

# ADRIATIC TOUR

Always on the look out for interesting places in the world to ride, when Ulyssian friends Bill and Kay Schiralli asked if Lyn and I would be interested in a tour by Adriatic Mototours out of Slovenia it didn't take long for us to say yes.

We settled on a two week guided tour with backup van then a week self guided tour afterwards to the Italian Dolomites, we mentioned this to Pauline and Neil Clacher and Peter Hocking from Macarthur Branch and the tour was full. The tour only allowed for a total of ten people and with two Brits and an American already booked we had reached this.

Four of us chose to go via Dubai, then Venice for a couple of days and then by train to Ljubljana the capital of Slovenia, the rest of the group arriving by air from other places.

All the Aussies had selected to ride BMW 1200GS bikes (4) which were in very good condition, the oldest

having a modest 70,000 kms on the clock. The others rode Honda CBR 600 (2) and a CBR1000.

The first day was used for introductions, instructions, and paperwork and then a loop ride to get used to the bikes and riding on the right hand side of the road, it was also an opportunity for

Matej the tour operator to see how we rode.

When reading the neat little tour schedule book it showed that the Day 2 scenic route was only 207 km saying it was a 7 hour day – I thought they have to be kidding! I soon learnt they weren't and that traveling over there is nowhere like Oz, the roads we used were in general good bitumen ranging from normal width roads having fast sweepers to secondary roads that are twisty and narrow, very twisty and very narrow and towards the end of the tour through the Dolomites becoming even twistier with the very few straight roads becoming a thing of joy.

The trip took us from Ljubljana – Plitvice – Sarajevo – Mostar – Zabljak – Petrovac –Dubrovnik – Hvar Island – Pag Island – Sezana then the self guided tour to the lovely alpine town of Corvara in the Dolomites which became our centre for loop rides.

In typical motorbike rider manner none of the routes were direct and often took us through incredibly beautiful countryside often remote and wild, on roads that zig zagged up almost vertical mountain sides, sometimes through tunnels with junctions in them. We rode through areas still showing reminders of the dreadful toll of the Bosnian Serbian war, wandered around and absorbed the magnificence of the old towns of Sarajevo, Mostar and Dubrovnik, and the beautiful but sparse islands of Hvar and Pag. We stayed in varying accommodation all of which were good with most being in places where we could walk to the sights and



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## Vic and Lyn Lesslie explore some corners with a group of adventurous Ulyssians...

restaurants, a big plus when on bikes. We always found the locals friendly and never felt at all uncomfortable.

It was interesting that whilst there were literally hundreds of motorcyclists wherever we went, very rarely were they over aggressive in their riding style. Fast yes, but with consideration for others. Cars were always considerate to us as riders and would often pull over in order for us to pass and always would ease back to allow the bikes to pull in front of them when passing.

Probably 50% or even more of all bikes we saw were BMW's (mainly GS) with the rest being Japanese, with about 98% of all bikes being sit-up style bikes. Commenting on this to Matej he said most sport bike riders stuck to the more open corners south of where we were and that the Dolomites in particular with the huge number of switchback corners, were not conducive to sport bikes. I can understand why, it was a long day in the saddle with the GS when you consider on some days we were taking 4000 plus corners.

On the down side was an accident had by our American companion forcing him to return home – he had recently been diagnosed with diabetes type 2 and not having breakfast or morning tea, and not drinking

any water and it being a hot day, he blacked out on a shallow bend and went off the edge of the road (there are no shoulders on any of the roads). He and the bike flipped a couple of times and he ended up with a broken ankle and badly bruised hip, the bike having to be written off. It could have been a far worse result.

The tour operators Matej and Rozle were always considerate of our needs and have put together a well organised schedule. All in all it was a magnificent trip and to be thoroughly recommended, however not for the faint hearted or for those who cannot ride corners. (info@adriaticmototours.com).



The Ulyssian group from front row left - Bill Schiralli, Kay Schiralli, Lyn, Pauline Clacher, Neil Clacher, Peter Hocking - Back row Tour Guides Matej and Rozle, and Vic Lesslie.

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