



MOTORCYCLING THE HIMALAYAS

MOTORCYCLING THE HIMALAYAS: THE RIDE GETS REAL – PART 10

A small band of brothers, 3 Aussies, a Kiwi and 3 Yanks (The Himalayan 7) have finally started what we came to do, Motorcycle the Himalayas. The Riverside Springs resort is wonderful, replete with grand views of the valley, bungalows and a pool! Their Veggie burger was by far, my favorite yet. A breakfast meeting included a presentation on rules and regs, some familiarization with our Royal Enfield's.



HIMALAYAN 7

Two of the riders, Bill and Dean had never ridden motorcycles got their motorcycle licenses just to take this epic adventure, my helmets off to them. The first and foremost task is familiarizing the team with bikes we will be on over the next 14 days. We then went on a shakedown ride through the city streets and some time on the madness that is the main byway. At this point Bill realized this is completely out of his league and opts for the safety of the chase truck, a very wise decision. The team is good to go, flanked by Jack in the lead and Rob as sweeper we are off to our first stop, Pokhara.

TRIAL BY FIRE

The ride to Pokhara is absolutely grueling. Even though our departure point is far outside Kathmandu still, the brutal traffic is relentless. Who thought this was a good idea? First of all I packed for Everest an 18 thousand foot altitude. Its 85 degrees, 80% humidity and I am wearing heavy black leathers sweating my ass off. The roads are a wreck, potholed and pitted in pathetic disrepair. The smells are even worse. Sucking in dust and plumes of black diesel exhaust so thick you can't see through them we ride the ragged edge at every turn. This is trial by fire in survival 101 for the newbies. For the seasoned riders, an exercise in defensive driving and the adventure Veterans, great fun! Good god, its day 1 of 14 and we've only ridden 246 Kilometers. At the halfway point we stop in Banipur, a beautiful mountain town that dates back a thousand years, the ride up is full of extreme ascending hairpin turns and it's here another U.S rider almost drops his bike and twists an ankle. Two men are down and its day 1 of the ride.





MOMENT OF ZEN

The Battle continues as we forge onward. These roads have 6 inch deep potholes; have cows standing in the middle and massive diesel trucks barrel headlong directly at you. We pass through small villages that look like something out of a Nat Geo documentary. Mr. L.A. Sipping double Macchiato's overlooking the Pacific Ocean is taken aback by the third world poverty, pollution and feels like a total wimp, this California boy's gut reaction is to question why I am here. What good could possibly come from weeks of battling difficult circumstances and endless obstacles? This is so outside my comfort zone. Arriving in Pokhara, I sit in the solitude my room for a Zen moment of reflection.