



Here's a little recap of a Retro Tour I took with Joel Samick and others to Chincoteague Island. When traveling I try to use as many places recommended in Backroads Magazine. I have the usual old guy's stable of motorcycles, preferring to use an '07 R1200 GS for longer trips. I routed a ride that took me from home, near Albany, NY, to Millheim, PA, and on to Kennett Square, PA., where I would pick up the Retro Tour.

The ride to Millheim consisted of some nice PA twisties, and plenty of unpaved roads. The Triple Creek Inn was quite a treat – as quirky as it gets, and the Brew Pub across the street was excellent.

More miles of unpaved forest roads took me down to US 22, where I headed east for breakfast at Top's Diner on 22, at the north end of PA 829. From there it was south and southwest to the exceptional Six Mile Run, and finally PA 26. I've been staying at the Inn & Spa in Berkeley Springs since my uncle Ed, a local resident, passed away. The food isn't bad, and the service is friendly.

Pennsylvania back roads took me to Kennett Square, where the route sheet I made six years ago got me to Joel and Lynn's place.



You may have heard of Retro Tours. Joel is a collector of vintage two-cylinder motorcycles, some of which have been reviewed by Clement Salvadori on the back pages of *Rider* magazine. This collection is maintained in good order, and the bikes are used for the tours that Joel organizes during the riding season. The two-day tour I'd signed up for would be approximately 500 miles on 500cc machines. Larger machines, including a Harley XLCR, are available for longer tours.

For a small extra fee, participants can stay at Joel and Lynn's before and after the tour. Lynn is an excellent cook, as well as an accomplished motorcycle rider. It should also be noted that they keep kosher.

Our group consisted of four participants; me: a farmer/retired welder, Jim: an artist/printer/retired teacher, Dave: who is in law enforcement, and Richard: a teacher and expert chain saw sculptor. Some of Richard's work is on display at Joel's. We are all experienced riders, which is a good thing, as some of the bikes are kick start, and some have right hand shift, and tricky or absent turn signals.

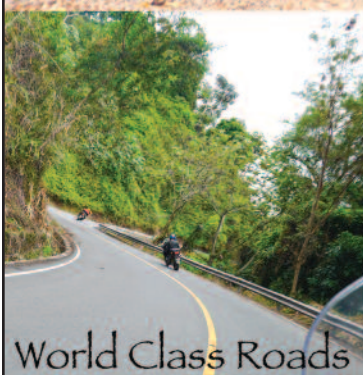
Each machine is equipped with a tank bag and a luggage rack with bungee cords. There is no chase vehicle, so it's a must to pack light and waterproof.

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I had selected a late 60's 500cc Triumph twin. The other bikes included a CB 500 Honda, a Moto Guzzi, a Moto Morini, and a RD 400 Yamaha two stroke. A unique part of a Retro Tour is that you get to ride every bike around 100 miles. At each gas stop, riders switch bikes, checking with their new mount's previous rider about the various idiosyncrasies of the machine. A short ride around the lot, and we're back on the road.



Joel, of course leads the pack on a pre-planned route. He sets a brisk pace advising that we ride our own ride, and disregard any testosterone influence. This proved difficult, as there were a surprising number of 20 mph curves on the flatlands of the peninsula. Each

rider is responsible for the one following. No one got lost, there were no crashes, and only a few "pucker" moments.

Stops on Saturday included the museum at Dover AFB, and an "almost" tour of the Wallops Island NASA center. Joel's friend Keith works at the center, and on a previous tour had managed to gain access for a small group of 3 or so. This day the guards were not so kind, denying entrance for our group of 6.

We stayed at a motel on Chincoteague Island, and dined at a decent restaurant a half-mile walk away. So far, no wild horses.

Sunday we wandered up to Assateague in search of the elusive critters. Again no horse sightings, but plenty of evidence mounded up on the road.

I guess no trip in this area would be complete without the congestion of Ocean City. A personal thrill here was trying to find reserve on the RD 400 while surrounded by 40 mph traffic. Someone told me later that the petcock was "sticky" – an understatement.

A word about the bikes: Everyone had a favorite. Mine happened to be the RD 400. Even though it got the worst gas mileage, always on reserve at 75 miles, it was still the most fun to ride. The Guzzi was my second choice. Good power, handling brakes, and ergonomics. The Honda was sort of a "vanilla" machine – electric start, good ergonomics, etc., but not much soul. Sort of like the '14 CB 500 X that I used for daily transportation. The Moto Morini, to me, was the bike from hell. It handled, powered, and stopped OK,



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but it sure didn't fit me and my size 13 boots. Also, the seat was about like an oaken 2 x 6. When Dave stalled the Triumph and couldn't restart it, I offered to get it going if he'd take back the Morini. He agreed, and the old, tired British twin fired on my first kick. I rode enduros on one of these in the late 60's/early 70's, so there's a certain mojo involved.



Each machine is equipped with an SAE type male/female connector for devices and heated gear. Unfortunately on old bikes such as these the electrics seldom keep up with the heated gear, and the headlamp will suffer. The cooler weather on Sunday caused a little discomfort, but it was all part of the adventure.

Upon arriving back in Kennett Square we were treated to another one of Lynn's masterpiece dinners by a warm fireplace. Richard and his wife Lauraine left for Long Island, Dave took off on his ST 1300 for eastern PA, and Jim and I stayed overnight.

There was frost on the meadow Monday morning, but the sun was out, the Gordon's jacket was turned on, and I was off to Thisilldous in Belvedere for a late breakfast and the run up 519/521 to Port Jervis and familiar roads home through the western Catskills.

If you want to try a Retro Tour, contact Joel Samick @ 610-608-7430 and check out their website @ [www.retro tours.com](http://www.retro tours.com).

~ Jake Herzog

