

# **Motoexplorers UK Kazakhstan - China - Thailand expeditions**

## Discovering places others haven't found

### **Free-spirited Motorcycle expedition**

11 week adventure.

Dept. UK: flexible up to 18<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Finishing: Bangkok 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Motoexplorers have successfully run guided tours across China to Beijing in 2009 and across China, Laos and Thailand in 2011. We now want to share our knowledge and passion and encourage others to have their own ride of a lifetime for a fraction of the cost of a fully guided trip. Our routes will take you across some of the most stunning parts of Eastern Europe and central Asia as you ride the silk route to far eastern China. We will equip you with route notes, contacts and pre-trip advice helping to take the hassle out of planning your trip and the constant thoughts of "what have I forgotten!"



<http://www.motoexplorers.co.uk>

### **Expedition options (Self guide on pre-China stages)**

**UK – China – Thailand. Full 11 week expedition: £6599**

**Includes all costs throughout China, fully guided.**

Flexible option to ride Europe & Kazakhstan at your own pace and join at the China border, 24 Sept 2012 for 6 weeks riding across China, Laos, Thailand  
**Or joining from China to Bangkok - £5499 (guided in China, self guide from Laos & Thailand)**

\***Self-Guide** costs cover MotoExplorer pre-trip planning, logistics and full route packs.

Riders then pay all direct touring costs on a 'Pay as you ride' basis. Ie, European hotels, (China is all-inclusive) fuel, insurances, permits etc (full detailed costings are itemised in the 'riders own expenses' section below.

### **Free-Spirited Adventure – expedition logistics – Guided tour across China**

This expedition is tailored for riders who wish to combine a degree of pre-trip planning, organisation and support, with a good degree of personal freedom in order to complete a World motorcycling expedition crossing China. As such, there are certain stages where riders have total freedom and control of their own ride plans and where you ride without a support guide.

### **Self-Guide route pack includes:**

- Visa application advice
- Rider route notes
- GPS waypoints

- Opportunity to attend a pre-trip Training Day covering map reading & ride pacing, GPS advice, motorcycle maintenance & repairs, puncture repairs, brakes & tyre changing
- Local infrastructure – tips on garage & repair locations, fuel etc
- Accommodation locations, hotels and camping (estimate approx 10-15 % of the tour camping)
- Return freight contacts and assistance, from Bangkok to UK. *(Costs for return motorcycle freight de-berthing and customs clearance are direct costs payable by riders )*
- key waypoints for European stages, including; Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Russia prior to entry into Kazakhstan. *(actual accommodation / camping costs are riders own expense and included in the riders own costs estimate below.)*

### **Additional tour support**

We will provide the following additional expedition support as required;

- Advice on liaising with customs & border crossings.
- Advice on arranging third party motorcycle insurance.

**China expedition** – enables riders to join and benefit from the support of an official approved Chinese guide in order to comply with all current legislation and entry permits for riding foreign registered motorcycles across China. (riders own expense as detailed)

- Chinese entry permits for all Provinces
- Official letters of invitation for China
- Customs clearance agent (Chinese entry & exit borders)
- Chinese motorcycle registration and driving license
- Support vehicle & driver for duration across China

We can also recommend and assist organising the services and assistance of an additional tour agent and guide in Laos and Thailand. (if required)



### **Expedition style**

We detail a flexible ride plan for the whole expedition, with options to choose ride stages & joining date. Recommended accommodation has all been pre-scouted & includes a variety of camping and hotels.

You will ride across some of the best motorcycling routes in Europe, before reaching the first riders waypoint in the Czech Republic. After that you will head east and across Romania to the Ukraine The route incorporates much of the routes we have pre-scouted, although riders are totally free to deviate from our recommended schedule, up to the Chinese border. Russia will be your first milestone and gateway to Central Asia, where you can take a well earned rest in the vibrant river town of Astrakhan, as well as make any running repairs to the motorcycles including tyre changes (if necessary) ahead of the more challenging Kazakhstan stage.

There will also be opportunities to carry out oil changes and basic servicing of your motorcycle in either eastern Kazakhstan or upon entering China. Bikes usually require just the one tyre and oil change on these expeditions.

After crossing Kazakhstan you will enter into China. On arrival at the Chinese border you will be met by our trusted local guides who provide invaluable local knowledge as well as tour support throughout China. Our Chinese guide will enable you to gain access to regions that you'd never discover without that local knowledge & experience. Throughout China your guide will provide motorcycle support, back up vehicle & all local hotels which are of a high quality 3/4\* accommodation. The first 2 days in China will be spent clearing all bike licensing & customs formalities, which then sets you free for a stunning adventure ahead; 29 days riding through mainland China.

Our Trans-Asia silk route takes you into some amazing regions, little explored by western riders. Heading into Southern Asia you will cross the border from China into Laos, continuing south through the lush mystical forests of northern Thailand, before you head further south riding the length of majestic Thailand from where you will prepare the bikes for shipping, either back to the UK or for world riders, onward to your next destination. Shipping costs and services of a freight agent to assist with freighting bikes back from Bangkok to UK at the end of the expedition can all be pre-paid directly to our approved freight agents in UK and Thailand

After safely packing the bikes for shipping, anyone hungry for more exploring will be able to set your own agenda and explore more of the Far East at your leisure.

## **Accommodation**

Hotels have been chosen for their location, character, security & comfort. Throughout China, full accommodation costs on a bed & breakfast basis are usually pre-booked.

## **Camping options**

No world expedition would be quite the same without the tranquility of spending a few nights under the stars. We will suggest places to make camp, taking into account local facilities & the security of the group.

## **Your Motorcycle**

In order to comply with Chinese permit regulations;

You must be the registered owner of the bike (copies of registration documents must be provided to our approved Chinese agents, no later than April / 5 months prior to departure).

The bike document must show your own (or Company) name and current address.

The bike should be well maintained, fully serviced with new brakes, chain & tyres fitted prior to departure. We advise expedition members have a spare set of tyres, which would usually be strapped onto the rear bike rack. (Support vehicle can carry tyres on certain stages – but not the full duration)

We will also suggest a suitable service stop en-route where riders may have oil, filters, brakes & tyres changed if necessary. We recommend all riders carry their own bike manufacturer approved filters, brake pads, spare inner tubes & puncture repair kits.

Basic guidance with bike maintenance will be provided prior to departure.

We will also provide detailed advice for all expedition members on:

Recommended tools & service items, Motorcycle spares & touring equipment

Bike packing procedures for return freight.

## Motorcycle type

We recommend bikes with wire wheels & metal luggage. I.e. BMW GS 1150, 1200 Adventure, 800 GS, Yamaha 660 / 1200 Tenere. Although a lot of the riding routes are road based (sometimes quite rough / loose tracks etc) but not usually anything too extreme / off-road. Therefore, the most important aspect of the bike is that you are comfortable with it in all respects yourself.

## Rider Suitability

Any competent rider with the will to make this journey should be able to complete the expedition. Remember: long distance journeys are, by their very nature - unpredictable! Things change – you will need adapt to any unforeseen situations that may arise. Participants should also be adaptable by nature, easy going with a sense of humour and willingness to see things from others perspective

**Basic Off-road experience is beneficial**, Riders should be confident enough to explore a few forest tracks, green lanes, rutted unpaved roads and some moderate sandy sections at your own pace, which will prepare you well for some of the slightly rougher surfaced sections of eastern roads! Attendance on a basic level off road course could also be beneficial for those who wish to improve their confidence.

Riders must hold a full motorcycle license and have a minimum of three years riding experience on a bike in excess of 500cc & should be comfortable riding: Up to 300 miles per day / 1200 miles per week.

## Maintainance

All participants should ensure that they are able to carry all essential day-to-day items themselves. In China the Chinese support vehicle may be used at the Chinese expedition leaders discretion to provide emergency assistance and onward travel to the nearest suitable destination where you can arrange further assistance.

All costs incurred to third parties (e.g. local mechanics, parts or shipping agents as well as repatriation of motorcycles) are payable by individual participants.

Should your bike require a replacement part that cannot be sourced locally, you may need to source parts from the UK and arrange freighting out to you. Actual costs of the part, and the cost of freight are payable by the tour participant.

\* Please note that due to certain schedule restraints for entering and traveling within China, if any participant experiences an incident resulting in significant delay, it may in certain circumstances be necessary for you to make your own onward or return travel arrangements.



## **Not included**

1. Fuel
2. Any costs incurred to third parties e.g. local mechanics, or agents directly arranged by the tour members themselves.
3. Border entry fees i.e. customs charges, motorcycle insurance or any other miscellaneous expenses directly incurred by the tour participant.
4. Accommodation / camping costs (China stages require an advance booking deposit) All other costs are payable on a 'Pay as you ride' basis.
5. Participant's medical, travel insurance & motorcycle insurance costs. (Compulsory for these trips)
6. Participant's own return airline tickets.
7. Visa & embassy fees
8. Inoculations – Participants should consult with their own GP no later than six months ahead of departure.

## **Travel items required**

Lightweight camping equipment; small petrol stove & cooking equipment, tent, sleeping bag, lightweight air mat, ground sheet, torch, penknife, repair tape, your own bike tools etc.



## **Personal travel requirements**

1. Entry visas for all countries through which you travel. We will provide a full route plan to all accepted expedition members. Visas for every Country en-route are easily obtainable in advance for all EU citizens.
2. Driving license with your current address.
3. International Driving permit (available from motoring organizations ie AA)
4. Passport – valid for at least six months from the end of the expedition & with at least ten blank pages.
5. Photocopies of all documents + we recommend you make a digital scan of all travel documents & store these on a secure server in case you need to access copies on the expedition.
6. Credit cards – we recommend that you carry at least two different cards, ideally with a zero foreign loading charge – which will make obtaining cash on route as easy & cost effective for you as possible.
7. Cash: a minimal amount of currency for each Country + plenty of dollars! As the dollar is still the preferred international currency.
8. You should consult with your GP or nurse regarding the relevant travel vaccinations well in advance of departure. Participants should not travel into remote regions if they have any on-going medical issues or are advised against travel by their medical practitioner.
9. We recommend that you have a dentist check up before the expedition.
10. All expedition participants must have travel insurance, suitable for an overland motorcycle expedition, to include all medical expenses associated with emergency medical evacuation in the event of accident or illness.
11. Participants should contact their own relevant organisations in advance of the tour, to include notification to your bank, Credit Card Company & mobile phone company of the Countries through which you will be travelling & duration of your trip, ensuring that full use of facilities has been logged & authorised.

12. Participants should ensure that they have sufficient resources in place should the need arise to suspend travel and return home at any stage. In the event that anyone is unable to continue the ride due to an emergency situation you will need to be prepared to leave your bike and kit.

## **Riding Kit**

Most travel insurance terms provide that all riders wear suitable protective motorcycle clothing. We recommend using the best fully waterproof clothing you can afford, including full protective boots & gloves. (advisable to carry spare waterproof gloves)



## **GPS**

All riders should have and use a GPS system & be familiar with entering & registering their current or projected E/N Coordinates. This will make finding fellow riders & meeting at waypoints easy. We recommend the Garmin 550 or 660 with Garmin World Map + China & Asia on micro sd card.



We recommend that all participants ride certain stages of the expedition in groups of 2 or more riders. All participants should carry a good simple mobile phone with full worldwide coverage.

GPS, navigation and route pacing advice & training can be provided to expedition members. A simple spare phone is also beneficial, which will enable you to use local SIM cards outside Europe.

## **Tracker & Rider Coms**

Although not a 'must' it is suggested that riders buy and use a portable tracking device such as a 'SPOT' tracker which can be used to transmit your exact position to other riders and friends & family back home. This provides peace of mind that in the event of an incident you will be able to summon emergency support without the need of a mobile phone signal. The units also feature a SOS function linked to a worldwide emergency response centre, which may summon local assistance to your exact GPS position. This facility does of course rely on the local rescue infrastructure, which varies from Country to Country & should not be relied upon as an instant 'get out of trouble' facility. SPOT trackers are available through Amazon

## **Rider's own first aid & personal kit**

Plasters & first aid dressings

Antiseptic cream

Diarrhea prevention tablets

Re-hydration sachets

Painkillers

Water bottle / camelback (your best friend!)

Water purifying tablets

All expedition members should have a basic understanding of First Aid.

Good hygiene practices before eating and after going to the toilet will help prevent stomach bugs.

## **Return Bike Freight**

We will provide assistance with the freight logistics in order to return your bike to the UK. Return sea freight costs from Thailand to UK are payable directly by riders to freight agents.

## **Riders Return Flights**

Riders will need to book their own onward or return airline flight from the end of the expedition in Bangkok. If you decide to book return airline flights prior to the tour departure we recommend that your ticket allows you to alter the return date in the unlikely event of the expedition encountering any unavoidable delays.



These guidelines will be updated with any relevant pre-tour information and form part of the tour logistics 'Self guided expeditions' Terms & Conditions of booking.



## **Booking**

Participation is open to riders of any nationality, subject to visa requirements. Most visas need to be applied for in your own Country of residence.

## **Terms**

Participants should be aware that these expeditions are tailored for people who wish to combine a degree of pre-trip planning, organisation and support, with a large degree of personal freedom in order to complete a World motorcycling expedition. As such, it is not therefore a totally 100% guided and supported tour. There are certain stages where riders have total freedom and control of their own ride plans and as such must be prepared to take responsibility for their own actions.

Adventure motorcycling is a dangerous pastime & all riders are required to sign our waiver of liability relating to any unforeseen incidents, which are beyond our own control. These could include (but are not limited to) Strikes, limited access or border restrictions, war, terrorism, kidnap, motorcycle or road traffic accidents – where riders or third parties at fault, health or medical conditions, delays during expedition due to incidents beyond our control, total mechanic failure of motorcycles.



Expedition places will be awarded on a first come basis to suitably qualified applicants. Applications should be made by completion of our expedition booking & application form. We reserve the right to gain further satisfaction of your suitability for the expedition by either telephone or meeting prior to acceptance.

You will be riding through some challenging environments, but will at all times attempt to do so in as safe a manner as possible. World rides call for participants who are determined & adventurous individuals who can be team players when needed. You should be open minded, adaptable & above all have; "a good sense of humour" in challenging times.

Applications along with tour booking deposit of £750 should be forwarded to MotoExplorer (address below). Should you withdraw from the expedition for any reason all deposit & tour payments are non-refundable. We recommend that you obtain suitable travel insurance to cover the repayment of your expedition fees should you have to withdraw from the expedition. Our own services are entirely 'advisory' providing information, contacts and route information in order that free spirited motorcyclists can make an independent expedition, in regions of the world where it is difficult to explore. We do not provide any direct touring services ourselves (and as such are not subject to the costs and regulations of a package tour operator) All direct expedition expenses are the responsibility of the participant – which ultimately gives participants much more freedom as well as far lower travel costs. Once an application for detailed expedition advice and route packs has been made, along with the deposit payment, no refunds are possible. You do not of-course make any direct expedition payments until you are ready to travel (other than a deposit payment to the Chinese guide of approximately £600 which is non-refundable) All balances and direct travel costs are then Pay as you ride.

## Expedition Budgets



### **Expedition route pack and logistics for China 2012**

Includes Logistics & support vehicle up to Romania – Ukraine border, plus costs for transit in China.

**Total expedition base cost: £6599**

This is the total amount payable to Motoexplorers

### **Booking advance payment: £750**

'Self guide' booking deposits are Non-refundable, as we start to provide information and advice as soon as your booking is confirmed. Balance payable no later than six months prior to departure.

### **Riders own expedition direct expense estimates**

China inclusive 30 day tour cost; estimate / subject to actual participant numbers. Includes all services within China, as detailed including hotels, guide, support vehicle, permits for every Province, customs clearance, Chinese driving license.

European accommodation / hotels: £1200

Laos & Thailand hotels: £450

Visas, visa agents, and embassy fees: £300

Travel insurance & third party bike insurances: £200

Return bike freight: £550

**Riders direct Expedition costs; £2700**

**Motoexplorers expedition logistics, route notes & assistance as detailed: £6599**

**Total all inclusive estimated costs: £9299**

(From previous experience, we estimate the riders all-inclusive expedition cost is approximately £6,000 lower than taking a fully guided fixed schedule tour)

***Participants should be aware that these types of expeditions do carry certain risks, which could lead to circumstances where you would need to arrange your own repatriation for yourself and your motorcycle. We do suggest that you factor for this and make an allowance in your reserve travel budgets, should the need arise. (We suggest you have an emergency contingency budget of at least €2500)***

**Applications & booking deposits should be forwarded to:**



## **Contact & bookings**

### **Motoexplorers**

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Lincoln

LN1 1LB

United Kingdom

Tel: 01522 522493 / +44 (0) 7788 101144

Personal visits by appointment only.

BACS / direct Bank transfers to:

Santander Banking

A/C name: MotoExplorer

A/C: 42762549                      Sort: 09-06-66

BIC: ABBYGB2LANB                      IBAN: GB34 ABBY 0906 6642 7625 49

Paypal / credit cards accepted. (contact us)