



Smiling Albino's

# Fall Motorcycling Classic

Thailand's Northwest into Myanmar & beyond

A rugged mountain ride, charming rural villages & untouched Myanmar, plus a chaser of golf for good measure...

November 1 - November 8, 2013



## Background



This year we are exploring new ground on a bold, and pioneering journey: north and west, that is. This incredible ride features some big days, amazing landscapes and a variety of roads.

This multi-day route will allow us to experience outstanding motorcycling in Thailand's seldom visited rural northwest. From here a grand loop into Myanmar's untouched wilds.

We promise to enjoy golf, great scenery and hidden historical sites in this, the least visited country in Southeast Asia. Accommodations are cozy and clean although generally simpler in Myanmar.

The word "awesome" is frequently overused these days, but we feel comfortable applying it to the experience that we have crafted for you this year and look forward to hosting you!

**October 31, 2013:  
Get started in Bangkok**



**Flight Arrival Details:** according to personal flights  
[Majestic Grande](#), Grande Premier Room

Upon arrival in Bangkok we'll arrange express transfer service from the airport to your city hotel.



### **About Majestic Grande Bangkok**

The Majestic Grande Bangkok is a 4-star hotel conveniently located near to some of Bangkok's major shopping and entertainment areas. Rooms are elegant and tasteful with an emphasis on Thai silk and hardwoods; the pool, massage services and restaurants are top-drawer.

**November 1, 2013:**  
**Fly to Chiang Mai & ride  
to the hills**



**Meals:** B, L, D  
**Flight:** TG 102 BKK-CNX 08:00-09:20  
**Riding:** 235 km paved, curvy mountain roads  
[Riverhouse Hotel](#)

Begin with a flight to Chiang Mai, then saddle up, escape the city and begin an epic day of back-country riding. Before you know it you'll be in the mountains surrounded by the embrace of Thailand's lush tropical forests.

We'll make our way south, then west into the most forested province in the country, Mae Hong Son.



We'll pass highland villages and a variety of long stretches and fabulous rugged mountain turns until reaching our home for the night, Mae Sarieng.

### **About River House Hotel**



River House Hotel in Mae Sarieng is a charming, converted northern Thai teakwood house in the center of a charming little northern town. It is easy to walk down the road to the neighborhood pub or soak in balcony views of the river valley. Simple, clean, natural, this is Mae Sarieng!

**November 2, 2013:**  
**Long, winding road down  
to Mae Sot**



Meals: B, L, D  
Riding: 255km  
[Irawadee Resort](#), Standard Room

Today we'll cruise mountain roads along the Thai-Myanmar border while making our way down to Mae Sot, located in Tak province and a border crossing city to Myanmar.

This ride glides along the western spine of Thailand and passes dozens of refugee camps sheltering mostly Karen groups from their previous home in Myanmar.



The road is mostly outstanding, with varying construction and chaotic mudslide-ridden sections at the start, and some brilliant curvy sections closer to Mae Sot.

We'll stay in far-flung Mae Sarieng on the Yuam River, which is one of the most picturesque spots in Thailand



### **About Irawadee Resort**

Irawadee Resort is coolest place in Mae Sot town, located right in the heart of the city. It has a cozy boutique style with friendly staff. The building is constructed with natural brick and rooms are decorated in an old classic Thai-Myanmar style. Not bad for a border country town!

**November 3, 2013:  
Cross the border and to  
Hpa An, Myanmar**

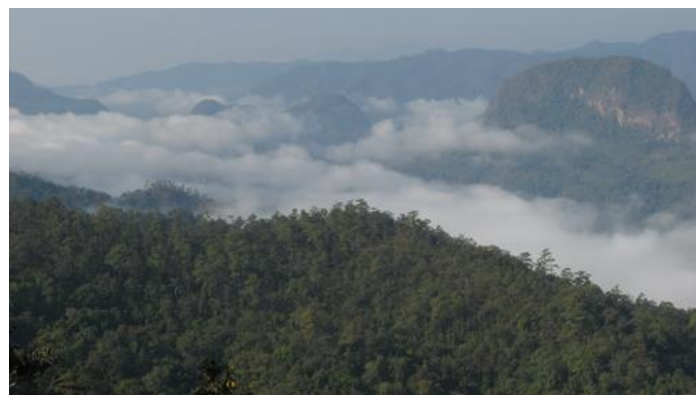


Meals: L  
Overnight at Hotel Zwekabin,  
Deluxe Room

Border crossing formalities take time, so we'll need to arrive early, wear a smile, and ease through it gently. Welcome to Myanmar!

Today is an ODD day, literally. The road to Hpa An is quite narrow and so travel is possible only in one direction at a time. On odd numbered days we can travel towards Hpa An and on even numbered days the flow of traffic reverses.

This is common on Myanmar rural roads and one of the many things we'll have to get used to in this fascinating country.



We'll meet our Myanmar support team and begin our ride in Myanmar on a small mountain road. Overall, the first 60km will be VERY slow going as this road is pock-marked madness, and it's the main import road for Thai goods entering Myanmar. Viewpoints

along the way will present themselves and we will stop frequently for photos and breaks. Along this route you will see many homes on stilts in the lowlands, frequently with the roofs made of the leaves of rubber trees.



One of the main differences that we will feel on crossing the border is a real rural feel to the ride and the surrounding landscape. We will pass several small towns on the way to our destination at the Hotel Zweekabin in Hpa An. The first Myanmar Beer awaits by the small pond at the hotel. We will ride at least 6 hours in Myanmar, and we'll eat at the hotel, and probably not leave the balcony.

### About Hotel Zweekabin



Located just outside of Hpa An town, the Zweekabin Hotel offers a rural feel within a gorgeous setting at the base of a dramatic limestone cliff. Rooms are very modern by Myanmar standards and are quite spacious.

**November 4, 2013:  
Hpa-An to Kyaikhto  
(Golden Rock)**



Meals: B, L, D

Riding: 145 km

[Golden Sunrise Hotel](#), Deluxe Room

Rise early and ride out of the limestone valley on the main road. Hpa-an is a small town, but a rather busy commercial hub and we will see farmers coming to town on horse carts or trishaws stacked with baskets or mass to sell in the market.

We'll pass many ornate temples, and at times the road will become congested in the towns, so, slow down for a look at life in modern Myanmar. There will be opportunities for photos, and the route offers a good cross-section of life in Myanmar.



On our arrival at Kyaikhto we will turn north off the main road to the town where the Golden Rock Temple is located. The famous

Golden Rock is an impressive sight, and from the road by the hotel, it is visible at night, illuminated from every angle.

After lunch we have a choice of either spending the evening at leisure or going up the mountain to visit the Golden Rock Temple. The road that leads up to the temple is restricted and bikes are not allowed. We will arrange a village truck to get there, and if feeling energetic we can hike!

### **About The Golden Sunrise Hotel**



The Golden Sunrise Hotel is situated in the heart of the Mon State at the foot of the magnificent Golden Rock. The villas are spacious and nicely furnished, surrounded by a tropical garden and mountain range. This is a simple, rural Myanmar hotel, but everything works!

November 5, 2013:  
Kyaikhto (Golden Rock)  
– Mawlamyine and  
GOLF!



Meals: B, L, D  
Riding: 150km  
The Strand Hotel, Royal Deluxe  
Room

This day we will depart from the hotel early and catch the brilliant morning light. On the road, we will see horse and ox carts that ply this route with goods and farm products. We'll backtrack a short way from the previous day's ride and as we pass Thaton, you will notice that some of the temples begin to take on a more Indian look. The road runs alongside the main rail line which crosses the road several times so expect a few uneven surfaces along the way!



On the entry to Mawlamyine, Myanmar's fourth largest city, we cross a 3km long bridge over the mighty Salween River that feeds into the Bay of Bengal. Following a short ride around the town and by the jetty launches we will seek refuge and relaxation at our hotel.

Mawlamyine is best known to English speakers through the opening lines of Rudyard Kipling's poem "*The Road to Mandalay*":

*By the old Moulmein pagoda  
Looking lazy at the sea  
There's a Burma girl a-setting  
And I know she thinks o'me*



**Golf:** enjoy golf this afternoon at one of the best golf courses in Myanmar. While here, we may also want to take a walking tour to stretch our moto legs around town.

Mawlamyne is a charming old colonial relic, once one of the grandest cities in SE Asia, and there is cold beer to be found on several corners.



### About the Strand Hotel

A modern hotel and the best place in town to stay, the Strand Hotel is nicely located by the waterfront and within convenient walking distance to the local market and several local restaurants. The rooms are spacious and clean with comfortable beds that will be much appreciated after the day's ride and golf.

**November 6, 2013:  
Mawlamyine to Thailand**



Meals: B, L, D  
Riding: 280 km  
[Tak Andaman Resort & Hotel](#)

Today is our final day in Myanmar and as we depart Mawlamyine the scenery is beautiful through limestone peaks with stupas and temples dotting the peaks along our route. After about an hour of riding we will rejoin the hectic main Myanmar – Thailand road on an “even day”, and re-trace our tracks out of the country for the next 100km.



After the ascent on the last hill, we’ll see market stalls and truck stops which tells us we have arrived once again at the Myawaddy-Mae Sot border crossing. Formalities, again, will take some time. Once we re-enter Thailand we’ll be glad for the much improved standard of road and driver and we’ll cruise 100km on a rolling rural highway towards to provincial capital of Tak Province, named, Tak.

**About Tak Andaman Resort & Hotel**



A clean and tranquil hotel which offers us a good stopover on our journey back to Chiang Mai. The rooms are again spacious, clean and furnished in a traditional Thai style. We’ll go out along the river tonight and get re-acquainted with Thai food.

**November 7, 2013:  
Towards Chiang Mai**



Meals: B, L, D  
Riding: 295km  
[Shewe Wana Boutique Hotel](#)

A final memorable day of riding sees our intrepid group making its way back into the Lana Kingdom's capital of Chiang Mai. Scenic, high-quality roads await as we'll cross northward into the forested surroundings of Bhumipol Dam, then northeast towards Lamphun and the northern capital of Chiang Mai by late afternoon.



We'll take today slow to enjoy the ride, fresh-air and bountiful nature. Once in town let's reflect on the adventures of the days past and sip cold drinks by one of the pools at Chiang Mai's Shewe Wana Hotel. Tonight, let's hit the town in style to celebrate a truly epic, ground-breaking, history-making, pioneering journey!

### **About Shewe Wana Boutique Hotel**



A charming, well-treed property in the center of Chiang Mai, located a short walking distance the Night Bazaar and Ping River. An emphasis on wood furnishing creates a modern Thai atmosphere with all amenities. A nice outdoor swimming pool and relaxing balcony make Shewe Wana a quiet escape in the city.

**November 8, 2013:  
Fly back to Bangkok**



**Meals:** B  
**Flight:** TG 103 CNX-BKK 10:10-11:30

This morning we'll transfer to the airport for a mid-morning flight to Bangkok. Services officially end for the motorcycling portion of the trip here in Bangkok, and we'll assist you with forward travel plans.

### About the motorcycles



The 250 CFR features a comfortable riding position and a low seat height. Experienced riders may notice a little less power than they might be accustomed to, however once this bike hits the power band you won't be left lacking for get up and go. The bike is quite nimble and turns rather tightly when you need it to.

What to expect: As with past Smiling Albino motorcycle adventures, you should expect that the daily rides will be between 4-6 hours on the bikes. Meals, snacks, activities, logistical support are all provided by Smiling Albino to enhance the adventure and free your mind to enjoy the spectacle unfolding around you.

#### **INCLUDING:**

all accommodations, meals, fuel, hosting services, happy hour tips, snacks, an adventure kit, vehicle support, golf, and airport transfers. Also Myanmar visa and arrival services.

#### **EXCLUDING:**

personal expenses, alcohol, or motorcycle damage.



## **The Smiling Albino Service Difference**

We understand implicitly that a perfect adventure is much more than nice hotels, great meals and hassle-free logistics. For a travel experience to be perfect, all pieces must work together like a symphony. It is the fine details which our guests appreciate most, like cold face towels after a hike, electrolyte beverages for your day cycling, and wine uncorked when the moment is right. From local maps to bottled water and colorful anecdotes on the areas we visit, a Smiling Albino adventure is a thorough, intimately hosted experience. We will also provide you with a complimentary mobile phone for your use throughout your stay. You'll be treated with executive care during your Smiling Albino adventure.

We look forward to hosting you!

### **The Team at Smiling Albino**

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