



By Alisa Clickenger

ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

Scooter Fun Means More Motorcycle Enthusiasts

I'm just back from almost four weeks of riding in Southern Europe and Northern Africa (Morocco). With half our industry getting ready to get on planes to go to Milan for EICMA, my thoughts remain across the pond with regards to riding. Europeans and the European motorcycle marketplace seem to take a much more serious approach to riding motorcycles, not just their graduated licensing system but also their focus on safety standards for protective apparel with the CE regulations. But this trip I also learned that there's also a fun side to riding on two wheels in Europe.

Enter scooters: Just like in the USA, there is no special license required to operate scooters which are under 50cc. It's not surprising that commuters, especially the younger demographic with limited budgets, are flocking to these machines as the narrow city streets become even more congested with vehicles. What is surprising is that several clever companies, including Northroad Rentals and Tours in Porto, Portugal, are finding a flourishing tourism market for these machines.

There is a burgeoning market for 'self-guided' tours. Rent the small cc scooter with a GPS and a nightly plan for accommodations and presto! Instant adventure. Smaller machines mean that the cost to the tour operator is less, even when factoring in that any organized scooter tours

deploy a chase vehicle because of the limited storage capacity on these machines. Smaller machines mean shorter consecutive days that are comfortable in the saddle, so the rental companies are shortening the itineraries, and the combination means that these mini excursions are affordable, easily accessible, affordable, and insanely fun.

Consumers initially see the scooters as less intimidating than motorcycles, so in Europe scooters have earned a delightfully fun position as the perfect gateway vehicle even when compared to the larger two-wheeled vehicles. And once these tourists — including many Americans — experience the fun and excitement (as well as the limitations that a 50cc offers), suddenly the larger machines aren't so intimidating and "unsafe". And voila' — A motorcyclist is born.

So, my question is this: How do we bring this easy trajectory-to-two-wheels back to the United States? How do we leverage this bit of fun to not only enhance our industry, but also grab the attention of those individuals who are the holy grail of the new motorcycle marketplace: Millennials and women?

To me it makes sense to stop size-shaming what anyone rides. Let's offer scooter "experiences" Stateside and see if we can grab those two-wheel curious people. Instead of shunning scooter riders, show them a heck of a good time, and get them riding before they think about all the reasons the naysayers say they should not. To me it makes sense to keep working towards images of people having fun on scooters AND on motorcycles in mainstream magazines and in consumer events so that more people can self-identify with the ads and catch the two-wheeled fever.

Hmm... I think I just identified the next step in my business plan. What makes sense to you? 

*Alisa is a world traveler, author, professional experience maker and confidence coach. She has been featured in a variety of media outlets as a woman pursuing a life of adventure and helping others to access their inner wisdom and be free to lead lives they are passionate about. Her book **Boost Your Confidence Through Motorcycling: A Woman's Guide to Being Your Best Self On and Off the Bike** became an Amazon.com #1 Bestseller. In 2019 Alisa was also named to Dealernews TOP 100 People in Powersports. Her personal mission is to support and empower other riders, particularly women, to be their best selves on and off the bike.*

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