

Biker Information Guide

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"Biker Billy Cooks with Fire"



My Best Friend's First Bike

Even if you have been riding for more years than you can count you probably have buddies who don't ride. Maybe they rode dirt bikes when they were kids. But for all these years that you have been regaling them with the excitement and joys of riding motorcycles, they have just stood on the curb and watched. It is sad not to be able to share the adventure motorcycling with friends, especially your best friend.

So it is with my best and longest standing friend. We have known each other since I was ten and he eleven. We grew up together, had our share of adventures and youthful mischief, went off to different colleges and pursued far different careers. Life led us to live in different areas and some years left little or no time for us to get together. Yet down through the years we have remained best friends. I even introduced him to the lovely lady he married and had two beautiful daughters with. After all these decades we are still the same two hellions we once were; just a lot older, a little wiser and not as likely to get in trouble anymore.

Besides the many ties that bind us from long ago we do share a few current interests and hobbies. Technology and fast Mustangs are two. Many years ago I was the motorhead and he always had his head in some computer. Now he earns his living developing software and I work within the motorcycle world. Over the years I have grown interested in computers and technology and he got into drag racing a Cobra Mustang. Both developments have increased the fun we share when we get together.

This New Years Eve, shortly after midnight my cell phone rang. I put down the parts I was working on, wiped the oil off my hands and answered the phone. (Yeah, my idea of a fun way to celebrate a New Years is to tinker in the garage.) Guess who called? My best friend and his three ladies; they had just returned from a neighbor's party and wanted to wish me a happy New Year. We four yakked over their speakerphone until it was time for mom to chase the two teenagers off to bed. Then it was just us old boys catching up on stuff. You know; work, the economy, the elections, and some fun stuff like fast cars and computers. Then he tells me his New Year's resolution. He's getting a bike this coming spring! Then he asked me what would be a good first bike.

Boy was I glad I had already set those expensive parts down on the workbench. My surprise and happiness was followed in a blinding flash by an overwhelming sense of responsibility. The years of listening to my persuading and advocating had finally helped him to make the leap from four wheels to two. Now he needed my help in taking this from a mental decision into the reality of riding a motorcycle in the Urbanized-Asphalt-Jungle of New Jersey. Thankfully he had actually been listening to me all these years, when I mentioned that first he needed to take a Motorcycle Safety Foundation Rider Basic Rider Course (MSF-BRC). He said, "You

have to do that, right?" I promptly replied "YES YOU HAVE TO DO THAT!" Whew, that was a relief. You don't know how many new riders I meet at events who haven't taken a MSF-BRC and say things like "Yeah I'll get around to that, maybe next year when I am more experienced." Beyond advising them to do it now not next year, all I can do is pray for them.

Well with that hurdle safely past it was back on to what would make a good first bike. We spoke for most of the first hour of this year about how to choose a first bike. Sport verses cruiser; new verses used; slow revving verses high-strung; we covered most of the factors to juggle in that momentous first bike buying decision. I am sure his head was as filled with moto-visions as most New Years revelers were with Champagne by that time of the night. As we said our wishes for the New Year and goodnight, we also promised to keep talking about this after he had read a few dozen motorcycle magazines. The one thing that I will surely come back to recommending is that MSF-BRC. In fact, now would be a good time for you to schedule yourselves for a basic or experienced course. After all the more you know, the better it gets and spring is just a few weeks away. Ride Safe!

French Bread Pizza from Hell

Why is it that this pizza, made on Italian bread, is call French bread pizza? Who cares? Enjoy it on Italian bread or any kind of bread.

Olive oil

2 fresh red jalapeno peppers, stemmed and thinly sliced

1 red bell pepper, cored and julienned

1 yellow bell pepper, cored and julienned

1 orange bell pepper, cored and julienned

1 green bell pepper, cored and julienned

1 Italian green frying pepper, cored and julienned

3 medium onions, julienned

5 teaspoons chopped garlic

Salt and ground black pepper

1 loaf Italian bread

2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, or to taste

1.) Heat several tablespoons of olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the jalapenos, bell peppers, Italian frying pepper, onions, and garlic and fry for 6 to 10 minutes, or until the peppers are tender. Add salt and black pepper to taste.

2.) Preheat the oven to 350F.

3.) Cut the Italian bread in half lengthwise, cover with a generous amount of the shredded mozzarella, add a layer of sautéed peppers and some oil from the frying pan, and top with a light layer of cheese. Bake until the cheese is melted, 10 to 12 minutes. Serve hot.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

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