A9 before turning off to the left, and eventually onto a small tarmac road which soon turned into a forestry track. We now knew what the warning at the briefing was about.

We rode down this track for about 4 miles before coming to a gate with a lock on it. A small sign said to contact the game keeper for the code to get past this. We were lucky as two cars were parked close by and we asked them if we



The better part of the track to Altnabreac Station

were in the right place. Yes, it turned out that we were, but we had another 10 miles along the track past the gate to ride. We got the code from them and off we go again. What followed was about 6 miles of track like we had just come down, then it turned into 4 miles of rough pot holes. At one point, Sally had to get off and walk in front as some of the pot holes looked very deep. Not only that, we were riding alongside a loch which was very dark and black, like oil from the peat, and it looked deep.

After about an hour of riding we got to the station, parked the bike, took the photo and set off back. At the gate we met 2 guys who were riding together and we pointed them in the right direction. Not long after this the local farmer got annoyed with the few bikes going down this public track and parked his Land Rover to block the bridge. This became a nightmare for the Rally Master who was now taking calls from riders about this. One rider was trapped inside the gate. This is a risk when going for high bonus points - but is covered by the rules for Iron Butt rallies: 'when the road is blocked and no other way around, take the photo at the blockage'. Hmmmm - we spent 2.5 hours getting to this destination to get the same bonus as those who got blocked, we did moan at the marking, but rules are rules and the Rally Master has the last word, so we just had to take it on the chin..

Rannoch Station

Our next location was Rannoch station, to link with Altnabreac station in order to earn the extra bonus points for getting both. It was now starting to get dark as we got back on to tarmac road heading back down the A9, when in front we had 3 deer jump the anti-deer fence, run across the road and jump the fence on the other side. So much for anti-deer fences! As we headed down the coast road on the A9 Sally saw a stag standing on a cliff against the sky-line. She could not contain herself with what she had seen. We stopped at about 11pm for a bite to eat and drink at the side of road at Brora. We had now entered our rest stop window and had to take a 3 hour break sometime between 11pm and 6am. Last year we did a figure of 8 route stopping at home - big mistake as once in we were in our own bed it was hard to get out again. So much so, that we slept for 6 hours and not the 3 hours we had originally planned. This time we had planned to stay in an 'Iron Butt Hotel' - ie sleep at side of the bike.



We kept heading South, stopping to re fuel at Inverness where we met another rider who was sleeping in the Wickes car park. We thought it was a good idea until Sally found out that rats were about. So back on the bike heading South, we pulled off at Aviemore, found a park bench, parked up the bike up, got wrapped up and tried to get some shut eye. However we must have talked to every drunk in Aviemore ! We also got offered a bed by a very nice couple but by the time we would have got to their house, it would not be long before we had to be off again. So we stopped on the bench. We had plugged our heated jackets in and had left the engine running. Sally said to switch it off for the last 45 minutes, which we did. 45 minutes later it was time to go. No it wasn't. I forgot that although my jacket is powered through a relay, Sally's was powered straight from the battery. Yes, you guessed, the battery was flat, but Sally was nice and warm. We tried to bump it off but it was no good, so a quick call to the AA and 45 minutes later a quick jump start and we were back on the road to Rannoch station.

A nice early morning ride to Rannoch station, and a photo taken with Sally holding the balloon. Rannoch is at a dead end, so we rode the other way for 20 miles back towards the A9. We headed towards Perth, where we stopped for Breakfast.

Heading Back

Our next bonus was back on the Yorkshire/Lancashire border. This is where the second sat nav came into play as I could see that we could not get to this location and get back to Castleford before the deadline expired. So we had to scrub this location and head back to the finish. We stopped at Ferry Bridge to blow up the balloon with the stamp on, wrap it up in a tee shirt placed it in the top box for the last 3 miles to the hotel.

As we rode in we could see that a few bikes already back. You are not allowed to go to your hotel room until everything is checked, so we parked up, our odometer was logged, and it was now time to queue up to have everything checked: all of the paper work, the receipts and the photos, the balloon, our mileage and our fuel log. The second oops - we had made an error with times on the log by 3 minutes that cost us 1250 points from our possible 5000 fuel log bonus. We weren't very happy people - we had made errors last year, and had made a point to make sure that such mistakes

were not repeated this time. But our balloon passed, so that made us happy, as a good few failed to get their balloon back safely.

Next was to have our bonus photos checked. The camera memory card was handed over along with our log sheet: first bonus ok, second one ok, the third at Lecht no good, none too happy, when they told us why as that was 2500 point lost. A foolish error which will not be repeated this year (we hope). Fourth one was ok, sleep bonus ok, 5th one ok - this also gave us an extra bonus, so all looked ok.

It was all over with, so it was off to the bar to talk over the weekend with everyone else relaxing chilling and finding out where others had been. Then it was up to the room for a quick shower and back to the bar and wait for evening meal before all going to the rally room to find out how we had all done. As normal these went in reverse, I was pleased when it got to 32nd as that meant we had done better than last year's 33rd. On it went 'til 21st then it was us with a total mileage of 1114.8 miles and 28950 points - the highest placed couple. Well chuffed. Had we not lost the silly 3750 points it would have put us with 32600 points and in 16th position. The winner was Rob Roalfe who had completed 1445.20 miles with 45835 points. He has made this his own by having won all 6 rallies so far.

We have already entered for next year's rally. If reading this has got you interested, then get signed up - £70 at www.britbuttrally.info or get in touch with me. You may think it is mad but it is fun. Sally said that this was her last one, but once we got back home it was "When is the next one?" So much so, that we ended up doing the Brit Butt Light Rally (only 12 hours) and signed up for the 2014 Britt Butt Rally.

Graeme and Sally

Snippets

'Sorry mate I didn't see you'.

It's a well worn cliché, but it can actually be true. We don't see what our eyes see, we see only what the brain passes on, and sometimes the brain gets it wrong. Do you remember The Numskulls in The Beezer and The Beano ? A group of technicians inside the head of the owner, who's job it was to process the information coming in and pass it on to other numskulls to control the appropriate part of the body. Well, it seems that our own Numskulls don't bother passing on any information about objects that appear to be stationary. They concentrate instead on the moving objects. The problem is that something approaching you, head on, will appear to be stationary. The brain ignores it - especially if there are other objects in the field of view that are moving.

The result is that you simply do not see objects coming directly towards you, if they are against a moving background.

It's called Motion Camouflage, and there's a nice demonstration of it here.

<http://michaelbach.de/ot/mot-mib/index.html>

Alarming, isn't it ? Those yellow dots are there all of the time, yet they disappear until you move your head, or you get someone to move the monitor. Then - 'They came out of nowhere officer'.

So as you approach that car at the junction, are you riding almost in a direct line towards the driver ? If it's a straight road, then yes, you are. To the driver, you do not appear to be moving. So the driver doesn't see you at all because the Numskulls don't see the need to pass on the information.

So what's the solution ? Make sure that you cross the drivers line of sight as you approach. For a car emerging from a left hand junction, this means moving from the left hand side of the road towards the centre line. If you are already on the centre line then move to the left so that you can move back. For a vehicle emerging at a right hand junction, you need to move from the centre to the left. In fact, it comes natural to move away from a car emerging from a side road, and typically, you would be in that position anyway, to gain maximum visibility. But it seems that if the driver did not see you move, he or she may not have seen you at all.

Or you could just sound your horn !!

Access Service Database.

I have a database that I created for Microsoft Access a few years ago, and use it regularly. I tidied it up recently to make it a bit more user friendly, and it is available for anyone in the club if they would like it.

You record each service date and mileage, select the parts that have been attended to and select what work has been done from drop down lists. Add comments if you wish. As time goes by, the database fills up and it starts to become a really useful tool. The service intervals for each of the components are already built in for the ST1300.

Just enter the current mileage on the main form, and you can choose from a number of really useful printouts or displays:

- A full service history in order of mileage. Date, mileage, item serviced, what was done and any comments that you entered - for the entire history of the bike.
- A full service history for each individual part. So for example you can find out how many tyres you have had, when you changed them and at what mileage. The display also flags up when the part was last serviced, and displays a red warning if it is due for servicing again
- A 'When was it Last Serviced' report - which shows each part and shows when it was last serviced. It also shows the recommended service interval and displays a red warning if the part is due for service.

Obviously, I can't put the database here. If you want a copy, then email me at pantalk@northernpanriders.co.uk. The database is written for Access 2007, but will probably save for earlier versions. I have versions for the ST1300 and ST1100. Free to members of Northern Pan Riders.

Hot Weather Pinking ?

From new, my ST1300 used to 'pink' occasionally. A high pitched rattly sound coming from the engine when accelerating, or climbing steep hills - especially when the weather was hot. The ST1300 has anti-knock sensors, but they don't work well enough in these circumstances. Not on my bike anyway. The solution - give the petrol tank a treat and fill it with 98 octane fuel. It's more expensive, but the engine runs more smoothly, and the pinking disappears. Allegedly it runs more efficiently, and takes you further on a tank, but I have yet to be convinced of that.

Belinda and Graham's Spanish Tour 2012



Sunday 01.07.12 Ferry at Plymouth

There did not seem to be too many bikes boarding and there was plenty of space around the bikes for tying down, which makes a change. We left the helmets locked to the bike with a cable and took the tank bag and the back box inner bag up to the cabin. A quick shower and change then we found our way to the bar for a drink and relax before our evening meal.

That evening on the ferry was very pleasant. The main event was the Euro 2012 football final between Italy and Spain. Everybody on the ferry seemed to be cheering for Spain. Luckily Spain won, hopefully this will put all the Spanish in a good mood.



Monday 02.07.12 Santander to Salamanca

I slept OK, Belinda said that she hadn't. The crossing was quite smooth. We ventured on deck to be met by a nice bright morning. The breakfast should have been OK, nothing wrong with the food except that it was served on cold plates. Not good for French catering. We packed and then relaxed with a coffee until our arrival in Santander. We docked just after lunch and now it was warm and sunny.

On disembarkation, we had to wait whilst other vehicles were off loaded. We chatted to a young man, student I think, who had an old Yamaha 650 XS twin customised in flat tracker style. He planned to see a bit of Asturias before travelling to a farm in the Pyrenees area where he had a summer job. The bike had megaphones on so it was a bit deafening when he eventually got it started. He didn't seem to be very well prepared (the joys of youth) and said that he intended to get off the ferry and turn right to go west towards Asturias. We told him that if he did that, he would be travelling north and would end up in the sea. We advised him to follow signs towards Torrelavega before making his right turn. He got through immigration before us (why do we always end up in the slowest queue?) and we passed him on the A67 to Torrelavega so he was off to a good start.

We eventually left Santander about 13:30 Spanish time (the ferry had docked at 12:15) for the 217 mile motorway trip to Salamanca. The trip was fairly uneventful. The temperature at Santander was 21°C but rose to 28°C by the time we reached our destination. The A67 motorway climbs steeply after leaving Santander and the scenery is quite stunning. Eventually the motorway levels out with views of countryside and farmland, quite empty of any human activity. The motorway was also quite empty, great after the busy roads of the UK.

We had two stops for liquid refreshments. At the second we met a couple on a BMW1200RT, Steve and Bev. They were also going to Salamanca, however, unlike us they had rode down through France in two days covering huge mileages both days. Not our idea of touring but they were happy enough. They were heading for Portugal.



We arrived in Salamanca (a world heritage city) about 18:00 and eventually got to the hotel after the satnav had sent us on a dance around the city. This was due to road works and blocked roads. We checked in at the Room Mate Vega Hotel (we had stayed here before and can recommend it) and rode the Pan into the underground garage. After a shower and change, we headed for the Plaza Mayor (which is the main square in the centre of the city and close to our hotel). I wrote up today's entry with a view of the Plaza Mayor bathed in evening sun, cold beer in hand, with B people watching. The temperature had dropped to a pleasant 26°C, which was nice after our poor English summer, cheers!

Our evening meal turned out to be a bit naff. The tiniest lamb chops you ever saw. When they asked if it was OK, we said not, too small. They brought us another portion between us, not worth 60€ though even though the bottle of wine was good. We finished off the evening in the Plaza Major and listened to the traditionally dressed musicians from the university, "Tuna Universitaria". Salamanca University established the first "Tuna" around the eighteenth century, a tradition which has since spread around Spain, very entertaining.



Tuesday 03.07.12 Trip to Avila

We decided not to take breakfast in the hotel as they are usually overpriced buffets consisting mainly of bread, cold meat and cheese. We found a nice café close to the Plaza major where we had 2 fried eggs, bacon and coffee (well we are Brits).

We decided that as we had walked around Salamanca on our 2008 Spain tour, we would visit the spectacular walled city of Avila (another world heritage city) that we had passed on our way home in 2008. We packed shorts and trainers to change into when we got to Avila and set off from Salamanca. We took the A50, which is a fairly new motorway with little traffic, passing through open plains of cereal crops. The 60 mile journey rises up to Avila, which is the highest provincial capital in Spain at 1130 metres (3700 ft. which is higher than Mount Snowdon). Shortly after leaving the A50, the walled city came into view. The city is surrounded by 2 km of medieval crenellated walls and turrets built around the 12th century which are supposed to be the best preserved in Europe. We stopped at a viewing area overlooking the city, digital cameras in overdrive, before riding over the bridge across the Rio Adaja to follow the wall and parking signs. After one fruitless circuit in which we rode right through the centre of the old town, we retraced our route and parked at the first spot we had considered first time around. It was a good choice as it was close to the tourist information office. This allowed us to obtain a map of the town and change out of our bike gear and into our shorts and trainers in the wash rooms.

We had a cold coca-cola each at a Tabernas nearby before going into full tourist mode around Avila. We first visited the 11th century Basilica de San Vincente, which in my opinion (as a practising heathen) is the most beautiful church I have ever visited in Spain. Not big or grand, just very well proportioned and decorated. Better than the Cathedrals of Salamanca, Avila and even Seville.

Next, we took an audio tour of about one third of the spectacular wall to look down on the city both inside and outside the wall and learn a little of the history. Hard work in the sun but well worth the effort. Storks can be seen nesting on high buildings in the city.



After this we needed a break for a cold drink before making our way to the “Convent of Santa Teresa” which unfortunately was closed (siesta). Much of the history of the city is linked to St. Teresa, who was born there and was an important figure in the Catholic Church. Instead, we walked along the outside of the south facing wall. We could see the road on which we approached Avila back in 2008. We had ridden from Toledo (yet another heritage city), the view of Avila had left a lasting impression on us, hence this visit.

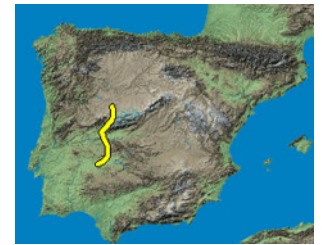
We walked around the wall back towards the Cathedral. On the way we did some bird watching, many hundreds of swifts which nest in the holes in the walls and fly back and forth catching insects. Apparently, holes were deliberately left in the walls for the swifts to nest in, whether this is true or why, I don't know. We also saw more storks nesting in easy view.

We entered Avila Cathedral, which is a medieval church-fortress and forms part of the city walls. Whilst not as beautiful as the Basilica de San Vincente it was still quite spectacular inside, unfortunately tourists are not allowed to take photographs inside. The museum section of the Cathedral contained some strikingly beautiful works of religious art including some huge illuminated choir books, paintings and gold craft including the Corpus Tabernacle.

All day, the temperature had been 32°C, very hot (little did we know what was to come later). By this time we had seen enough, after a last refreshment stop, we changed back into our bike gear and set off on the 60 mile ride back to Salamanca. What was noticeable was that the fields of crops were being sprayed with water over a massive area, no hosepipe ban here then.



On arriving at our hotel, we showered and changed and headed to the Plaza Major for a well earned beer (been on coca-cola all day). This was followed by a meal in a restaurant we found in one of the streets around the Plaza. Then back to the Plaza for the music. We ended up buying a CD from the university musicians, I suspect because B fancied the young lead singer who was selling them.



We breakfasted in the hotel this time, waste of money. On leaving Salamanca, the temperature dropped to 16°C even though it was a nice morning. A quick stop to put on the warm lightweight jackets that we carry to wear under our bike jackets when necessary. We took the A66, Autovia Ruta de la Plata that connects the north of Spain to the south. The motorway climbs up towards Bejar, there were brown tourist signs for ski resorts in this area which includes the Sierra de Bejar mountains.

Just after Bejar, about 80km from Salamanca, we left the motorway at junction 427 and made our way to Hervás to visit the "Museo de la Moto y el Coche Clasico", which translates as the classic motorcycle and car museum. Not an easy place to find. We followed the sat nav until the road seemed to peter out in the back roads of Hervás. I was about to get off the bike to ask some old Spanish guys who were sat on a wall for directions. Before I dismounted, one of these guys must of guessed our destination and pointed over a small bridge. We crossed the bridge until we found signs for the museum. A short but steep winding drive took us up to the entrance.

It is a strange place. I don't think it gets busy, partially because it is so remote and not located in a major city or town. It consists of several round and curved exhibition buildings and a round building where the people who look after the museum seemed to live. The museum is owned by one Juan Gil Moreno, whether this is his house or that of a caretaker I don't know. Unfortunately, we don't speak Spanish ("dos cervezas por favor" being my total vocabulary) and there was nobody who spoke English.



They seem to open when somebody turns up. We paid an entrance fee of €10 each and followed the signs to each numbered exhibition hall. It is mainly a motorcycle museum with over 300 old bikes, however, it also contains cars, trucks, carriages, even old prams. All the restored bikes were immaculate, the collection consisted makes I am familiar with, Moto Guzzis, Ducatis, Montesas, Bultacos Maico, Ossa BMWs, Triumphs, BSAs, Scott, Harleys and others. There were also many that I have never seen or heard of before, such as Lube, Sanglas, Cofersa, Soriano, Luxo, Monet, Sarolea. All the exhibition halls were spotless and the staff busied themselves cleaning and tidying.

It was quite fascinating and I would have liked to of spent more time there had we not got other things to see before our destination in Merida. Maybe we will make a return visit one day. I hope it keeps going, because I cannot see how visitor's entrance fees can possibly support it so it must receive a grant. In these difficult times for Spain that may not continue.

B managed to drag me away and we rode into Hervás for a coffee, only after inadvertently riding up and down every narrow street in the medieval Jewish Quarter of Hervás. It had warmed up to 26°C by this time. We rejoined the A66 for another 50km before exiting at junction 479 to take us towards the Monfrague National Park. We took the EX208 which starts off straightish in the direction of Trujillo, then becomes progressively more tight and twisty with many hairpin bends as it passes through the national park and crosses the Rio Tajo. Enjoyable riding with care.

Our first stop was at the Puente del Cardenal which is an arched bridge built in the 15th century spanning the Rio Tajo. It is supposed to be covered in water most of the year, presumably because of damming of the river, but was exposed at the time of our visit.

Riding around a bend below Monfrague Castle, we found that there was a viewing area adjacent to the road which overlooked the Rio Tajo and was in turn overlooked by the rocky cliffs in which many large birds of prey breed. We stopped and watched the aerial display of soaring flight as best we could without binoculars, fascinating. Unfortunately, our compact digital cameras don't take distance photos very well. The birdwatchers next to us had huge cameras and telescopes and were camped there for the day judging by their massive cool boxes. Note for next time, take some small binoculars. Birds found in this area include the Spanish Imperial Eagle, the Monk Vulture and the lighter coloured Griffon Vulture.





Like the Museum at Hervás, there is a lot more to see in Monfrague National Park and a revisit would be in order some time in the future.

After several more kilometres of bends, the EX208 became straight and empty passing through farmland full of olive trees and occasional fields full of black bulls. We headed through the small town of Torrejón el Rubio towards Trujillo 40 km away. It was over 30°C and we (me) had made the same mistake as we did when we toured part of Australia in 2009, we did not carry any water. If we had broken down, we would have been in a very uncomfortable situation as these roads were very empty.

Luckily, the fortress on top of the medieval hilltop town of Trujillo came into view. A stop for refreshment was in order. I wanted to see the Plaza

Mayor in Trujillo if I could, so I headed straight for it. True to form when riding through a medieval town, I became hopelessly lost. I did find the Plaza Mayor, although I don't think I should have been riding through it as there were no other vehicles there. I suspect I missed a no through way sign somewhere. We exited the Plaza Mayor quickly into a maze of small streets (a re-run of Hervás). By this time B was both thirsty and exasperated at my navigation and she ordered me out of the town. This would have been OK if I had any clue about which direction I should be going. Then I had a brainwave, as Trujillo was a hilltop town, if I went down at every junction, then I should eventually exit the maze of small streets. Great, we exited on to an open square and there in front of us was a café/restaurant with tables outside under parasols. Pretending that I had planned this, I parked up the bike and we visited the café for a cold drink or two and some tapas.

The final 85 km to Merida was all A5 motorway, which was good as we did want to see a bit of Merida in the evening as we were only there one night. We checked into the Velada Merida hotel, I parked the bike in the hotel car park and we had a cool beer. After showering and changing, we walked into the town where more cold beers followed. Merida has a lot of Roman history and has a Roman Theatre and Amphitheatre. Unfortunately, we had done a lot during the day and it was really too late to visit these monuments on this trip. We did walk past these on the way into Merida centre.



After Salamanca and Avila, the centre of Merida was less exciting and we were glad we were only staying one night. We saw the walls of the Alcazaba which is one of Spain's oldest Moorish buildings. Also we saw the Puente de Gadiana Bridge and walked along the park adjacent to the Rio Gadiana watching the rowers practicing racing along the river. We did have a really nice meal at a restaurant in the Plaza de España, which is Merida's town square.

Thursday 05.07.12 Merida to Seville

We left the Hotel Velada Merida late morning and headed off for Seville on the A66 motorway for 55 km. I had planned a detour from Alan Liptrot's route to get away from motorway riding. As it turned out, it was a very good plan. We left the A66 at junction 675 to take the EX101 through Zafra. It would have been nice to see a bit of Zafra, which is nicknamed "little Seville", however, today was going to be about the riding plus we were on our way to "big Seville".



The EX101 climbed towards the Sierra de Arcena mountains. It was fairly empty of traffic with some good twisty bits. The countryside was covered in olive trees and the temperature was a cool 20°C but sunny. We stopped in Fregenal de la Sierra for a "café con leche" at, surprise surprise, the Fregenal Hotel.

Here, the road changed its number from the EX101 to the N435 towards Galaroza. This 40km stretch of road must be a well kept Spanish secret and must also be one of the best roads that I have ever ridden. It consisted of sweeping bend

after sweeping bend. The road was wide single carriageway with a good, if not new, road surface and was pretty much empty as it passed through forest and hills. If Jeremy Clarkson is right about the funding for Spanish roads, then this must be the bit that I paid for. Fantastic!

At the top, at Galaroza, we turned left on to the N433. It was lunchtime, we could not see anywhere suitable for lunch in Galaroza, so we decided to carry on to Aracena. This road was also good fun to ride but a bit more traffic (still empty by UK standards). We spotted a sign for the "tourist village" of Fuentehieridos so we turned off the N433 for about 1 km to find it. It was a very pretty small village, white buildings covered in flowers, narrow cobbled streets. In the centre was a small square with 4 or 5 small bar restaurants around it.



After making our choice, we sat down for a cold drink and some tapas. The tapas were very good but I think we ordered too much. The problem with tapas is that it is a black art. Sometimes you are served a couple of really small dishes between you. So, the next time, you order a couple of dishes each and you are served huge portions. Plus, you never see the same dishes twice when travelling from one area to another. Obviously a Spanish plot to extract retribution for the Spanish Armada. We enjoyed a really pleasant break in Fuentehieridos.

After lunch we continued bend swinging down the N433 through a landscape of red hills, forest and olive trees. At one point cork oak trees with stacks of harvested cork between could be seen adjacent to the road. The road descended for about 70 km towards the A66 to Seville. The temperature rose from 20°C at the top to 33°C by the time we hit the A66.

After another short break for a cold drink, we joined the A66 for the final 30 km to Seville. The thermometer on the Pan reached 36°C on this stretch. We entered Seville, large busy boulevards to negotiate. This time, the sat nav took us directly to our Hotel Alcazar. After checking in and parking the bike in the nearby hotel garage, it was shower and change to head into Seville's historic quarter for a couple of cold beers. The Cathedral with its Giralda bell tower at night was certainly something to see. As we had eaten too much at lunchtime, we later had a small meal of tapas with a bottle of Spanish red wine.

Friday 06.07.12 A day at Seville

After breakfast in the hotel (it was included in the price), we returned to the old quarter of the city, first visiting the Cathedral (€8 each for a ticket). It was certainly very big and impressive inside. Particularly impressive was the Tomb of Christopher Columbus,



the Silver Altar and the vaulted ceiling with large mirrors at floor level set at 45° so that it can be viewed without falling over backwards.

Following a break for refreshment, we then decided to take a bus tour of the city as it was too hot to walk far. It was a "hop on/hop off" bus tour. We "hopped off" at "Plaza de Espana". What a magnificent building, a semi-circular brick building with its canal, fountains and bridges. Historic pictures in ceramic tiles depicting all the provinces of Spain are located in 48 alcoves around the inner wall. Digital cameras in overdrive again. After the bus tour, we had a light lunch, then decided to go back to the hotel for a siesta.

In the evening we took a horse drawn carriage ride around the old quarter of the city, which was very enjoyable. It also took us to the Plaza de Espana again but we didn't mind seeing it twice. The carriage driver took our

picture a few times and it was well worth it to see the city at a slower pace.

After this we sat at our favourite bar, opposite the Cathedral Giralda tower and had some drinks and tapas to complete a great day.



Saturday 07.07.12 Seville to Ronda

After breakfast, I brought the bike to the front of the hotel from the hotel garage. We checked the bike tyres for pressure and any damage, they were ok. We then finished packing and set off for Ronda, another deviation from Alan Liptrot's tour route. I have wanted to see Ronda for a while.



The satnav took us on a merry dance again as we tried to find the A376 out of the city. Seville has wide boulevards but many traffic lights, sometimes 4 sets in less than 100m. The temperature was climbing above 25°C before 12:00 hrs.

The A376 motorway becomes the A375 single carriageway road after 14 km. We stopped in the town of El Coronil for a coffee. It is always very pleasant to sit in the shade outside a café in an ordinary, non-tourist town watching the locals go about their business. It is obvious that this café culture is an important part of everyday life to the Spanish.

The A375 was a good road with plenty of bends to keep things interesting. The landscape was very pleasant with the Serrania de Ronda Mountains in the distance. We started to see quite a few Spanish bikers on the road, presumably because it was Saturday and they were out for a weekend ride like we do in the UK, except for them it is sunny and hot.

We joined the A376 for a while before turning off on to the A2300 (C-339) towards Zahara de la Sierra. Why two road numbers for the same road I don't know. The "A" prefix might mean that it is an autovia or an autopista, which it isn't, or it might mean that we are in Andalucia, which we are. The "C" prefix means that it is a secondary road which it is or it might mean that we are in Catalonia, which we aren't. So I suppose the 2 numbers mean that we are on a secondary road in Andalucia. Sorted (I think).



This road was excellent riding. The turquoise reservoir of Embalse de Zahara came into view with the beautiful Pueblo Blanco of Zahara de la Sierra clinging to hill. This "white town" is overlooked by a tower and the remains of Nazarit Castle, originally built by the Moors. We rode up the steep narrow streets to the centre of the town and found space to park the Pan on the main street. We found a table outside the Bar Nuevo under orange trees where we had a really nice lunch. We were sat adjacent to the Chapel San Juan de Letran at one end of the main street, at the other end was the Church of Santa Maria. It is not a big town but it does have pretty architecture and some stunning views of Grazalema Natural Park. We spent some time taking photographs then we continued towards Ronda.

The road from Zahara de la Sierra took us alongside the reservoir following its contours which created plenty of sweeping curves and tighter bends. At the end of the reservoir, the road rose up in a series of bends to join the A374. This wider road descends to the plains below Ronda with a fantastic series of sweeping bends and magnificent views and well deserves its green line on the Michelin map.

By now it had been 35°C for some time and we were glad to find the Hotel Maestranza in Ronda. I expected parking to be difficult in Ronda, however the hotel had its own car park underneath and even a section marked off for motorcycles. We checked in then decided to have a siesta as we were very hot. Hotel Maestranza claims to be a 4 star but it isn't and at £54 a night I wouldn't expect it to be. It is, however, a very nice 3 star and we were comfortable there for a couple of nights.



Later in the evening, we went out for a meal and a walk to get our bearings in Ronda. We found a nice restaurant in Plaza Teniente Arce (I don't know what it means but I sure it isn't rude) then walked through an adjacent park to a viewing point overlooking the plain below Ronda with mountains in the distance. We also had a look at the Puente Nuevo (New Bridge) which was built at the end of the 18th century. It is the historical monument that everyone associates with Ronda, spanning the El Tajo gorge that separates the old town (pretty old) from the new town (not quite so old).

We then ventured into the new town for a walk with the occasional stop for refreshment. By chance, we found that there was a religious festival taking place with a statue of Jesus being paraded through the streets accompanied by a marching band to the Iglesia de Santa Cecilia. This didn't even start until approaching midnight. Very colourful but it was our bedtime so we left them to it.

Sunday 08.07.12 A day in Ronda

We ate a leisurely breakfast in the town square under a blue sky and not too hot. Then we set off armed with cameras to see the sights of Ronda. I had to briefly go back to our hotel, which was very central, so I left B sat on a bench in the shade outside the Parador of Ronda Hotel. When I returned, B was being chatted up by a local pensioner. He didn't speak a word of English but seemed to be talking about

Bandoleros, Bandits who used to occupy the mountains between Ronda and Malaga. There was Museo del Bandolero in the old town which we did not visit, something I regret now.



There is a lot to see in Ronda, 28 monuments to visit on the official tourist street map and we saw most of them. If you visit www.turismoderonda.es/ this has them all. They are all worth seeing also the views from Ronda are spectacular. This took most of the day including a tapas lunch and refreshment breaks. When it started to get too hot, mid-afternoon, we returned to the hotel for a siesta. Later that evening we had a meal of Paella, which made a change, then returned to Plaza del Socorro for a drink and to watch the world go by. It was quieter than the previous evening, probably because it was Sunday.



Monday 09.07.12 Ronda to Roquetas de Mar

Another leisurely breakfast in Ronda before packing the bike and checking out of the hotel. The first job was to find a petrol station close by so that I could check the tyre pressures. Everything was OK and the tyres did not need any air.

We left Ronda on the A367 which is a good road with nice scenery dropping down towards Malaga. The road changes into the A357 and turns into motorway before Malaga. After a short break for a "café con leche" we entered the motorway fray above Malaga following signs towards Almeria. This initially took us along the A7-E15 motorway which cuts through the coastal hills giving stunning views over the coast. We left the motorway just after Nerja on to the N340. The N340 itself is a fantastic stretch of road as it twists and winds along the coast.



The next stop was to be a planned visit to La Herradura for lunch. La Herradura is located in a beautiful natural bay. We followed the signs to the beach front and parked the bike outside a restaurant. We took lunch on the restaurant veranda with one eye on the bike and the other on the view.

After a nice lunch, we continued our journey along the N340, which cuts inland near Motril. It then returns to run along the edge of the coastline before changing into the A7-E15 motorway near Adra. Unfortunately, the scenery from here deteriorates as the hillsides are covered in ugly large plastic greenhouse/ polytunnels. Presumably, this is where Spain produces fruit and vegetables on an industrial scale to sell to the rest of

Europe.

On leaving the A7-E15 to cut across to Roquetas de Mar on the coast, we passed through a large area covered with these greenhouses, not pretty. They use a lot of African immigrant labour and the poverty is obvious. I was a bit worried that Roquetas de Mar was going to be a dump, however, my fears were unfounded as the "Urbanisation of Roquetas de Mar" where all the tourist hotels are located was clean and modern. I suspect that most holidaymakers in Roquetas de Mar were unaware that they were enjoying their holiday adjacent to such grim poverty.



Our hotel, the Hesperia Sabinal, was very good, located on the beach front. Our room also had a sea view which was nice. Most importantly, the beach was excellent. This was what we wanted as this stop was primarily to give B a well deserved break after 2000 kms of riding in mostly 30°C temperatures plus much walking around historic towns and cities. After checking in, unloading and parking the bike in the hotel car park, it was a quick change, a dip in the hotel pool for me and a couple of cold beers to wind down. We had a walk in the local area in the evening to find a restaurant for a meal. A pleasant end to a long day.



Tuesday 10.07.12 A day at Roquetas de Mar

We had booked B&B at the Hesperia Sabinal Hotel, so we had a “full English” breakfast from the large buffet on offer. The first job was to find a laundry as we were running out of clean clothes and the hotel laundry prices were ridiculous. After a bit of a search, we found one local to the hotel where we could have everything washed and ironed for €8, bargain.

Once the laundry was sorted, we headed for the beach, rented a couple of sunbeds under a parasol and relaxed for the rest of the day. In the evening, we had a meal in a local restaurant before returning to the hotel to watch the (naff) entertainment.

Wednesday 11.07.12 A second day at Roquetas de Mar.

Another lie in followed by a late breakfast. We located a “hole in the wall” to top up the wallet, then we searched for the Tourist Information Office (which is strangely not located where most of the tourists are). I was looking for information about Almeria Province. I had decided that the intended visit to “Mini Hollywood” whilst on route to Garrucha on Thursday was not going to be practical. We were going to be fully loaded, there would be nowhere to put coats and tankbag or change out of bike jeans and it was going to be hot.

We decided to stick to the intended route and just visit Tabernas and Sorbas. I had expected B to want to relax on the beach again, surprisingly, she preferred not to. We decided to find a car wash to wash the bike off then ride to old Roquetas de Mar for a look around.

Trying to wash the bike in the car jet wash was like a Mr. Bean sketch. I managed to get the bike all lathered up with soap, however, I couldn't figure out how to get the wash lance to discharge water only to rinse it off. We had spent about €3 before we figured it out. Eventually, the Pan was returned to its normal splendour.



We rode into old Roquetas de Mar and parked up in the Marina car park. A quick change out of bike jeans and into shorts, then we had a cold drink at the marina café. Once refreshed, we walked around the small castle and lighthouse, then along the sea front for a while. Pleasant enough but not outstanding in any way.



We returned to the hotel for a quick dip in the hotel pool followed by a cool beer. Then it was time to collect the laundry, everything clean and pressed.

In the evening, we decided to have a Chinese meal for a change before returning to the hotel for the evening entertainment.

Thursday 12.07.12 Roquetas de Mar to Garrucha

We had breakfast, then packed and loaded the bike so that all we had to do was check out. A slight problem was that whilst we were loading the bike, 2 coach loads of package holiday makers arrived and there were huge queues at the hotel reception. I decided to be cheeky and marched past the queues up to the reception desk and said "checkout please". Luckily, the receptionist understood my situation and I was checked out immediately.



We set off and following a quick stop for fuel, we headed out of Roquetas de Mar. The traffic was quite bad leaving Roquetas and it was already too hot to sit in traffic queues. Eventually, we made it to the A7-E15 motorway where we could speed up to 120 kph. The air passing through the vents in the jackets cooled us down quite quickly and we were more comfortable.

After about 30 km we turned north on to the A92 for another 20 km, before taking the N340 to Tabernas. Immediately off the motorway, we passed the first of, I believe, 3 "mini-hollywood" theme parks in this area. We didn't stop at any. The road was initially quite winding, the scenery could only be described as quite barren with strange rock formations. We stopped in Tabernas for some cool refreshment, the Moorish Fortress in view on the hill as we approached.

We continued on to Sorbas. The landscape had become more scenic and less barren by this time. Sorbas looked quite interesting with houses hanging over the gorge of the Rio de Agua, which is why it is nicknamed "Cuenca Chica", little Cuenca. We would be seeing Cuenca later in our tour. Unfortunately, we could not ride into the town centre as it was market day and the roads were blocked off, so we settled for a cold coca-cola in a café on the edge of the town.

After Sorbas, we took a very winding shortcut back to the A7-E15 motorway. This shortcut road looked fairly new and in good condition with a mixture of tight hairpin bends and faster more sweeping bends that still doubled back almost 180°. We rejoined the A7-E15 for a short distance until the turnoff for Garrucha. The road gives a good view of Mojacar on the hill approaching Garrucha.

We found our hotel, Hotel Tikar, a much smaller establishment than all the previous accommodation that we had stayed in to that point in our tour, 6 rooms in total. It is a quirky "boutique" type hotel run by an American, Sean McMahon and his Spanish wife Beatriz de Lerma. They are very friendly and welcoming and it feels more like you are staying in someone's house or guesthouse than a hotel. It has a small but very beautiful garden where we took our evening meal on the first night accompanied by a musical duo. The music night was basically jazz and blues, which reflected the "artistic" atmosphere of this area close to Mojacar. Every table in the garden was taken so the restaurant food was obviously very popular. The food was prepared by Beatriz and was very good. The hotel was Michelin recommended.



After our meal, we took a stroll through Garrucha town. It seemed to have several very large Heladerias, so ice cream is very popular in Garrucha. Also most restaurants specialise in seafood as it is a fishing town.



Friday 13.07.12 A day in Garrucha

We had breakfast in the hotel garden, which was a very pleasant way to start the day. We got into conversation with a couple from Lichfield who were also staying at the hotel, although they had booked for a week or more. They were most concerned about our return route to Santander. They were convinced that the isolated roads that we would be travelling were infested with Bandits. This was news to me, although I had heard of touring motorists being "fined" by bogus police officers. Time would tell.

After breakfast, we made for the beach so that B could top up her tan. Garrucha has a really nice extensive beach of fine sand. Unlike many resorts in Spain, there was only one small area of parasols and sun beds to rent in front of a small bar/restaurant. Most of the locals bringing their own parasols and beach equipment with them, some dragging small trolleys loaded with everything you could possibly need. We would struggle to fit a portable parasol on the bike, so we had to rent.

We had a pleasant day on the beach, then in the evening we visited Garrucha town for a meal and a few drinks.

Saturday 14.07.12 Garrucha to Requena

Another nice breakfast in the garden, then we packed and set off for Requena. Quite a long distance to travel today, 360 km (225 miles). Initially a fast motorway run along the AP7 (Autovia del Mediterraneo) then the A30 around Murcia.



Murcia appeared to be shrouded in smog as we skirted around it in temperatures up to 38°C. Eventually we left the motorways behind and joined the N344, riding on fairly straight roads through fields of fruit trees. We stopped at Jumilla for a cold drink, a town that will go on the list (big list) of places to re-visit in Spain. We set off again stopping briefly to photograph the castle at Jumilla. At Yecla, we turned on to the C3223 to Almansa, this road was starting to include some nice sweeping bends and we started to see some motorcycles on the road which is always a good sign that we are approaching riders roads.

We stopped again in Almansa for a break and refreshment. In turning off the main road to the centre of Almansa, we managed to completely miss the castle in Almansa. Although it was obvious that Almansa was quite a tourist town with many signs for various attractions, a sightseeing horse and carriage and plenty of restaurants. Like Jumilla, Almansa wasn't mentioned in my tourist book and is therefore another candidate for my "Places to revisit" list which is growing steadily longer.



On leaving Almansa, we found ourselves heading in the wrong direction. On stopping to turn around, we were passed by a couple of police bikes heading in our intended direction. We didn't see them after that, although this is another sign that we are entering biker country (plus it was weekend). We were heading on the N330 to Requena and sure enough the road was starting to get really interesting, particularly after Ayora. Plenty of twisty bits.

The scenery had also changed. The large fruit plantations had been replaced with pine forest interspersed with vineyards. We also seemed to be climbing and the temperature dropped to 34°C.

Ayora, Jarafuel and particularly Cofrentes were all very picturesque towns, each built on a hill with a castle on top. It was

disappointing that the new N330 that I was on did not have anywhere to stop to take a picture of Cofrentes. The view of Cofrentes castle as we crossed the river Jucar was quite spectacular. I have since found out that I could have taken the old N330 that goes right through the middle of Cofrentes and would have allowed me to take plenty of photos. The scenery just before Cofrentes was only spoiled by a large nuclear power station in one of the valleys.

After some enjoyable riding we arrived in Requena. Finding the Hotel Dona Anita was quite a challenge as it was located in Plaza Del Alborno in the maze of the old town. The hotel was of a very traditional design but proved to be very comfortable once we had managed to change our room for one with two windows to give us extra ventilation. All the rooms had air con but we prefer not to use it if possible. After a shower and change, we set off to explore.

Requena has a modern part with a wide tree lined avenue and also a small old town. The town originally had Moorish origins, however, more recently it was one of the largest silk centres in Spain and is now the main wine town in this part of Valencia. Quite a historical jewel. In the evening we ate in the restaurant of a hotel on the opposite side of the square and enjoyed a bottle of local wine.



Sunday 15.07.12 Requena to Cuenca

We slept well at the Hotel Dona Anita until 08:00, when the church bells were rung near to our hotel. One of the drawbacks to choosing a hotel in the old town. A shortish ride to Cuenca, 135 km (84 miles) which should allow us to see the sights of the city.



First we had breakfast at the hotel, which for a change was quite nice. Tea, tostada with ham, cheese and preserves and a large jug of orange juice. We packed and checked out about 10:30 am. After a few more photographs in the town square, we set off and found a way through the maze of narrow streets to exit Requena.

We joined the A3-E901 motorway just outside Requena for the first 30 miles. After about 20 miles, the landscape either side of the motorway changed to forest and the motorway started to twist and turn downhill. Then, suddenly, the motorway spat us out on to a bridge across the Embalse de Contreras reservoir with stunning views on either side. It takes your breath away when you are not expecting it.

We left the motorway shortly afterwards to take the CM211 (presumably CM is for Castille La Mancha, the penny is beginning to drop) towards Almodovar del Pinar. The CM211 seems to be a new road, perfect surface like we don't get in the UK. It climbs with some long straights to a ridge at about 1000m that has a long line of wind turbines stretching west to east. The temperature had been about 26°C when we left Requena but this dropped to 23°C en route to Cuenca, which was nice change from 30+.



At Almodovar del Pinar, we joined the N320. As it was Sunday, there were many Spanish bikers out for a Sunday run. They were heading down the N320 in the opposite direction. With hindsight, I should have stayed on the A3-E901 motorway longer and took the N320 near to Motilla del Palancar as it may have been a more interesting road than the straight CM211. In fact the squiggly line on the Michelin map indicates this.



Certainly after joining the N320 the ride became more interesting as this twisting road swept through pine forest as it increased in altitude. The pine forest gave way to a more rocky landscape covered in scrub at higher altitudes. Then it started to drop down cutting its way through a cultivated landscape varying from fields of cereal crops to vineyards until we reached Cuenca. We found our hotel Alfonso VIII eventually, checking in then parking the bike in a secure, pay, underground public car park as directed by the hotel, as it did not have its own car park. It was expensive but better than leaving the bike in the street as the Spanish drivers did not seem too fussy about how they parked.

We quickly changed into our tourist uniform, shorts and tee-shirts and set off in serious tourist mode to explore Cuenca. Cuenca has a fantastic historical area with so much to see. As everyone associates the Puente Nuevo as the symbol of Ronda, then the symbol of Cuenca is Las Casas Colgadas, the Hanging Houses of Cuenca. We entered the old town across the Puente se San Pablo footbridge which crosses the Rio Huecar River at a dizzying height. This is no mean feat given B's fear of heights and rickety bridges. The bridge crosses to the old town adjacent to the Hanging Houses, so is the best place to photograph then from. The bridge itself is dwarfed by some of the buildings in the old town.



Cuenca was originally a Moorish stronghold but was conquered by Alfonso VIII in the 12th century. There are statues and many references to Alfonso around the city including our hotel. We found the Plaza Major and the Cathedral, then took a walk around the historical area as suggested by the ladies in the tourist information office. Much taking of photographs with obligatory stops for liquid refreshment followed. A good day followed by a meal in the rooftop restaurant of our hotel to finish.

Monday 16.07.12 Cuenca to Calatayud

We got up fairly early and had breakfast in the hotel. We packed and took everything to the hotel entrance. After checking out, I had to take the hotel receipt to the secure public car park to prove that I had paid the overnight charge. Once I had retrieved the bike, I rode the short (200m) distance to the hotel and loaded up.



We left Cuenca about 10:00am on the A40 for about 6 km before turning off on to the N320 for the start of 200 km of fantastic riding roads with views to match. After about 30 km of the N320, we turned off on to the CM210. The road passed through differing landscapes and rock formations as it wound its way through the Serrania de Cuenca. We stopped for a coffee at a small town called Beteta. It reminded me of a small Mexican village depicted in Western films. The town hall had a small clock tower on the roof, above which was an arched metal frame supporting two bells, one above the other.

After coffee, we continued along excellent roads through the Alto Tajo Natural Park. If the name sounds familiar, the Rio Tajo that flows through Alto Tajo Natural Park also flows through Monfrague National Park 350 kms west. Tajo is the Spanish spelling, it is also known as the Tagus. It is the longest river in the Iberian Peninsular. The source is near the Alto Tajo region and it flows west to meet the Atlantic Ocean as the Rio Tejo at Lisbon in Portugal.



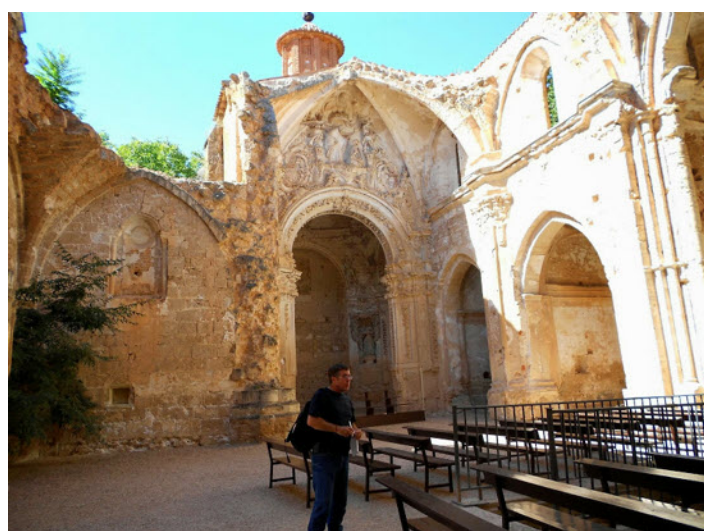
We carried on, only to ride around a bend and be confronted by a spectacular castle on a hill overlooking a town. This was Molina de Aragon. We had to pull off to the side of the road to take photographs. We continued into the town for lunch only to find that there was a fiesta in progress. The town was full of people from the local area all dressed up for the occasion, also marching bands and music. It all made lunch that bit more interesting.

The road climbed out of Molina De Aragon and the scenery changed to fields of cereal crops. A check on the satnav revealed that we were riding across a plateau at about 1200m above sea level. The

temperature was about 28°C. Unfortunately, about 20km before our planned stop at Monasterio de Piedra, the road surface changed for the worse. From being quite good, it became like a washboard, the road narrowed and the centreline disappeared. I later found out that this was because we had crossed from Castilla la Mancha into Aragon (a bit like crossing from the Scottish Borders into Dumfries and Galloway where the road quality takes a nosedive). We took it easy as there were many blind bends and the locals were not averse to charging around these bends in big 4x4s straddling the centre of the road.

Eventually we reached Monasterio de Piedra. As we were fully loaded we transferred as many items as we could from the tank bag into the panniers and top box. We then locked the almost empty tank bag and the helmets to the bike with the cable we carry for that purpose. Fixed both the disc lock and the bike chain around the front wheel (we wouldn't normally use both but the chain had to go somewhere). With the cameras and small valuable items in the small rucksack, we set off to explore.

When we bought the tickets for the park and the monastery, the attendant on the desk indicated that we could leave our bike jackets behind the counter in the shop whilst we explored. This was great as it was 30°C and we still had to wear our reinforced bike jeans and boots.



Monasterio de Piedra is a complex in 3 parts, a monastery, a hotel and a park. The monastery dates from the 12th century and was built on the site of a Moorish castle. The monastery was sold and the site was developed in the 19th century. The park is formed from the natural waterfalls and caverns that are part of the Piedra River that flows adjacent to the site with man made paths and landscaping.

We set off first around the park. We followed the set path that guided us around and under waterfalls and rivers and through cool caves and grottos. Very pleasant. Also, we were almost continually shaded by trees such that



walking with our bike gear on was not too bad. After a brief stop for refreshment, we started our tour of the Monastery. This was quite interesting as it included many displays showing how the monks lived and worked including a museum dedicated to wine production in the area.

It was now 18:00 hrs, so we retrieved our bike jackets from the shop and returned to the bike. Small panic moment when G thought that the lock was broken on the bike chain, which would render the bike immovable. Then B calmly pointed out that G was using the wrong key, only after taking several photographs for evidence. In my defence, the disc lock and the bike chain keys are very similar. We re-packed the bike again and then left.



Almost immediately we rounded a bend to be confronted by the village of Nuevalos with the Embalse de la Tranquera, another photo stop. A really nice view. We completed the final 26 km to reach Calatayud.

The hotel we had booked was the Monasterio Benedictino Hotel. It was built on the site of a Monastery and included the original architecture into the new hotel building with stunning effect. When we initially stopped at the public car park adjacent to the hotel, a young local police officer advised us that we could not leave the bike there as there was going to be a market there the next day. He advised us to park the bike on the wide paved area directly in front of the hotel. It would never happen in the UK.

As it was late, 19:00 hrs, we checked in, showered and went out to eat. Later, we actually found an Australian bar and sat at a table outside so that I could have a pint of Fosters. No disrespect intended to the excellent Spanish beers, just a change.



Tuesday 17.07.12 Calatayud to Logrono



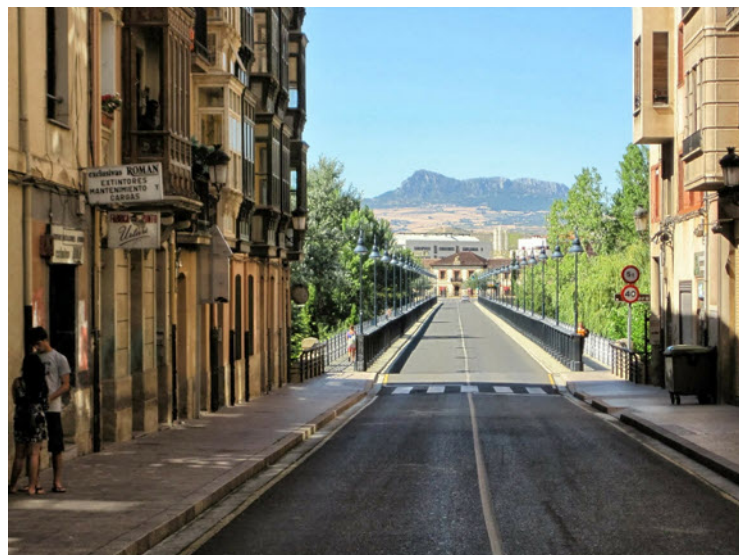
We slept well despite the best efforts of the market stallholders to get us up early. We had breakfast in the hotel as it was included in the price but it was ok. Once packed and checked out we found a garage to add air to the bike tyres. The rear was a couple of psi low, however, neither showed any signs of damage. We set off for Logrono, initially heading for Soria on the N234.

It was already about 28°C at 10:30 am. The N234 started off well, with sweeping bends cutting through a landscape of low hills surrounded by farmland. We stopped for a coffee at the town of Villaroya de la Sierra. As usual in these small towns, the local pensioners sit on benches or low walls chatting and watching the world go by. Usually segregated into male and female, never mixed. I suppose it beats daytime TV.

We continued and the scenery changed to fields of cereal crops stretching either side of the road as far as you could see. The N234 also changed and became as straight as a straight thing with straight bits on. This went on for 60 km until we reached Soria.

At Soria we rode into the centre. Purely by chance we found a parking space in front of the Red Lion Pub of all places. Inside the pub, the walls were lined with photos of old English scenes. We sat at a table outside so that we could keep an eye on the bike which was still loaded with the tank bag and helmets. It seemed strange to have soft drinks and tapas sat outside an English pub in Spain.

After lunch we left Soria. The N111 to Logrono is a seriously good biking road which cuts through mountains and forest for 100 km just getting better and better. My only complaint is that there were not enough places to stop to photograph



the spectacular scenery. About halfway, where the road crosses from Aragon into La Rioja, there is a tunnel about 2 km long. As we approached the tunnel, the air temperature was 28°C. The tunnel was initially pleasantly cool. Then the temperature dropped and carried on dropping to 14°C. The cold air cut through the open vents in the bike jackets, we were getting chilled and the tunnel seemed to go on forever. Then daylight appeared and we emerged back into 28°C sunshine again. The road was also descending and the temperature rose to 35°C by the time we hit a straight section of road 15 km before Logrono.

We found the hotel in Logrono, the Carlton Rioja, 4* and very nice. The road in front of the hotel was called the "Gran Via Del Rey Don Juan Carlos I", a wide long boulevard that was being resurfaced. A road worker

directed us to ride up on to the pavement and ride through all the pedestrians for quite a distance to the hotel underground car park entrance. I felt self conscious doing this, however, the Spanish did not even bat an eyelid. Then I realised that cars also needed to do this to reach the hotel. In the UK you would get a ticket before you had rode 10 yards.

It was only about 15:00 hrs so we changed and laden with cameras, sunglasses hats and a street map, we set off to discover Logrono. Logrono, the capital of La Rioja, turned out to be surprisingly interesting, there was plenty to see in the old quarter and the modern part of the city was pleasant with attractive park areas.

Logrono also offered quite a unique culinary adventure. There are 2 narrow backstreets in different parts of the old quarter that specialise in different food types. One street contained many small traditional tapas bars. The other street seemed to sell what can only be described as traditional Spanish "fast food" often served through hatches in the shop front. We selected a small tapas bar in the first street where we had one dish of patatas chorizo (or patatas riojanas) and one of frijoles blancos chorizo. Both were spicy and delicious. These were served with bread also we had 2 drinks each. The bill came to €6, absolute bargain. The old quarter had quite a buzz to it in the evening, Logrono is definitely a good overnight stop.



As the ferry was not sailing until 21:15 hrs, we could afford to take our time and have a late start. We decided not to have an over priced breakfast in the hotel but to take breakfast in the old town. We took a walk in the morning sunshine and found a café selling breakfasts of bacon, eggs and tea for €4. Once full, we returned to the hotel to pack and check out.

Again we had to ride the bike along a pavement full of pedestrians to get to the road. We left Logrono on the AP68-E804 for about 40 km before taking the exit for Haro to pick up the N232, it was already 35°C. The road was fairly empty and pleasant for the first 50 km. After Ona, however, it became very twisty as it cut through what can only be described as a



rocky canyon. Large birds of prey soaring off the cliffs. Infuriatingly, there was nowhere to stop and take photographs. These tight bends continued for about 26 km. The road surface then degraded for the next 20 km with patches of newly laid tarmac, the road was obviously being upgraded. Quite a few tight hairpin bends on this stretch also so care was needed with the new road surface.

As it was still hot, 35°C, I was hoping to find somewhere to take a break. B was feeling the effects of the heat which was unusual. I didn't think we would find anywhere, then we rode into a very small village called Condado where we found a small, friendly café/bar. We spent a good hour sat in the shade of vines growing on trellis above the verandah drinking cold shandy watching the locals come and go.

We continued on to find that the road improved greatly after 20 km at Soncillo. Wide sweeping bends took us up to about 1000m above sea level via the Puerto del Escudo mountain pass. I recognised the road and realised that we had rode this section 4 years previously when we had stayed in Burgos. The N232 that we were riding had joined the road from Burgos to become the N623. This is a good road, however, four years ago it rained heavily, today the weather was excellent so we could enjoy the scenery. The temperature was still 35°C as we climbed, then as we started to descend the other side, the temperature dropped noticeably to a fresh 29°C and continued to fall slowly to 22°C. A nice change from the heat earlier in the day.

The final 50 km down to Santander are very picturesque, the road twisting and turning as it lost elevation quite quickly passing through Alceda, Ontaneda, Corvera, Puente Viesgo and Vargas. I was a bit worried about fuel as I had let it run a bit too low and the fuel gauge had been flashing 1 bar for quite a while. Luckily a petrol station came into view and I could fill up and breathe a sigh of relief that we were not going to run out and miss the ferry. That would have been embarrassing and expensive.

At Santander we found the newly relocated entrance to the ferry terminal. Once checked in and parked up, we walked into Santander for a meal. Loading was due to start at 19:15 hrs and it was about 17:30 hrs so we had plenty of time. The cabin tickets we were issued also operated the security gate to allow us in and out of the terminal, very efficient. We found a nice café/restaurant and enjoyed a pleasant meal before returning to the terminal.

The loading was very frustrating. All the bikes were moved fairly early in the proceedings through passport control only to be parked further along the quay where we sat and watched almost every other vehicle being loaded. When it was our turn, we were crammed into every little space possible. Unfortunately, they do not allow enough room around larger bikes and moving around to unload was very difficult.

Eventually we found our cabin, changed out of our bike gear, then found the bar for a much needed beer. The evening entertainment was very good and we had a good smooth crossing.

Thursday 19.07.12 Santander to Plymouth

We were late getting up, 9:00 am Spanish time (our current body clock time) which was only 8:00 am ship time (UK time). I had a full breakfast, poor B could not face eating. B was not feeling too good and had to go back to the cabin to lie down whilst I sat in the lounge area writing up this journal. Eventually, B felt better then it was just a matter of relaxing until we reached Plymouth.

Disembarkation was not too bad as the bike was pointing the right way. It was a short ride to the Holiday Inn on Plymouth Hoe where we had booked a room for the night. We checked in then I rode the bike around to the basement car park. After a quick shower and change we left the hotel and set off walking across the Hoe towards the Barbican area. There were a large number of people parking their cars on the Hoe. An attendant explained that there was a "Music of the Night" concert in the Citadel staged by the 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery musicians.

We carried on walking to the Barbican and decided to eat at the "Admiral Macbride" pub. We both ordered small portions of steak and ale pie, mash and veg. We were glad we didn't order the large portions. Excellent grub, friendly service from ex-navy lads, well recommended. We then carried on along the Barbican to "Bar Rakuda" where we sat outside under patio heaters, it was much cooler than Spain. We enjoyed a couple of drinks listening local musician Richard James, good entertainment.

Later, we walked back to the hotel. As we were passing the Citadel, as if on cue, there was a firework display just to finish off the evening. A good night.

**Friday 20th July 2012**

We packed up and checked out of the hotel without having an expensive breakfast. After checking the tyre pressures, we rode to Sainsbury's on the A38 leaving Plymouth and had a full English each. We filled up the tank and set off for home, a boring but dry ride up the A38, M5 and M6. We were glad to be home, adventure over for this year.

Text and Photos - Belinda and Graham © 2012

Relief and road maps of Spain:

Source - Data Spain. <http://www.maps.data-spain.com/> - Used with permission and with thanks.

Guess Who

An NPR member shares his experiences.

My motorcycling history is probably much like that of many other riders. Nurtured as a youngster with the rhythmic heartbeat thumping of my father's single cylinder Panther 650 combination, I grew up with motorcycles as the normal form of transport.



Post teens, the Honda C90 was my runabout, 'borrowed' from my parents; the later BSA Bantam D14 was a non-running gift from my sister, requiring a strip down and re-build from the engine upwards. I loved it, and its quirky fixed ignition system which produced either no acceleration or horrendous pinking on inclines. But after the C90, this was a real bike, with a clutch lever !

The early BMW-style Cossack Ural M66 and sidecar was my Dad's suggestion after I was roly-polyed down the road by an errant car driver. Thankfully, my beloved Bantam bounced in a different direction. The Ural was crude, powerful and with a kick-start which could lift me clean off the ground, it spent much of its life on the brilliant roads around Snowdonia, where I lived at the time. A shaft driven 650 twin, I was able to ride with a sidecar long before passing my test.



The Yamaha XS650 with its Squire 2-seater sidecar was my first brand new bike - a necessary purchase after the press-fit crankshaft of the Ural decided to unpress itself. The Yamaha echoed the style of the Triumph Bonneville, but without the oil leaks. The ride was superb, the Squire sidecar handled brilliantly, the dual disk brakes worked well and the twin cylinders were beautifully balanced, especially compared to the agricultural Ural.

My old bikes and their model numbers are probably just irrelevant detail to anyone else, but for me they reflect my growing enthusiasm, an increasing mechanical awareness and eventually, the need to accommodate a young family.

But the demands of the growing family took over in the early 1980s and the bikes reluctantly gave way to cars. The young boys grew into remarkable young adults, and after 25 all too brief years with them, the house, the fridge and the bank balance were returned slightly the worse for wear into our control once more. Motorbikes had grown up in the intervening period, and my hunt for a large low revving, torquey tourer with fairing and shaft drive was on. We'd had enough looking around for the day, and we'd seen the Yamaha Diversion 900 and the Honda Deauville, but the one that I really liked - the ST1100 - was way beyond our budget. On the way home, an "Ok, just this last one then" side-street showroom presented itself. Looking a little uncared for and sporting an expression that said 'Buy Me' was a 28,000 mile 1996 ST1100. It happened to be £5 short of our maximum budget. How could we walk away ?

We've now owned 3 'Pans' - The ST1100T, The ST1100AY and the current ST1300A6 - the last two of which I ran side by side for 18 months - and have covered a total of 150,000 miles on them to date. My back-packing days are long gone, but we still love lightweight camping and the STs have done us proud over the years, lugging our camping gear around England, Scotland and Ireland for 3 weeks at a time, and taking us on many hotel based adventures in Spain, France, Austria and Portugal.

The beautiful Wineberry Red ST1100T on our first of many motorcycle tours of Scotland, overlooking Skye from the 'Ring of Bright Water' scenery above GlenElg





Great Routes

Clwyd & Snowdonia - 162 Miles

North Wales has some brilliant roads for riding, and I understand that it may be possible to ride them when they are dry. I lived in North Wales for just one year, so I am not able to confirm whether or not this is true. This route takes in some of the more well known roads and throws in a few that are easily missed, unless you happen to know about them.

It's a circular route, so it is possible to begin anywhere, but I'll start on the by-pass near Mold at the top right of the circuit where the A494 crosses the A451, and head off in an anti-clockwise direction.

The A451 heads North West and then South West to Denbigh. A brilliant road, which unfortunately has attracted too many motorcyclists, and speed limits in various places have been necessary additions. A shorter alternative from Mold to Ruthin along the A494 is also an excellent start to the ride, with wide open roads, interesting bends and a few wide hairpins thrown in.

From Ruthin, ignore the satnav pleas to stay on the A494 towards Corwen, and instead go straight on at the mini-roundabout leaving the town. This is the B5101 and doesn't look that promising at first, weaving past the church and up a heavily wooded road, but it soon opens out and adopts a lofty position on a broad ridge. This must have been an early route, staying up high, avoiding the squelchy valley bottoms. Whatever, it is 14 miles of sheer delight - riding or driving.

Down to Cerrigydrudion, a short blast along the A5 and then turn right onto the mountain road towards

Denbigh. Not much traffic on here usually, and it is exposed to the elements, but it is a great ride. Turn left along the B5382 and A548 toward Llanrwst and Betws-y-Coed.

The A5 West to Capel Curig past Swallow Falls and Ty Hyll (The Ugly Cottage) is interesting enough. The A498 takes you once again across open moorland, past the Pen Y Gwryd Hotel and over the small pass towards Beddgelert. Snowdon dominates the view to the right.

The twisty windy road from Beddgelert to Llan Ffestiniog is pleasant, although the tree cover tends to keep the road damp. The satnav helps to pick out the B4391, an inconspicuous minor road immediately after a railway bridge which takes a more direct line towards Bala, ignoring the fact that there is a small mountain in the way. 'Direct' maybe isn't quite the word: the road ducks, dives and weaves its way across typical Welsh moorland on a reassuringly grippy road surface, eventually meeting the A4212 from Trawsfynydd. From here the road is open, fast and takes a wide 180° sweep around the Northern end of Llyn Celyn before winding its way down the hill towards Bala.

From Bala, perhaps the most well known section of the A494 takes us 10 miles towards the A5 to Corwen and eventually to Llangollen. The A494 can be taken just before Corwen - it is a delightful road - but Llangollen takes us towards the Horseshoe Pass and the Ponderosa Cafe. From here the A5104 whisks us back towards Mold.

A mapsource file of this route is available from pantalk@northernpanriders.co.uk

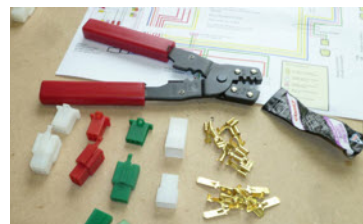
Workshop

Adding Power for your Accessories.

The quartet harness is an add-on that can be bought for many Honda bikes. Part number 08A30-MCS-801, currently £27.00 + VAT. It comes as a 9-pin male connector which plugs into its female counterpart half way down the steering head behind the left hand fairing. It provides 4 additional power outlets - a 9 pin female connector, and 3 x 3 pin female connectors of different colours, which can be used for powering a number of devices, up to a limit. The connections use fuses C, F and J. But other devices on the bike also use the same fused supply, so care needs to be taken about what devices you add. Connecting a SatNav or radio would be OK, but if connecting an outlet for heated gear, you might need to do a bit of maths. However, Honda's own heated grips plug into the quartet harness, so the main wiring harness must be able to support one lot of heated gear.



The 3 pin connectors are colour coded and provide different supplies depending on the position of the ignition key. White provides 12v only with ignition; red is live with ignition or accessories; ditto black - but black uses the third pin to provide an always live connection. The 9 pin connector provides the same outputs as the red and black connectors, but also duplicates the power which is sent to the left and right indicators.



To make use of the harness, you really need to get hold of some Hitachi style connectors, such as those available from <http://www.sgmotorsports.co.uk>, and a crimping tool.

How much power do you need ?

This depends on what it is. A headlight bulb is easy to work out at 60 watts. School physics tells you that Watts = Volts x Amps. 60 Watts = 12 Volts x Amps. The headlight therefore uses 5 Amps, because $60 = 12 \times 5$.

This means that the cable to the bulb must be capable of carrying at least 5 amps. Given the choice between 5 and 10 amp cable, choose the 10 amp. Fit a fuse that will blow before the cable overheats. Not 5, it's not enough. Somewhere between 5 and 10, if you can get one. If not a 10 amp fuse will do. Not more than that though. The idea is that the fuse blows before the cable's capacity is reached.

A heated jacket is difficult to estimate. Get a multimeter and measure the resistance in ohms across the two connecting pins. Mine reads 4.5 ohms. More physics: Volts = Amps x Ohms. 12 volts = Amps x 4.5 ohms; so the current rating is around 3 amps ($13.5 \text{ volts} = 3 \text{ amps} \times 4.5 \text{ ohms}$). Power from the battery can exceed 12 volts with the engine running.

If you are adding something that draws a lot of power, then you need to consider adding a relay. A relay is name for a switch which allows larger currents to be turned on and off than would otherwise be possible. It sits between the normal switch and the accessory to be powered. The switch turns the relay on. The relay turns on the larger current to the accessory. It 'relays' the signal from the switch to turn on the accessory.

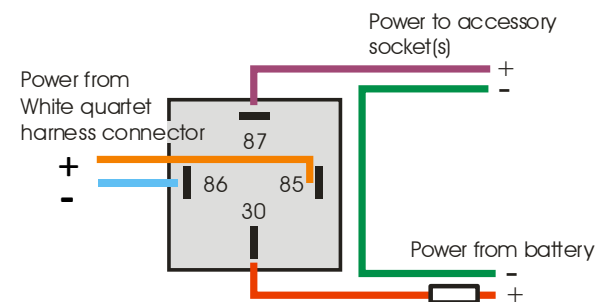


Wiring a relay for heated jacket sockets.

The method I use for having sockets for heated gear which turn on and off with the ignition.

A typical 25 Amp relay looks like the picture on the left, although I prefer Honda headlamp relays. They have 4 spade connectors which are numbered on the underside. Check, because some relays

have a slightly different layout. Connectors 85 and 86 are connected to the internal coil and are used to switch on the relay. If you connect these to the positive and negative posts of the battery, you will hear the relay click on. Remove, and the relay will click off. You can connect 85 and 86 to the connections on the white 3 pin quartet harness - the relay will turn on and off with the ignition, and will turn off when the key is turned into the accessory position.



The 'click' that you hear is the relay switching on the connection between contacts 30 and 87. 30 is connected to the positive power supply, with a fuse placed as close as possible. 87 is connected to the

positive contact for the accessories. The earth / negative (green) lead does not go through the relay.

I prefer to take power from the main fuse, rather than from the battery. I use thick cable which is taped and sheathed between the bike's main fuse and my own 15 amp fuse. If there is a problem in this short stretch, I want the main 60Amp fuse to blow rather than melt the cable. There is a real fire risk in any lead connected to the battery, until it reaches your fuse, and it needs to be protected. After my own 15A fuse, the 15 amp cable is laid in protective conduit, taped and cable tied to prevent movement and abrasion. 15 Amps cable and a 25 amp relay is enough to power both heated jackets and a heated seat.

For Sale

Noticeboard

Honda ST1100 Pan European

1991 Honda Pan European ST1100M

Reg - J50PAN
67,000 miles



MOT to June 2014

NEW Bridgestone Tyres (front & rear)

Full stainless exhaust system

New Honda rear shock absorber

Full luggage system

Original screen

Taller screen currently fitted

1.5" handlebar risers

Autocom rider to pillion radio

Radio & CD player

Tom Tom Rider full system with spares

Bike lifter – home made, with jacks

Taxed to March 2014

Originally £2,200 - negotiable

Here is a link to more photos -
<http://goo.gl/UDQeO>

CONTACT John

eccup@btconnect.com - home email

0113 2302303 – work phone
07860 645183 – mobile



All notices are placed for the convenience of our members. The Northern Pan Riders Club does not accept any responsibility for items listed.

If you intend to purchase listed items, it is your responsibility to check the ownership of the goods, that the goods are of satisfactory quality and are fit for purpose.

PanTalk is an occasional magazine produced by and for members of Northern Pan Riders - a motorcycle touring club for owners of Honda ST1100 and ST1300 Pan European Motorcycles. It is published electronically on Issuu.com. A search for 'Pan Talk' or 'Northern Pan Riders' will lead you to other copies of the magazine.

Suggestions for articles are most gratefully received, and we are always looking for tour reports; your favourite roads; technical articles; simple modifications to your bike; your own brief riding history.

Photos help make articles more interesting about 1280 pixels wide works best for me. I can produce a map of routes taken using gdb (mapsource / basecamp) or gpx (log from satnav) format.

Please contact pantalk@northernpanriders.co.uk with suggestions or articles

Many thanks to:

Belinda and Graham for sharing their text and photos of their trip to Spain in 2012

Pete for leading the Lakeland Passes Ride, and his photos.

Graeme and Sally for their write-up and photographs of the Brit Butt Rally

John for Snippets, Routes and Workshop contributions

A Member for the Guess Who text and photos

Further Information about the club, can be obtained on our website:

www.northernpanriders.co.uk

Previous copies of PanTalk can be found at:

www.northernpanriders.co.uk/npr2/

UK Maps reproduced in this document are obtained from the Ordnance Survey website and are used under the terms of the Ordnance Survey and Open Government Licence for Public Sector Information.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010

