VANSON LEATHERS

By Alisa Clickenger

Vanson Leathers is a company with a long history in creating quality leather goods, particularly motorcycle apparel. Vanson built their first motorcycle jacket in 1974, and over the decades has earned an enviable reputation for creating legacy motorcycle apparel. However, times are changing and Vanson is changing with them. At AIMExpo they premiered two waxed cotton jackets, the Compass and its mesh-paneled counterpart, the Baja.

The Compass is a full-length, belted, fully waxed cotton jacket. Ideal for touring or looking stylish while riding around town, it's full of thoughtful details like the leather-covered belt buckle which ensures your tank won't get scratched. There is a leather keeper for the belt, embossed with the unit number of the jacket, which makes sure the belt doesn't get lost. The Compass also has 2-way lower front pockets (top loading and side entry), an inner wind flap and outer storm flap full length down the front and a two-way main zipper for riding comfort.

"The best thing is that this waxed cotton is breathable," explains Michael Van Der Sleesen, founder of Vanson Leathers. "This means that even on a hot day, it will absorb your body moisture and pass through the wax. It's a remarkable material and an old world solution to an old world problem. It's much more effective than the nylon oil-based materials like polyester."

Vanson's Baja touring jacket is a unique hybrid jacket ideal for hot weather riding. The CORDURA® mesh fabric panel is strong and abrasion-resistant, while allowing maximum airflow. Completing this jacket's versatility is the provision for zipping-in Vanson's Streamliner vest, which makes the Baja ideal for those hot riding days which morph into chilly evenings.

The waxed cotton of both jackets is 10.10 ounce army duck fabric also known as "shelter duck" — a medium weight multi-purpose canvas fabric with a very tight, plied yarn weave construction which makes it resistant to tearing. Both waxed cotton jackets come with Vanson's patented zip-in "hanging" liner design which allows the armor to shift with your body and not be restrained by the shell so that when the rider moves the armor stays in the proper position. CE approved F.A.S. armor at the shoulder and elbow is included, and there is a CE approved back protector that can be purchased separately.

All of the materials as well as the construction is made in the USA, except for the snaps, which are made in Italy. The Compass jacket comes in both men's and women's styling and is available in black or a tan & oak color scheme, with a retail price starting at $549. The Baja jacket also comes in men's and women's sizing, and is available in a black and a tan color. Retail prices for the Baja also start at $549. Vanson leathers sells direct to dealers and can be reached at:

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