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ROAD of ADVENTURE

NUMBER 5



THEY WRITE FOR YOU

POZNAŃSKI SZWENDACZ



MAŁA I DUŻY W PODRÓŻY



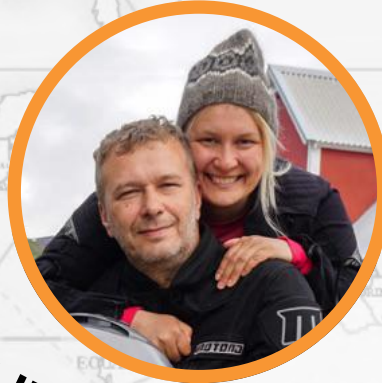
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FROM THE EDITOR

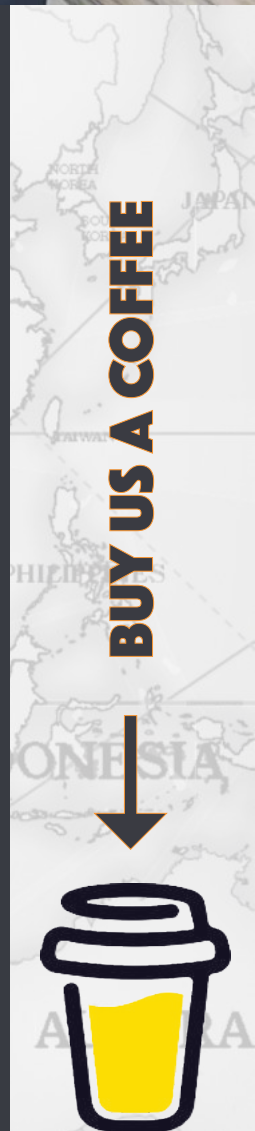
Hola!

This is the fifth issue of our magazine, and this time it's different because it was entirely assembled in a hotel in Veracruz, Mexico. Here we met wonderful people who reassure us that the brotherhood of motorcyclists is present all over the world. Special greetings to Jorge and Jesús of MotoClub Veracruz, whom you can see in the photo above, and who on Mexican soil welcomed us as if we were family. Next month right here on the west coast of Mexico there will be an international rally of Motorrad clubs, if time permits we will also be there and report back to you. Of course, whoever has the time and inclination should come! More information can be found at <https://motoclubveracruz.com/xxv-convencion-veracruz>

In the September issue we take you on a tour of Europe. We will visit Bulgaria, Romania and Italy, and in the UK we will visit the largest rally of female motorcyclists in the world. In the Traveler's Workshop you will learn a little about tents, how to choose them, what to look out for. But we start with an interview with Henrietta, who has been traveling in Africa for two years, probably known by you as For The Love Of Wheels!

Drive safe!

Karolina Kowalska



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Cover photo: Henriette Thiim

PAGE 6

What's wrong with... FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS

INTERVIEW

Author: Szymon Zobniów



PAGE 16

Romanian roam

ROMANIA

Author: Poznański Szwendacz



PAGE 28

A country where their "no" means our "yes"

BUŁGARIA

Author: Mała i Duży w Podróży





PAGE 42

Under the sun of Tuscany

ITALY

Author: DomiADV



PAGE 58

World's Largest Female Biker Meet 2022

United Kingdom

Author: ADV Hoppers



PAGE 68

Tent for a motorcyclist

TRAVELER'S WORKSHOP

Author: Karolina Kowalska / LifeOnMoto

FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS

HENRIETTE, BETTER KNOWN ON SOCIAL MEDIA AS FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS HAS BEEN TRAVELING THE WILDERNESS OF AFRICA FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS, DISCOVERING THE CULTURE AND TRADITIONS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE. READ HOW HER ADVENTURE STARTED.

Photos: HENRIETTE AKA FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS
The interview was conducted by SZYMON ZOBNIÓW





First, our traditional question, what were your beginnings? Where did your adventure with motorcycles begin?

When I was 23 I got my motorcycle license and bought an old Yamaha DT250MX that was used in the Danish military in the 70's. At that time, I was alone with my passion, I had no motorcyclist friends and I didn't belong to any clubs. Later in my thirties, my boyfriend also began to dream of two wheels. I was supportive of him and started riding with him on a Honda CBR1000. One day as we were watching the TV series "The Long Way Round" about Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman's motorcycle trip around the world. I asked my boyfriend: "Hey, how about doing something like this too?" And to my surprise, because he was not one of those people who makes decisions quickly, his answer was a short and convincing "Yes." :) So we agreed on a date and started looking at maps of the world and made the decision to travel from Alaska to Argentina by motorcycle. The next three years we prepared ourselves for

the adventure. We saved money, bought camping equipment and motorcycle gear. We learned how to fix a flat and took off-road courses. Finally in 2011 we flew to Alaska to pick up two bikes in Fairbanks and began our 8-month trip through the Americas and travelled 40.000 km's through 15 countries. It was an amazing adventure and upon returning home, although happy, I was also exhausted. Tired from the life on the road, and riding every day. My boyfriend, on the contrary, was hungry for more adventures. We parted our ways then and although we continued to be best friends, each of us followed our hearts. I wanted to go back to work and buy a house.

Then how did it happen that you are back on the road again?

It wasn't until about 5 years ago that the road started calling me again. This time I didn't have anyone to go with, and I was actually happy to go alone. As I started looking for possible

destinations and browsing maps of the world, my eyes kept returning to one continent - Africa. I had no experience traveling in Africa and it scared me, but I had to come to terms with my own fears and accepted the destination. I decided to ride from Copenhagen to North Cape, then come down the west coast of Africa's to South Africa, then ride back to Europe along the East coast of Africa. I started to prepare but 2020 came and suddenly the whole world was shutting down as the pandemic hit. I thought to myself "Henriette! You have to move now, don't wait before it's too late! You won't regret it!" So, on August 1, I got on my Honda CRF250L and hit the road, knowing that no matter what happens it will still be a great adventure. I might be stuck somewhere and I might have to change my route, but so what? You can find cool motorcycle routes everywhere. The first leg of the journey was riding up Norway's coast to North Cape, a very lonely experience. The first week I didn't speak to a single person. I spent the nights mostly in the wild, occasionally only visiting supermarkets to replenish my food supply. The covid restrictions put a damper on people's desire to approach a traveler. It didn't bother me, because to some extent I was also afraid of getting sick and avoided contact with other people. I reached North Cape and, as previously planned, headed south towards Africa. Although there was strict Covid rules in every country, they didn't stop me at any border. I saw cars being stopped and checked, but no one wanted to check a lone woman on a motorcycle. I only wondered how I would manage to get to Africa with the closed borders, but when I got to Italy it learned that there was a ferry to Morocco from Genoa. And I almost made it.... almost, because, unfortunately, it wasn't possible to get a PCR test, and before I knew it, Genoa went into full lockdown. I had to "escape" to the south of Italy and then to Sardinia, where it was still possible to move around without restrictions. After three weeks I tried again to get on the ferry from Genoa to Morocco, and this time I succeeded. I don't know if it was luck or misfortune that I got to Morocco, because two weeks later that country closed its borders and now I was stuck there with my motorcycle. Nobody knew how long it was going to last, and I ended up spending 6 months in Morocco and Western Sahara before I was able to leave the country again.... But hey, being stuck in Morocco with an adventure bike, is not the worst thing that could happen to me! I was free to move around within the country, and decided to make the most of it.

As you mentioned you are now riding a Honda CRF250L, did you prepare the motorcycle yourself for this trip?

Yes, except for an upgraded suspension, I prepared everything myself. As I was going to travel alone, it was important to me, that I got to

know the motorcycle as well as possible. I wanted to be able to deal with breakdowns myself. Of course, there are things that I can't do myself, but I always try to learn as much as possible from the mechanics and insist on being there in the garage with them. I do all basic service myself including changing chain and sprockets, oil change, air filter, brake pads, tires changes etc. It means I know the bike, I know the tools. This makes me feel confident, knowing how to do most repairs on the bike. Especially in places, where mechanics can be a bit rough and disassemble and assemble the motorcycle in dust and sand. Then I will be there to ensure we clean and grease before



assembling and make sure we take good care of my Honda. :) And I quite like to get my hands dirty and really enjoy the mechanical part.

What about the rest of the preparations? In retrospect, now that you're on the road, would you have prepared better? Did you do anything differently?

No, I think everything is as it should be, in my opinion I am very well prepared for this journey. The first big trip from Alaska to Argentina taught me a lot, Maybe the most important of which is to trust, that things will be all right. It is impossible to plan everything and prepare for everything – even more so during Covid. It is



INTERVIEW
FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS



important to be able to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances. For example, in Zambia, where I arrived during the rainy season, it was hard to make any plans. The roads could be washed away and impassable because of the rain, so you have to be flexible and open to changing your plans from day to day. But I guess my whole expedition is like that, forcing this flexibility on me. Covid and traveling during it makes it impossible to plan anything, you never know if you're going to be stuck somewhere for an extended period of time, as I was in Morocco. But sometimes these changes work out for the better. I didn't plan such a long trip, I thought I would travel much faster, and now this slow traveling suits me much better. Staying with people for a while, getting to know them, learning about their culture, customs and daily life gives me incredible satisfaction. Besides, it's the local people, whom I've met and get to know more and more every day, who show me the best roads or places to visit that I didn't know existed and would probably never have seen if I didn't spend some time with them. Some days I just do 100 kilometers and in that time, I stop several or a dozen times, to meet and talk to the local people.

And how do people in Africa react to you as a woman traveling alone on a motorcycle?

They are very surprised, but also very kind and interested in me. They always ask me why I travel alone, if I'm not afraid, and if I have children. They are very curious, but in such a nice way, and often worried about me, I don't feel threatened in any way. And at the same time they also talk a lot about themselves, their lives, their traditions. And sometimes they can't understand the differences between their culture and mine. Especially in Africa, people are very surprised that I don't have children, they can't comprehend it, because it's unthinkable in their society.

On the first trip you traveled with your boyfriend, now you travel alone. Do you prefer to travel alone or with someone?

Both. I really like to ride alone, but I also travel a lot in the company of local motorcyclists. In Africa, the motorcycle community is very open to travelers. And in some countries I have been completely adopted by the local motorcycle community as I went from one motorcyclist's



FOR THE LOVE OF WHEELS

home to another. Everywhere I am received with great kindness. The motorcyclists in Angola was totally amazing. Angola is a country that very few travels to. There are very few campsites or facilities for travelers. But there are motorcycle clubs in the larger cities, with wonderful people who welcomed me into their homes and showed me their country in a way I would never see it as a normal tourist. But I meet such people on my way all the time and am very happy to travel with them. Recently I met Sonja from South Africa in Livingston in Zambia. She and I took off together to some very remote parts of Zambia. In Morocco I was invited to a wedding, and later on returning from it I found great mountain roads, but I was afraid to go there alone, so I talked to the local guys I met, if they would like to accompany. So they went with me by car and for 5 days we roamed around these beautiful and remote parts of Morocco. Therefore, it is hard to answer your question. I like to travel

alone so that I have the freedom to choose my destination, the next stop on my way, but I also like to travel with others once and a while and really enjoy the company.

And when you travel alone are you not afraid? Is it an accident or an encounter with wild animals?

Not really. An accident can also happen to you at home, you can die in your garden. I always try to ride at 80%, I don't ride at night. On top of that, I always take good care of my motorcycle, because my safety depends on its condition. I have a satellite locator with an SOS function, which means I can get help anywhere in the world. And my family can see where I am at all times. As for wild animals, of course you have to be careful, something can always happen, not so long ago in the place where I stayed last night a hippopotamus killed a fisherman. But the







most dangerous in Africa is getting malaria. That's why I always carry malaria tests and anti-malarial pills. If you have signs of fever and you are far from a clinic it is better to use them, because your life may depend on it.

Do you plan daily routes as you travel?

Mostly not. I am spontaneous and in my opinion there are too many beautiful places that you can miss if you go from point to point. I do have a map with places I would like to visit, one such place I really want to visit is Lake Turkana in northern Kenya. It is a place where three countries meet: Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia. Driving around Lake Turkana you pass through all three, but there are no border crossings between them. When riding in a new country, I ask local motorcyclists or locals if there are places worth visiting and roads worth driving or sights worth seeing in the area. This way you see places not described in guidebooks, or on the Internet. Sometimes you have to plan and then I do. When we drove through Kafue National Park in Zambia I had to plan the route because it involved permits to enter the park, full of elephants, lions, buffalo and other wildlife.

Do you go every day? Or do you take days off?

I have many days off. :) And that's probably why I don't get tired of traveling. Sometimes I drive a few hundred kilometers to stay in an area for 6 or 7 days. Then I drive another 300 kilometers to make a stopover for 3-4 days, and so on. During those stops, I make short trips, usually with local motorcyclists that I met, visiting nearby attractions. That's why my trip takes so long, after a while, this trip actually became my current life. Every once in a while, you have to stop, wash things, take care of paperwork, so this is no longer an expedition, it's life on the road, and such a life may not be fast, but it's beautiful. :)

Any pleasant or unpleasant adventures you have experienced during your travels?

Let me start with an unpleasant one. I was in Angola at the time, in a small and very basic guesthouse. The same bucket of water was used for washing and as a toilet. In the morning I drove down to the harbor to shoot footage for German television. There were a lot of fishermen and locals, which is typical of African ports. They surrounded me and were curious, as is normal. There was one young man who seemed nice at first, he wanted to take a picture with me. After a while, he became pushy, started asking about my passport, approaching me in such a way as to fence me off the motorcycle. I felt very uncomfortable. I wanted to get away from there as quickly as possible, I squeezed my way to the motorcycle, and he started to prevent me from putting on my helmet. Then I really started to get scared, especially since I could smell alcohol from him. Fortunately, I was finally able to put on my helmet and gloves, start the motorcycle and ride away from there, but the situation scared me a lot. On the other hand, pleasant adventures I don't think I can count, almost every day something wonderful happens, something memorable, such as riding on the

endless sandy roads in Namibia. Dangerous, remote, challenging, beautiful and giving a shot of adrenaline. That day I felt as if I was made for motorcycle riding, even riding the sand was a real pleasure. Riding this road will always remain in my memory, such motorcycle heaven. I didn't ride, I flew and I was high on the ride. :) Besides, every encounter with the local people now brings back wonderful, unforgettable, pleasant memories.

Finally, maybe you have some advice for our readers who, like you, would like to embark on a long journey?

Trust the world, the world is much better than its reputation. Of course, there will be bad people everywhere, but my experience is that you find more of them in civilized Europe than in "wild" Africa. Don't worry, just go. Things will be all right. What is supposed to go wrong will go wrong anyway, the important thing is to learn to adapt to changing circumstances and enjoy the journey and life on the trail. Don't be afraid to talk to the people you meet, be kind to them and they will return the favor.

Thank you very much for the interview and we wish you safe, wonderful and unforgettable adventures on your travels.

Thank you :)





EUROPE
ROMANIA





ROMANIAN ROAM

ROMANIA - THE COUNTRY WHERE ALL MOTO-TRAVELERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN. AND YET... FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS IN THE SADDLE, I AVOIDED ROMANIA FROM AFAR. THE EXCUSES WERE MANY. FINANCES, TIME, FAMILY, LAZINESS. HOWEVER, THIS YEAR I STOMPED MY FOOT LOOKING ENVIOUSLY AT THE PHOTOS OF OTHERS. IT WAS IMPERATIVE TO TICK THIS COUNTRY OFF MY LIST OF TRAVEL DESTINATIONS. AND, SINCE I MAKE DECISIONS QUICKLY IN THE SPRING THE HANDLE FELL - I'M GOING!

Text and photos: Mikołaj Szarański



EUROPE
ROMANIA



Zamek Spiski z ekipą



Zamek Spiski

Despite having an adventure-type moto with nice tires, I had no ambition to navigate the wilderness itself. I just wanted to spend a few days in the saddle, winding up the kilometers. Since I had licked a little in my professional life on the subject of "event organization", I concluded that I would arrange the entire route myself. The destination points were, of course, the Transalpina and Transfogaraska. However, something had to be added to it. A few weeks later, the general outline of the route with dozens of points appeared. I was as happy as a child. I would finally get to see Romania. I will be able to see a bear and nail a pawn with Count Dracula.

While preparing, I figured it would be fun to share my impressions of the trip with someone on a regular basis, but not through popular social media sites, but simply in person. Thanks to a post on the V-Strom Poland group, Wiesław from Gniezno and Darek from Wrocław joined the expedition. I had known Wiesław before, while I met Darek only on the trip. Already the first kilometers together confirmed that we formed a harmonious team.

The first day is always a typical cross-country route. From Poznań through Wrocław to Ružomberk in Slovakia and the first planned overnight stay. Plus the first beer together. The first concrete chats. And good thing too, because it turned out that my plan was too ambitious for the length of vacation I had. After the third Slovakian brew, the whole trip was redone. Something along the lines of we drive until we get bored. We watch what's on the way. And overnight stays will be embraced.

The next scheduled stop - Satu Mare. Along the way we managed to hook up with Spiski Castle. This is an unusual building located on a rock towering over the city. It was built at the turn of the 11th and 12th centuries and covers an area of about 4 hectares.



Najlepsza pizza w Satu Mare



The giant building lies 634 meters above sea level, and is one of the largest castle complexes in this part of Europe. Today, much of the castle is destroyed, and only parts of the walls have been rebuilt. In 1993 the site and its surroundings were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inside the castle there is a museum.

Despite the beautiful building, we gave up on a detailed tour of the fortress. The reason was mundane - 38 degrees,

roasting sun, and we were in full swing. A commemorative snapshot and on toward the appointed destination.

Towards evening, without any obstacles or stops at the border, we reached Satu Mare. We had an overnight stay in the central point of the city, so we quickly made our way to the market. We took a photo at what is probably the tallest building in the city - the City Hall - and it was time to eat. I don't mention other attractions, because the evening was

overshadowed by the best pizza I've ever had until now. The pizzeria with the magical name "Ali-Baba" does not encourage, but believe me - there is no better pizza in this part of the world. Although maybe we were just hungry.

Romania will not discover itself. We chose the northern route towards the merry cemetery. No road trip to northern Romania is complete without a visit to the small village of Sapanta. The village is located in the Marmara Mountains, about a dozen kilometers south of the border with Ukraine. It is there that one of Europe's strangest necropolises - the so-called Merry Cemetery - is located. Wooden tombstone crosses in blue, carved scenes from the life of the deceased and epitaphs - often satirical and humorously telling the story of the deceased's life, this is how the place can be briefly described. The originator and creator of the first "cheerful" tombstones was a carpenter - Stan Ion Pătraș, who began carving them in this form in 1935. The carver decides on the drawing and text that will appear on the tombstone, but beforehand he tries to consult with the family so that the content best characterizes the deceased. Today there are almost 1,000 such tombstones here, and the uniqueness of the place is evidenced by the fact that in 1999 the Merry Cemetery of Săpânța was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

From the cemetery we took the route to the south. It is worth taking road 18 - good asphalt. A lot of hairpin turns. One can go wild within reason. And so we slowly approached Romania's next "must see" attraction - The Turda salt mine.

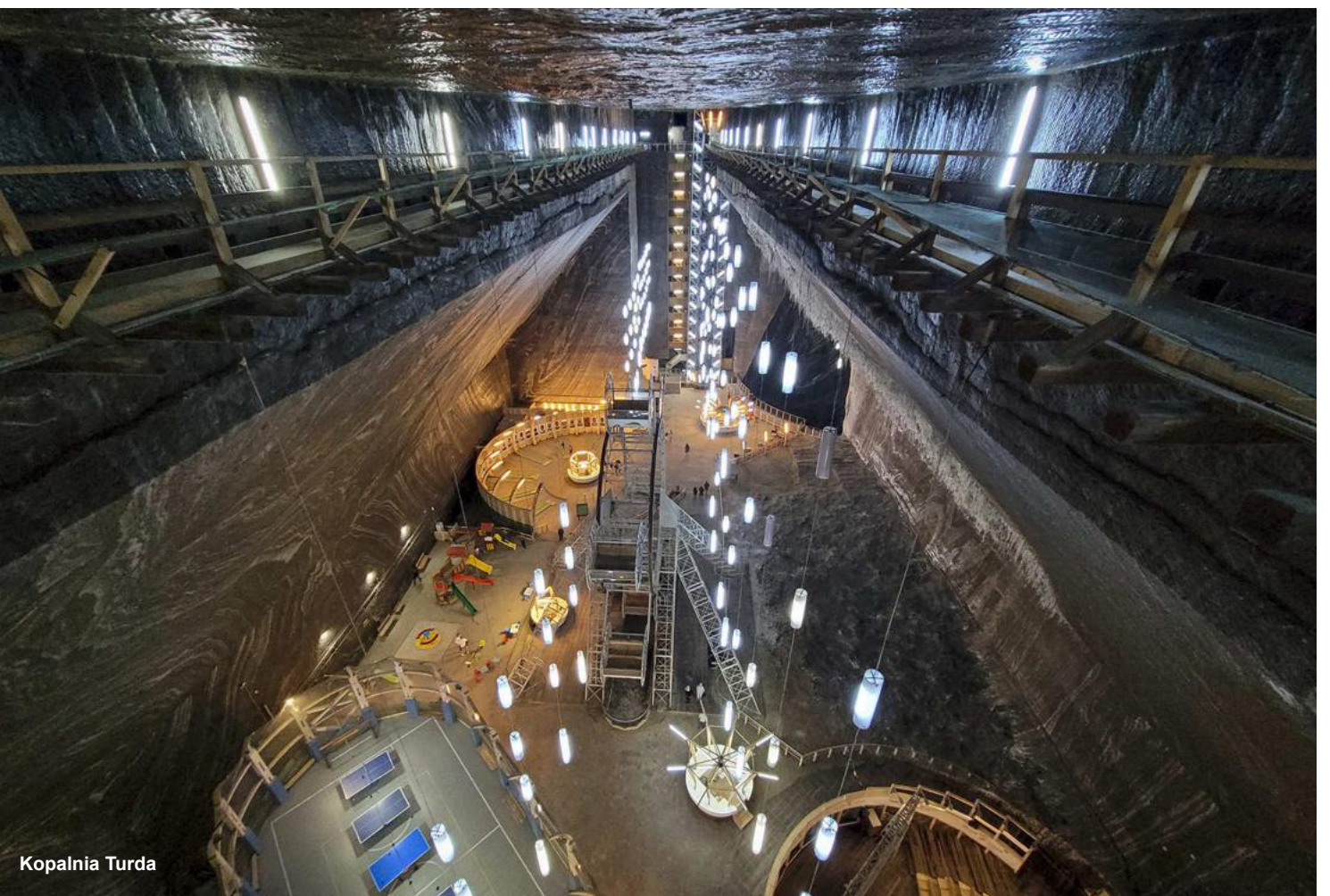
Turda is an important point on the map of Romania, because it's where two of the country's very famous attractions are hidden. One is the Salina Turda salt mine, which is one



Wesoły Cmentarz w Sapancie



Wesoły Cmentarz w Sapancie



Kopalnia Turda



EUROPE
ROMANIA





Satu MAre

of the oldest and largest of its kind in Europe. Salt was extracted here as early as the time of the Roman Empire, and mining was completed in 1932. Since 1992 the mine has been open to tourists. Today you can admire the well-preserved workings and mining machinery there, but the place is also known for its amazing amusement park, which is located in the mine's huge main chamber. There is a Ferris wheel, a miniature golf course, an underground lake where you can sail a boat, an amphitheater and many other attractions. A must-see item. Although the mine itself is not one of the largest - it is impressive. I suggest looking for the old entrance, from which runs a long, nicely lit corridor. We end the day at the Muresh Market. We managed to book a nice guesthouse. Large rooms, enclosed parking, but so-so breakfasts. However, the highlight was the pool! At this room price (120 zloty per person)-revelation. After a whole hot day on the

motorcycle, this moment of relaxation was priceless.

From Muresh Market we pulled further in the direction of Brasov. We intended to spend a longer time there. Less than 30 km southwest of Brasov lies the small town of Bran. Probably not many people would look into it if it weren't for the castle located there. The castle was built in the 14th century, and gained its popularity with stories that Vlad the Impaler, who was the prototype of Count Dracula, lived there. And although the latter was said to have stayed in the fortress for only a few days, the legend of him became a promotional element for Bran and attracted a huge number of tourists. Yes, the town is quite picturesque, but the crowds and terribly expensive entrance tickets to the castle (more than 40 zlotys per person) can be a bit of a deterrent. Nevertheless, it's worth ticking off this point.



Uliczki w Braszowie



EUROPE

ROMANIA

Getting to Brasov is a must-do on Route 1E. A wonderful route with a view of the city. Asphalt of the best quality. Beautiful, well laid out and fast winding roads. The downside? The route is so good that there is a lot of motorcycle traffic. However, before you reach Brasov, it's worth stopping for a while in Rasnov. There you will find a 13th century citadel. Initially, built by the Teutonic Knights, the fortress was intended to protect the immediate area from Tartar and Turkish incursions. After the Order was expelled from Romania, the citadel was systematically expanded by peasants and burghers, eventually becoming a full-fledged peasant castle. It served its role until around the 18th century, when firearms dominated the war industry. Nowadays, for several years, the citadel has been under reconstruction (restoration), and one can only walk around the walls from one side, possibly admiring the panorama of the city.

Brasov itself is surprising. A Romanian city that is simply beautiful. The main life of Brasov is centered on the Market Square, where we also managed to find accommodation. As it happens in the Market Square, also here, the central place is occupied by the Town Hall with its tall, 58-meter tower (its other name is Trumpeters'

Tower). All around it are beautiful 19th century townhouses with orange tiles, which emphasize its unique character. It is not without reason that it is called one of the most beautiful old towns in Dracula's country. It is a city you can easily spend several days on. We had a mere dozen hours.

After Brasov, we started the main point of the trip - the Transfagaraska route. This is one of the more popular scenic roads in Romania. It is a little over 150 km long and runs through the Fogarases mountain range. At its highest point it reaches 2042 meters above sea level. Near Lake Balea Lac there is a tunnel through which the road passes to the other side of the mountains. Numerous serpentine and spectacular views make driving the Transfagaraska Route an unforgettable experience. This is also where we encountered coastal states of asphalt. From the north, a beautiful ascent. From the south side downhill on a road of tragic quality. To justify - this was the only part we encountered with a lower quality road condition.

After an amazing day with the beautiful roads of Transfagaraska we could not sleep for quite a long time. Amazing impressions! And the next day an equally beautiful (for me much more beautiful)



Widok na trasę Transfagaraską

route awaited us - Transalpina (67C). It is the highest circular road in Romania. Before World War I, the Germans decided to expand the road for military reasons, then the king of Romania decided to continue the work of the Germans. This made it easier for transportation, the movement of troops and for the king to reach his summer residence. The Transalpine was named the royal road. Later, over the years, the road was badly damaged and parts of it were stolen. In 2008, the route was revisited for modernization. Asphalt was laid along the entire length of the road, and guard rails were erected in dangerous sections. The final work was successfully completed in 2012. As a result, it is possible to travel at a wonderfully slow pace along the magnificent winding roads while enjoying the amazing views. The whole day ended in the town of Deva.

Here it is necessary to mention the castle in Hunedoara. This





Przystanek na trasie Transfogaraskiej



Widok na trasę Transfogaraską z ekipą



EUROPE
ROMANIA





building is considered the most beautiful example of Gothic architecture in the central part of Europe. The main courtyard is surrounded by several structures - a Gothic palace, a chapel and utility rooms. The whole is surrounded by walls with numerous towers and bastions. The whole, although visually beautiful, offers nothing more. The range of exhibitions is negligible. A facility on the principle of "a photo from the outside" and on the road.

Time passed inexorably. We finally had to take the direction of Poland. We returned by a similar route, but this time we wanted to taste a bath in Hungarian Miskolc. Unfortunately, the temperature reaching over 40-41 degrees effectively finished us off. After arriving in Miskolc, we lacked strength for further attractions. The next morning we decided that everyone would already skip independently, straight home. The result of this decision was more than 850 km in the saddle in 1 day.

A beautiful adventure, wonderful traveling companions, 3616 km on the motorcycle. Lots of photos, videos. I met new people, gained new experiences. This trip made me realize that I need to devote more time to this country. In terms of tourism, it really has a lot to offer. In addition, there are still not too many tourists there, as



a result, there is peace and quiet, allowing you to fully enjoy the beauty of the places you visit. Thanks to the fact that Romania is relatively cheap, a stay there can be really economical (for the whole trip with all expenses went about 3,000 PLN).

Romania is a country that still holds many secrets. I have dozens of new points to visit. It is worth traveling, exploring, experiencing.



POZNAŃSKI SZWENDACZ

Under this nickname hides Mikolaj Szarafinski. He hangs out here and there alone or with a team. By moto, on foot, 4x4 or anything else. On his fanpage he shares accounts of his small and big trips around Poland and the world.





EUROPE
BULGARIA



A COUNTRY WHERE THEIR "NO" MEANS OUR "YES"

BULGARIA IS NOT ONLY THE SANDY BEACHES OF THE BLACK SEA. HIGHLAND AND MOUNTAINOUS AREAS OCCUPY 60% OF THE COUNTRY. OUR PLAN WAS TO DRIVE THROUGH ITS CENTRAL AND NORTHERN PARTS, WHICH INCLUDE THE STARA PLONINA MOUNTAINS ALONG WITH THE ZABALKAN BASINS RANGE.

Text and photos: MAŁA I DUŻY W PODRÓŻY





EUROPE

BULGARIA



Twierdza Belogradczik

We varied our trip through Romania by driving along Route 66A from Lupeni to Cerna Sat, touring the Acumularea Cerna Lake. Unfortunately, road conditions forced us to change our route and we reached the village of Cloșani. When planning our routes we use google maps or maps.cz. On google maps road 66a is marked in yellow, on maps.cz it is not there at all. In fact, it is a rocky road through the

forest with muddy sections. At first it was nice - a forest tract, a rocky road. Even a few motorcyclists passed us, so the road was spotted by more than just us. At one point, those who passed us turned back. It turned out that there was "some" mud, and their KTM and GS did not particularly want this mud on road tires. We had to make a decision-mud or return. The way back would have been terrible so it was out of the

question. And the mud, as it turned out, was maybe 150 meters. I didn't even try to cross it, so both bikes had to be pulled by Big. He managed to do it without any rollover, but we both looked pretty dirty. Later there were still some puddles the size of Lake Balaton. On the Serbian side we drove through the Danube Gate and arrived at an old vineyard called Pivnice Radosavljević - Ljubina pivnica- on a sunny hill are



Park Kambinite, Sofia



Pivnica Radosavljević, Serbia

EUROPE
BULGARIA



Wjazd na Kalim Dam, najwyższej położoną zaporę w Bułgarii





Monastyr Rylski, Bułgaria

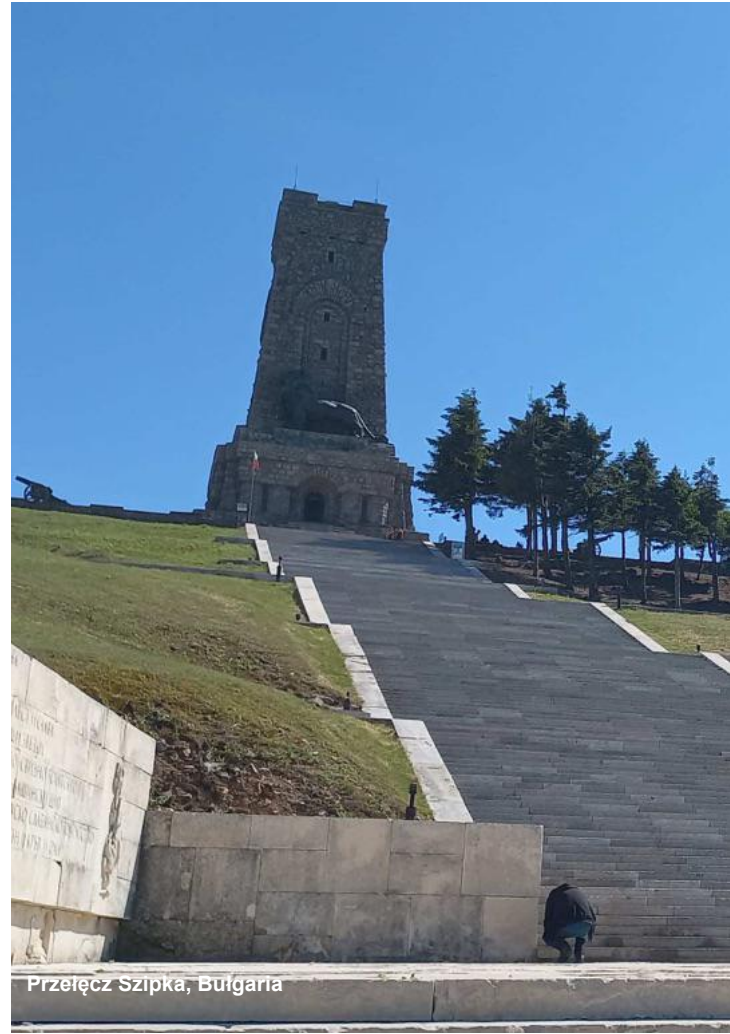
located a dozen or so houses acting as wine cellars. The peculiar microclimate means that even in the middle of the day the temperature in the cellars was pleasant. The hostess treated us to a dinner consisting of homemade products and we celebrated the evening with local wine. We entered Bulgaria at a small crossing point in the village of Bregovo.

The first place we saw in Bulgaria was Belogradchik Fortress. The fortress was built into the rocks, which became a natural fortification of the fortress. It passed through the hands of Bulgarians and Turks and in 1885 was last used during the conflict between Serbia and Bulgaria. The entire complex is more than 10,000 square meters and the red-colored rock formations stained with iron ore stretch for a long time along the route to Sofia,

where we are scheduled to spend the night. The road leads through the Petrohan Pass. Since we didn't find any restaurant, we decide to camp our excursion kitchen on the shore of a water reservoir, which is located on the summit at an altitude of 1410m. We warm the water and watch as a thick white fog begins to glide down on us from above the forest. A picture straight out of a horror movie. I haven't seen clouds rushing at such speed before. Before we had time to brew tea, it starts to drip from the clouds. Within moments it begins to pour heavily. We pack up our belongings and get on our motorcycles hoping to get ahead of the rain. Oh naive us ! It pours for another two hours and we arrive at the hotel completely soaked. The surprised receptionist, looking at the puddles we made, says that at their place it sprinkled several minutes and that's all.



Łuk Wolności na Przełęczy Trojańskiej, Bułgaria



Przełęcz Szipka, Bułgaria



Twierdza Wielkie Tynowo

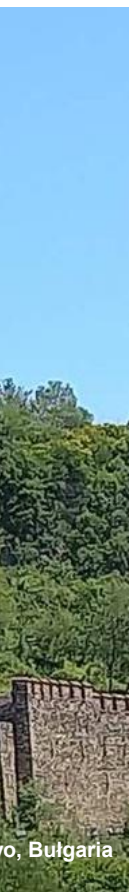


In the morning, even before breakfast we go to Kambinite Park, where you can see more than 100 bells of various sizes. The complex was built to celebrate the International Year of the Child, which was established in 1979. To commemorate the event, a circular monument was built in the park and bells from all the countries whose children participated in the event were placed there. In the middle of the park stands an almost 40-meter pylon with 7 bells that play a tune at certain times. The pylon is considered the largest percussion instrument in Europe. The largest is a Bulgarian bell weighing 1,300 kg and the oldest bell dates back to the 9th century. You can play on some of the bells.

We bid farewell to Sofia and drive to the Rila Monastery. This is the largest Bulgarian monastery, founded in the 10th century by a monk, miracle worker and healer named Rylski. The center of the site is a temple with beautiful gilding depicting biblical scenes and figures of

saints. After visiting the monastery, we leave our luggage at the hotel and drive to Kalim Dam. It is the highest water dam in Bulgaria, 2400 above sea level. The rocky road leads through the forest and the incredibly steep climb was very difficult. We didn't manage to reach our destination - the expanse of snow didn't allow us to continue. Instead, we met a new Bulgarian acquaintance who wanted to climb the mountain for the second time, and for the second time had to give up a piece before the summit. He got his motorcycle stuck in the mud and couldn't get out of it. He was really lucky that we ended up there. The road is not very frequented and the boy could have really waited a long time for help. Later we met up with him once more in Varna.

We headed towards the Trojan Pass to see the Freedom Arch, a monument erected in 1980 to honor all those who fought for Bulgaria's freedom between 1878 and 1944. It is 37 meters high and you have





to climb 1,630 meters to stand under it. We pass through Kazanlyk - called the Valley of Roses. For 3 weeks in May, the valley turns into one huge rose plantation. Flowers harvested from the bushes are processed into rose oils, used as a base for cosmetic products. It takes 3.5 tons of petals to make 1 liter of oil. We, unfortunately, were a while late and the roses had already been harvested. For that, lavender grew everywhere in wholesale quantities and the smell made our heads spin. From Kazanlyk it is not far to Shipka Pass and Buzludzha, which we visit for the second time. In the 19th century, 4 major battles took place at Shipka Pass, in which more than 10,000 soldiers were killed. To commemorate

these events, a Freedom Monument was erected at the top. From the monument there is a fantastic view of the entire pass. We descend the mountain and in a moment climb another one. This is Buzludzha - a mountain peak reaching 1441 meters. In 1891, a secret meeting was convened at the foot, where the socialist movement in Bulgaria was launched. To commemorate the event, a monument was erected on the summit, which has become a symbol of socialism. The building resembles a UFO and next to it stands a 75-meter high pylon with a red star on top. In the 1980s it was possible to take an elevator to its top. The illuminated red star was visible in Romania and on the shore of the

Aegean Sea in Greece. The structure took 7 years to build, with more than 6,000 workers and then 20 of Bulgaria's greatest artists decorating the interiors for 18 months. We were here a few years ago on our way to Turkey. Back then there was only a guard guarding the facility during the day. Today, the building still stands locked for security with large padlocks but inside the frescoes and paintings are being secured. We continue towards the Black Sea, through Veliko Tarnovo - a city on 4 hills, dating back in history to the third millennium BC. In Shumen we go to the monument to the Creator of the Bulgarian State. Monumental sculptures depict the most important figures in the history of the state,



15 Wejscie do jaskini Lalomitei



EUROPE
BULGARIA



Полуостров Калиакра



starting with Khan Asparuch. There are 1,300 stairs leading up to the monument. Exactly that many years separate the moment when the Bulgarian state was established and the day when the monument was opened to the public. We approached from the side of the parking lot so the stairs were fortunately not necessary for us. The monument consists of 8 blocks 70 meters high and 140 meters wide. Our next stop was in Varna, where we drive to the Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship Monument, built in 1979. The monument was built in 1979, it was beautifully lit and activists placed flowers under it. After 1989 it fell into disrepair, all the bronze elements were stolen and the monument went into oblivion. In 2001 the city took care of it and it may not be beautiful, but it is a reminder of history. The next point is the Horseman of Madara, a rock relief from the 7th century, a UNESCO-listed site. We continue to Aladzha, where we see a medieval monastery





EUROPE
BULGARIA





carved into 40-meter-high limestone rock. You can see the monks' cells, chapels or rooms where animals were kept.

The last point is the Kaliakra peninsula with its 70-meter cliff and mysterious stone door. According to legend, 40 virgins gathered on the peninsula during the invasion of the Turks. The girls, defending their dignity, preferred to throw themselves off the cliff rather than be captured into the harem. In the tiny chapel of St. Nicholas located right next to the stone door, we light a candle for our permanent intentions.

We leave Bulgaria, making a stop in Vama Veche. We return home, but on the way we drive into the Bucegi mountains to see the Lalomitei cave and the tiny church built into it. The entrance to the cave is at an altitude of 1530 m. The route open to the public is 400 meters. In some places the ceiling is so low that even I have to bend down. We find our last night's lodging in Oradea and in the evening we explore its old town.

Several times we are fooled by differences resulting from different expressions of approval or negation. We ask passing people for directions, show a map and point with our finger where we want to go. We ask if it is possible. They nod and we understand "no", another route and another "no". It was only after a few such nods that we remembered that in Bulgaria, people agreeing with us nod their heads completely the opposite of what we are used to.

We did 4,000 kilometers in 12 days, but it's not the number of kilometers driven that we care about, but what we see along the way and who we might meet along the way. And this time again we were able to make acquaintances that may be short-lived, but can also stay for a longer period of time to the benefit of both parties. The sights passed, the monuments seen, the flavors of the food will stay with us until our next trip. And we have plenty of ideas for those.



MAŁA I DUŻY W PODRÓŻY



Mała i Duży w Podróży (Small and Big on the Journey) - for 5 years they have been enjoying every day spent on motorcycles together. They constantly suffer from notriphobia - the fear of the moment when they won't have another trip planned. They work together - he comes up with the directions and plans the routes, she takes care of the visas and accommodation. For them, the route is less important than the people they meet on it.





EUROPE

ITALY





UNDER THE SUN OF TUSCANY

THE IDEA FOR TUSCANY WAS ALREADY FORMED IN OUR HEADS A FEW YEARS AGO, IN CAROLINA'S CASE IT WAS TO BE A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY TO THE PAST, IN MINE ANOTHER PLACE ON THE MAP OF EUROPE THAT I DREAMED OF VISITING ON A MOTORCYCLE. THE DECISION WAS MADE - THE YEAR 2022 WE SET OFF.

Text and photos: DOMIADV



EUROPE

ITALY



The plan was to travel through Germany and Austria to Italy. We started our journey on June 9 this year.

After breakfast the direction was Munich, Fussen (Neuschweinstein Castle) and then passing Austria we arrived in Italy. To make it not too beautiful, already on the second day there were problems.

Near Munich we noticed a fuel leak. Bearing in mind that we had refueled a while earlier, we decided that the motorcycle was overfilled and moved on. In the vicinity of Fussen, after visiting the first service center, we already knew what was going on, it was the failure of the fuel pump, on which there was a microcrack. Unfortunately, we didn't get any help in Germany, so we kept driving. We arrived in Prato allo Stelvio tired and nervous.

Concerns arose, what to do next! The next morning we made the decision that we were going to start on the Stelvio, and then we would see.... Stelvio is the highest pass in the Italian Eastern Alps, driving SS38 is a pleasure! The whole thing is about 50 km





EUROPE

ITALY

long, while its most difficult section is 25 km long and contains 48 exciting turns. The views are amazing, forever memorable, and we attest to that. This is a place that every motorcyclist dreams of. However, the pump failure did not give us peace of mind, and we decided to look for a service center that could help. The service centers informed us that the waiting time for a new part was 5 days. We were

dismayed, given the fact that we were waiting for another 700+ kilometers that day. And then we came across a service in Bolzano...and a miracle happened, it turned out that there was a similar motorcycle on the service and the owner decided to resell the pump to us. The whole visit lasted about an hour, the employees were incredibly helpful. After an hour the motorcycle was ready to ride.

Stone from the heart...then nothing could spoil our plans anymore, incredible joy and emotion! We go on :) Our resting point that day was Riva del Garda, where we arrived in the evening.

The next day we set off on the beautiful SS45bis, and after a while descended into Strada della Forra - the SP38 road. This road is located in Lombardy, in the province of Brescia, on the left side of



Lake Garda, and connects Tremosine to Pieve di Tremosine. It was named the eighth wonder of the world by Winston Churchill. It is 10 km long, winding, narrow, charming, very demanding, leading through ravines, steep slopes and rock tunnels. It guarantees a wonderful experience, picturesque views and unforgettable memories. Marc Foster, director of "007 Quantum of Solace", chose this very place to shoot a

segment of the film with the famous agent Bond!

The next kilometers were in the direction of Tuscany. Our base was in the village of Quercegrossa, by the way a very good place considering that all the attractions we decided to see were within a radius of 80 km. Well, and what can I say, it was love at first sight. We were enchanted by the green hills spread all around, covered with vineyards and olive groves,

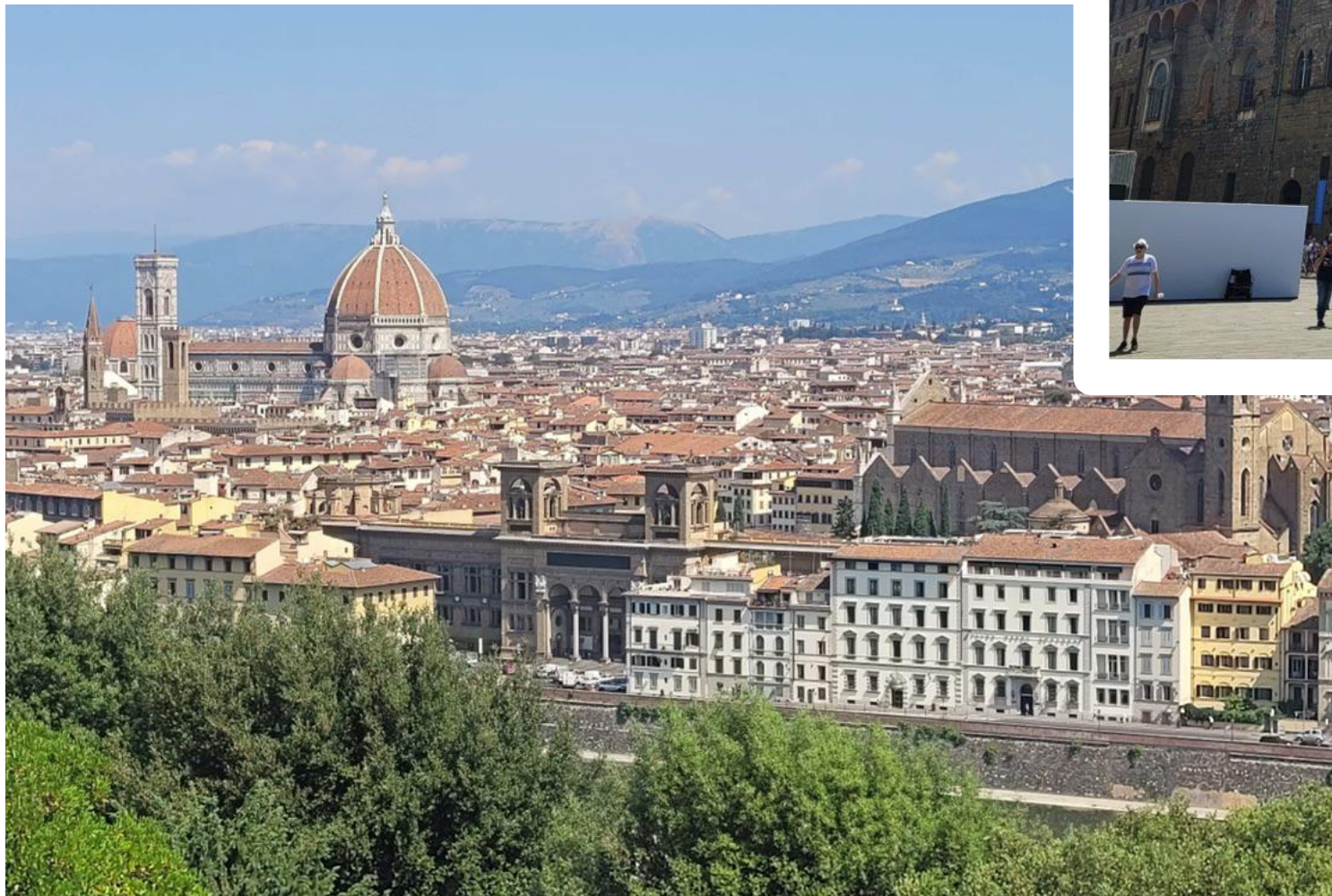
lonely stone houses with wooden shutters, medieval towns found at every turn, fabulous winding roads or the famous rows of cypress trees. But let's take it one step at a time... We planned our first day in Tuscany to relax, but by the afternoon we felt a whiff of boredom and set out on our first tour...we decided to see a little-known site - the Abbey of San Galgano. A place a bit off the beaten track definitely deserves a moment's





EUROPE

ITALY





into disrepair. In the 18th century, the church tower was struck by lightning, as a result of which a falling bell completely damaged the building's roof. Located in an open field, the building, whose only roof is the sky, is incredibly impressive.

We devoted the next day - Monday - to exploring Tuscany's most beautiful valley, the Val d'Orcia Valley (a UNESCO-listed site), in particular visiting the filming locations of Ridley Scott's iconic movie "Gladiator." The valley stretches south of Siena, its landscape characterized by gentle hills crisscrossed by numerous roads planted with slender cypress trees. As our first point we chose Podere Belvedere located on the SP146 road, a very recognizable place, mainly due to the numerous paintings and postcards on which it is featured. The road then led us to the Capella della Madonna di Vitaleta, a distinctive lone 16th century chapel located in the middle of a field. There was a truly idyllic view all around, including the extinct



attention. We reached it via road SP441. After leaving the motorcycle in the parking lot and a short walk, we were greeted by a long line of dewy cypress trees leading to an abandoned church without a roof. The history of the place dates back to 1148, when Galgano Guidotti, a knight recognized as a saint after his death, was born. The abbey, built in the Gothic style, was an important religious center, but in 1329, due to a famine, it began to decline. Eventually, in the 15th as a result of numerous robberies, it was completely abandoned and fell





EUROPE

ITALY

volcano Monte Amiata (1734 meters above sea level). We then headed to the Pienza area to see the famous Gladiator road. The site is a few hundred meters down the valley walking from a 12th century Romanesque stone church. Pieve dei Santi Vito e Modesto a Corsignano. The baptism of Popes Pius II and Pius III took place in this unassuming little church.

Another point we really wanted to see while following in the footsteps of Maximus was the cypress road leading to the Agrotourism Poggio Covili on the SR2 road. The view is insane both up close and from the surrounding hills.

At the end of the day we left ourselves a gem, the town of

Pienza. Originally a tiny village, it was transformed into a perfect city about six hundred years ago thanks to the generosity of the then Pope Pius II. The pope wanted to satisfy his artistic sensibilities and for this purpose hired the famous architect Bernardo Rossellini. The Piazza Pio II main square, the Piccolomini Palace and the main street Corso Rosselino, located there, were created at the time. The town, listed as a UNESCO site in 1996.

Tuesday was dedicated to exploring Siena and San Gimignano. Siena is a compact and pleasant city to visit. Hundreds of years ago it rivaled Florence for the title of the most important city in







EUROPE

ITALY



Tuscany. We parked the motorcycle in a covered parking lot just outside the old town. A few minutes' walk along narrow cobbled medieval streets brought us to Piazza del Campo, a distinctive shell-shaped brick square surrounded by dense buildings of historic houses, whose floor slopes down toward the Palazzo Pubblico. The square is famous for

hosting horse races twice a year during an event called Palio di Siena. After a delicious coffee, we headed a bit further to see the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta.

We then set off for San Gimignano. Situated in the hills of the Val d'Elsa, halfway between Siena and Florence, the town is often referred to as the "Medieval Manhattan" because of the numerous

towers within it. It is one of the best preserved medieval towns in Europe, originally the famous towers were as many as 72, today only 14 remain. The first documents in which you can find references to the town date back to the 10th century. Two hours are enough to visit San Gimignano, enough to walk the main street, rest a while at Piazza Duomo, eat the best







EUROPE

ITALY





ice cream in the world at Piazza della Cisterna. So little, and so much to keep this wonderful atmospheric place in your memory forever.

Florence was not to be missed during our trip. We chose Piazzale Michelangelo as our stopping place. Choosing this place is a great decision, because it is located on a hill and from the very entrance we were enchanted by the view of the whole city, as from the most beautiful postcard. We

walked to the historic center passing successively the famous Ponte Vecchio (Bridge of the Goldsmiths), Piazza della Signoria with Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza del Duomo with Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral and Santa Croce Church. The city, as the cradle of the Renaissance, impresses with its wealth of art, architecture and history.

The last days of our stay we decided to visit Monteriggioni and Volterra. The first town is

located between Siena and Colle di Val d'Elsa on picturesque hills covered with vineyards and olive groves. Surrounded by a spectacular fortified wall, and its authentic buildings date back to the 13th century, it is so tiny that it only takes a dozen minutes to get around. It's worth a look if you're passing through, to get a feel for the atmosphere of the old days and to feast your eyes on the beautiful surroundings.





EUROPE

ITALY

Volterra, on the other hand, is much larger, located 555 meters above sea level. It was built by the Etruscans as early as the 7th century BC, while in the 4th century AD it was surrounded by walls. It is known as the city of wind and alabaster. The most characteristic building, and the oldest town hall in all of Tuscany, is the Palazzo dei Priori, built of stone. Walking through the streets of the city you can feel the spirit of the past. Among other things, in its history the city was under the rule of the Roman Empire, and a remnant of that period is the ancient Teatro Romano. Author Stephenie Meyer placed the action of the second part of her Twilight vampire saga here.

The time of our trip inexorably came to an end... Tuscany will remain in our hearts forever, we would like to return here to see more. The places we visited are only a fraction of what it has to offer. And it has nature, culture, art and of



course delicious cuisine....

Returning completely by chance, we managed to pass another scenic route through a pass located in South Tyrol - Passo di Pennes (2211 m). The SS508 road is extremely spectacular, steep and winding, a nice change for the boring highway.



DOMIADV



DomiAdv - is Dominik Micek a banker, motorcycle and travel enthusiast. He treats the blog as a kind of diary of his motorcycle trips. Lately, his wife Karolina - a motorcyclist and lover of medieval towns in Italy - has been a strong support in his travels.





EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM



WORLD'S LARGEST FEMALE BIKER MEET 2022

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST GROUP OF FEMALE MOTORCYCLISTS. LOOKING AT THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AND THE ATMOSPHERE THERE SURELY IT WILL BE REPEATED MORE THAN ONCE.

Text and photos: ADV Hoppers



TRIUMPH

CELEBRATING
1 MILLION
MOTORCYCLES



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We told ourselves, no more fixed appointments on our agenda's, but...maybe one last time. This one we couldn't miss, being invited by one of our bunk-a-biker hosts, we decided to support this cause and try to get an interview with the organizers.

During the days before the meeting we convinced another fellow female traveler to attend the record attempt, so we met up the day before near the Triumph factory at Hinckley, where the event would take place.

We arrived at the factory and were surprised of the number

of bikers queuing to be registered as a participant. The whole entrance lane of the factory was filled with proud female bikers, waiting patiently to get their number and add their presence to the record.

The parking lot filled up with all kinds of bikes, from custom



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build trikes over adventure bikes to race machines, a sight to see. Strolling along the rows showed how passionate women can be in biking, a well proven point that the organizers wanted to make.

Another remarkable fact was the age difference of the bikers, from teenagers up to women in their seventies, clearly it's a thing of all times. But again, in passion they all are alike, loving biking.

After admiring all those wonderful machines it was time to move on to the several stalls that were present at the entrance of the factory. Of course Triumph had the main

stage, as they were hosting the whole event. But also the police was present with an info stand on biking in nowadays traffic, and they were open to all kinds of questions. Some stalls with info on driving courses, travel organizations and clothing. But one of the more important ones was the Blood Bikers representation, who were one of the good causes the event was supporting. The Blood Bikers are a organization taking care of emergency blood transports between hospitals and blood banks. The other good cause was the Air Ambulance, again in the emergency sector, sadly also often linked with motorbiking. During the event the atmosphere was nicely tuned





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up with some live music, food trucks and coffee or tea provided in the Visitors Center of the Triumph factory.

After some waiting we could get hold of the organizers, a duo of women who know what they want, but nevertheless were happy to take some time for us. Nimi and Sherrie from Moto Advisor offered us a chair to have a talk and explain to us what it was all about. The full interview you can follow in the video attached. But the essence of their idea was to make the motorbiking world aware of the fact that it's not a man's world only, and that women are getting their share of the attention. And that it's high time the producers of motorbiking related products should take women into account when developing their market. And this meeting will not be the last one, they assured us, they will keep on bringing their passion to the attention of the world by gathering all those female bikers and finally wake up people that they are to be counted for. Last edition gathered 1332 women, and the record was broken by this time, having 1549. In addition, 9000 GBP to support the two abovementioned charities were raised. Way to go, and we wish Nimi and Sherie the best of luck with their future plans.



ADV HOPPERS

ADV Hoppers is an international couple of motorcyclists and adventure lovers: Agata Dudek and Joris De Poortere. Currently on a trip around the world, the progress of which can be followed on the blog and social media.





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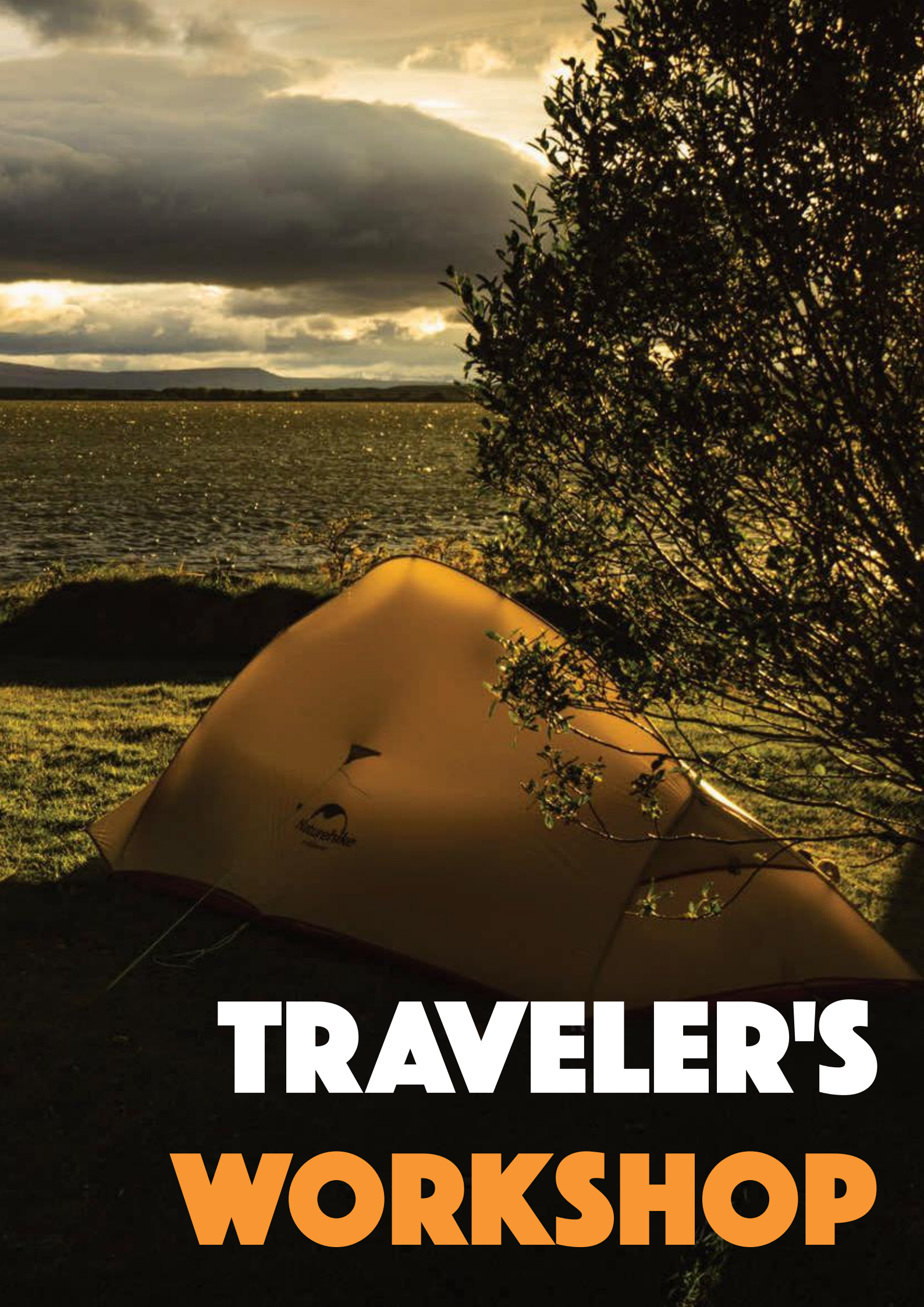


TRAVELER'S WORKSHOP

TENT FOR A MOTORCYCLIST

TENT FOR A MOTORCYCLIST

Text and photos: Karolina Kowalska / Life On Moto



TRAVELER'S **WORKSHOP**

When preparing for motorcycle trips, many of us look for new camping equipment. We usually look around for minimalist solutions, taking care of every kilogram of luggage, because, after all, our motorcycles do not have the payload and capacity of a truck, camper or even a passenger car. We ourselves, recently preparing for our motorcycle trip around the Americas, tried to study the topic of sleeping in a tent in great detail.

WHAT TYPES OF TENT CONSTRUCTION DO WE HAVE?

It's probably worth starting with a few words about the construction of touring tents, because just knowing the types of tents available, their advantages and disadvantages, will partly make our choice easier. With regard to construction, we distinguish between tunnel tents, dome tents, geodesic tents, 2Y tents, tents with an external or internal frame and various vestibule structures. Below are brief descriptions of the most popular of these.

Dome type tents are self-supporting structures. Which means that once pitched, the

tent stands on its own without lashings or pegs and can be moved without dismantling. This is very important if you plan to camp in areas where the ground is very hard or shallow, or just the kind that makes it impossible to drive the pegs. The dome construction makes tents of this type resistant to wind gusts, which is quite problematic in some regions of the world. Having traveled around Iceland ourselves, we've seen how easily the wind can put down a tent, although at the time it was blowing really decently. :) The undoubted disadvantage of dome tents is certainly the available usable space, which is greatly diminished by the slanted walls of the tent.

Surveyor tents are also dome structures, but they have been reinforced with additional stakes that make such tents very sturdy and resistant to wind gusts. Since surveying tents are mainly expedition tents, they are also quite low and staggered, constructed to best grip the ground in extreme conditions. Those extra risers, however, also add pounds to them.

Tunnel tents need to be carefully laid out, as their degree of water- and



windproofness depends on this. All lashings must be well fastened, the pegs must be solidly hammered in, which unfortunately takes time. In addition, before unfolding, you need to choose a good place, because any relocation will involve unfolding the tent from scratch. Also, the tunnel tent will not pitch on every ground, which, for us, is its biggest disadvantage and basically disqualifies all tents of this design, despite the undoubted advantage of space inside. Here the optimal height of the tent is along its entire length and is not diminished by slanted walls as in the case of dome tents.

Tents based on two letters Y(2Y) are a combination of a typical dome tent and a tunnel tent, such a hybrid design. As a result, you get more usable space than in a dome tent, and the use of fewer arches means that such tents are usually very lightweight. This type of construction can be









found in the ultra-light MSR Hubba Hubba NX or Naturehike Cloud Up tents.

SINGLE, DOUBLE OR TRIPLE? HOW TO CHOOSE THE SIZE?

When it comes to a tent for a motorcyclist, it is best to choose a tent one number larger than the expected number of people sleeping in it. That extra person will be our luggage, which it would be nice to store somewhere - jacket, pants, helmet or tankbag. While a helmet strapped to a motorcycle for the night can get away with it, stuffing motorcycle clothes by force, or worse - leaving them on the motorcycle overnight, is a mediocre solution. We once tried to prove to ourselves that we could sleep in a 2-person tent, which was really great, but after a month of sleeping in it every day, the tent went into the closet, and we ordered the 3-person

equivalent of the same tent. Of course, there are some people who go for total minimalism, who don't even mind sleeping under a tarp, but for a bit of personal comfort, it's still worth thinking about a bigger tent, having in the back of your mind the things you'll want to pack into it for the night.

SEASONALITY OF TENTS

Seasonality is another important criterion for dividing tents. They can be year-round, 2-season or 3-season. Summer tents will tend to be lighter due to the use of more mesh materials and to be more breathable, so we won't cook in them during hot summer nights. 3-season ones are probably the most popular and versatile, while winter ones will be a bit heavier and are not uncommonly equipped with additional snow aprons,

allowing you to sprinkle the tent with snow, further protecting it from the wind. Thinking about when and under what conditions we will be camping will certainly make our choice easier, because if we are not thinking of pitching a tent in late autumn or early spring, we won't need a year-round or 3-season tent. This way we save money and do not burden our motorcycle with unnecessary kilograms.

WITH OR WITHOUT A VESTIBULE?

Our dream tent was to have enough bedroom space, a vestibule with a floor spacious enough to sit in it and cook dinner in peace on rainy days, on less rainy days roomy enough to fit our trunks and all our gear. And on top of that, self-supporting, lightweight and one that won't ruin our budget. If anyone has a similar dream, we'll say right away - it can't be done. All

TENT FOR A MOTORCYCLIST

tents that have a large vestibule are not lightweight and are usually not self-supporting either. Often recommended by motorcyclists is Fjord Nansen's Corsica III. Spacious with a really impressive vestibule, but we couldn't afford a tent that requires lashings and we won't set it up everywhere due to its tunnel construction, and it still weighs quite a lot - 5 kg. Of the self-supporting structures, the Czech tent - Hannah Set 3 - is also recommended, but this one is not light either, in various specifications its weight ranges from 4.5-4.9 kg, so a lot, and besides, this model, is now withdrawn from production.

A large vestibule is a cool thing, but it already ceases to be so cool when it turns out that having it unfortunately significantly increases the sheer weight of the tent and the size when packed. Making a compromise, we were left with tents with a small vestibule (or two, depending on the model). Those completely without a vestibule we rejected, because it's really nice to at least stash your shoes somewhere, not necessarily smelling of violets after weeks of travel. In several models of tents, e.g. Naturehike P-Series or Big Agnes Copper Spur Bikepack, we found a very interesting solution that allows you to make a canopy over the entrance to the tent from the vestibule, using ropes or poles. In general, there is a lot to choose from when it comes to tents with small vestibules, it is important for you to consider whether you want a vestibule at all and, if so, which vestibule will work in your case.

HOW IS IT WITH THIS WATERPROOFING?

To be honest, when thinking about tents at the very beginning, we completely ignored the aspect of their

waterproofness, and the numbers given by manufacturers told us nothing. We assumed that the tents were waterproof enough to handle a rainy night. Well, and that assumption works for the most part, but what if the same tent will be standing in the rain day after day? What if we go to Scandinavia, where the rains can go on unabated for weeks? What if we hit the monsoon season, where it's not just the rains that are a problem, but the constant moisture in the air? And at this point we started looking for

because it all depends on how correctly we set up our tent and take care of the correct tensioning of all lines and lashings. Deciding on a tent with weaker parameters, we can expect that it may start to get wet for us. However, it is important to remember that water seeps not only through the flysheet, but also through the floor, which is why reputable companies usually equip their tents with a floor that is much more durable and waterproof than the flysheet, even up to 10000 mm water column. This is also due to the



information on what those magic numbers given by manufacturers mean. :)

Water resistance, or water column height, is an indicator that expresses the material's resistance to water pressure. The higher it is, the more our tent can withstand. Theoretically, a fabric with parameters of 1500 mm water column is already resistant enough to withstand a big rain. To keep our tent dry in all conditions we should choose a fabric with parameters of 3000 mm. Theoretically,

wear and tear of the material, which loses its properties after a while, and the floor is the most vulnerable element.

We, choosing a tent for our trip, assumed that we are interested in a value of not less than 3000 mm water column and not more than 5000. Why not more? The higher the water resistance of the fabric, the more rigid, heavy and prone to tearing. Less elasticity of the fabric means less resistance to wind, especially to side winds. When buying a tent just for a





summer vacation in southern Europe, we would choose from the 1500-2000 mm range.

What else is worth knowing about the water resistance of tents? Parameters with parameters, but manufacturing technology is also important. For example, MSR tents, at first glance, do not have high water resistance parameters, but the DWR (Durable Water Repellent) technology used in them makes them much more resistant to water than you might think, looking at the pure parameters. Also, before buying, it's also a good idea to simply read about the specific product you're choosing.

WHAT ELSE IS WORTH PAYING ATTENTION TO?

You've probably heard more than once that a good tent for a motorcyclist is one in which you can first pitch the tent's flysheet and then suspend the bedroom. Such tents are called double-skinned or double-layered, and you will certainly appreciate their functionality when you come to camp in the rain. Putting up the tent usually starts with the bedroom, because it's just easier, but if conditions are unfavorable, having a double-layered tent you can start from the tropics and our bedroom and the interior of the tent will stay dry. Single-layer tents have an integrated tropic and bedroom, making them very light and small when packed, but they perform poorly in rain and cooler climates. For a summer trip to the south of Europe - ideal, but if you have Scandinavia in your plans, for example, a two-layer will be better.

The number of entrances to the tent and their arrangement. Seemingly a minor issue, but imagine a situation where you are going together with your half to a tent that has only one

entrance on the long side of the tent. By force of nature, one of the people to go outside will have to walk over the other, which is not necessarily cool in the middle of the night. That's why most often tent designers put the entrance on either the head side or both sides of the tent, which has the added benefit of being able to unzip the tent and make for a cool breeze. Most often, but not always, and it's worth keeping this in mind as well.

SIZE, WEIGHT AND PRICE

And at the very end we come to what probably everyone is most interested in - size, weight and price. The truth is that if you want a very lightweight and packable tent for a motorcyclist, you have to pay more than for an ordinary tourist tent, the size of which you don't care about, because it will end up in the trunk of your car anyway. Unfortunately, in ultralight tents, completely different technologies are already used, which means that we will not buy such a tent for very low amounts. We were personally impressed by the MSR Hubba Hubba NX tent, which we had the opportunity to use during one of the trips to the `Balkans. Lightweight, easy to set up, self-supporting

with a detachable bedroom in case of rain. Everything great, but however, price-wise it put quite a strain on the travel budget, so we looked for other solutions.

In the end, after a long search for the perfect tent, we decided on the NatureHike CloudUp 3. We tested it quite well in Iceland, where the weather conditions are not very favorable, and it managed, while not ruining our budget.

Of course, each of us has our own experiences with tents and our own types, requirements and different budgets. Therefore, on our blog, which you can find at: <https://lifeonmoto.com>, we did a comparison of tents recommended by other motorcyclists. We took into account price, weight, size before and after unfolding and number of vestibules. That is, really everything that is necessary when choosing a tent for a motorcyclist.

KAROLINA KOWALSKA

Plecaczek z dość krótkim, kilkuletnim stażem. Mimo, że wcześniej turystyka motocyklowa nie leżała w jej zainteresowaniach, to odkąd poznała Szymona, razem podróżują i prowadzą bloga <https://lifeonmoto.com>. Teraz nie może doczekać się kolejnego sezonu motocyklowego. Cały czas myśli też o zrobieniu prawka, chociaż nigdy nie ma czasu na dokończenie rozpoczętego kursu. To ona wybiera kierunki, zaznacza punkty na mapie i szuka coraz nowszych destynacji. Introwertyczka i marzycielka, która kocha koty, wino i przyrodę.



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