

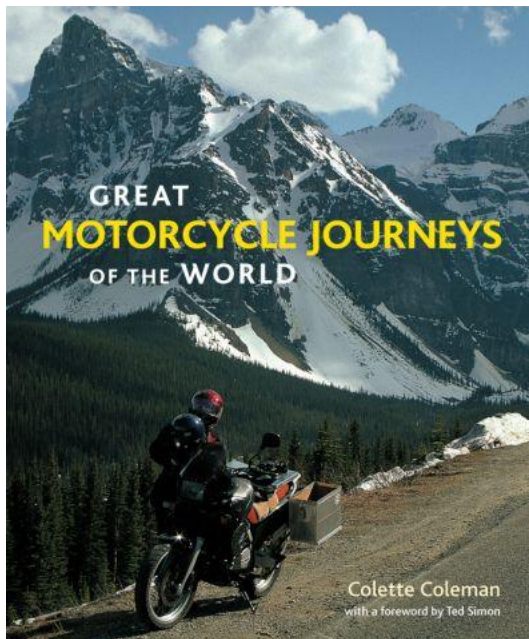
Great Motorcycle Journeys of The World

Ask people what their dream job is and many would say that it's to travel to exotic places and get paid for it. Colette Coleman is fortunate enough to have spent a large majority of her working life doing just this and has recently published a book featuring a variety of motorcycle journeys that can be taken in the space of the average annual holiday.

Great Motorcycle Journeys of The World features 40 classic routes to inspire the would-be traveller and is the perfect book for anyone who has ever dreamt of taking off on a bike and exploring the globe. Colette is well qualified to compile this book, having spend most of her 20s and 30s travelling, before working for several of the UK's leading action and adventure tour operators, researching and developing adventure holidays. She has also explored many countries on two wheels, including a 40,000-kilometre ride from England to Australia via Europe, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.



Colette had been heavily involved many years ago in Chris Scott's first edition of the now famous *Adventure Motorcycling Handbook* – seen by many as the 'bible' for overlanders. However, Colette's latest commission was different as she was presented with an opportunity for a book that would appeal to those riders who had



aspirations for exciting adventure trips, but who didn't feel they had the time, confidence or experience necessary to undertake such adventures. In short, Colette wanted to help them realise their ambitions.

"I saw the commission as a great opportunity to produce an inspirational book that would encourage nervous, new and even non-motorcyclists to get out there and see the world on two wheels. I also wanted the book to appeal to riders like myself, who had done the longer trips but now found that other commitments – such as work and family – made it difficult to disappear for a year. I will definitely be using the book as inspiration for my own holidays over the next few years and I'm hoping that other motorcyclists will too."

The idea behind the new book is that motorcycle travel is now so much easier and is open to everyone. As such, the featured journeys – including the Cape Town Circuit in South Africa, China’s Northern Silk Road, the Ringroad Tour of Iceland and Australia’s Great Ocean Road – appeal to a wide range of motorcyclists, offering routes most riders can tackle, if not always on their own then as part of an organised group. Furthermore, the destinations are considered safe in the current political climate and any of the journeys can be taken as part of an average two or three-week holiday or even a few days out of a family holiday. According to Colette, it is also possible to link many of the trips to extend the riding into a couple of months for those wanting a longer adventure.



“It is not a definitive list of the world’s best or toughest motorcycle trips, but a selection of journeys that are currently accessible to most nationalities,” she said. “I have chosen countries where it is either possible to take your own bike, where bike hire is available or there are options to pick up a bike as part of an organised tour. I have also featured a wide variety of riding terrains – smooth tarmac, off road tracks, deserts, mountains and coastal rides – so the journeys offer a mix of riding to suit all skills and adventure levels. I really believe there is something for everyone in the book.”

Each route described in the book is accompanied by stunning photography and features a ‘tool box’ telling you when to visit, other routes in the region that can extend the ride, and exactly what options are available to you in terms of your motorcycle – whether you can take your own bike into the country, make arrangements to hire machines there, or book a bike-inclusive tour. A map also illustrates the route and the points of interest on the way.

As is the nature of motorcycle adventure travel, many of the stories and inspirational pictures in the book feature BMW bikes – and Colette is a big fan. She bought her first BMW – a 1984 R 80 G/S PD for about £1300. It was already 10-years-old when she bought it but it took her and her husband Steve all the way overland to Australia – around 40,000 kilometres through some pretty harsh terrain. After that, it was used

by Steve for a couple of years as a 'despatch' bike to deliver parcels and packages all around London. Apparently, it never missed a beat.

"The R 80 G/S PD was the first BMW I had ever ridden and it was a brilliant bike," said Colette. "It converted me to BMWs and I've owned two since – the F 650 on the inside cover sleeve of the book, which I took to Morocco and a R 100 GS PD which mainly did the daily commute. If I were to do a 'big' trip again it would definitely be on a BMW."

Colette has just returned from a two-week trail ride in Costa Rica and has been invited to ride in Vietnam and China. Her plans for the future are to produce a follow-up book to *Great Motorcycle Journeys of the World*, using the same inspirational/colourful format but featuring some of the longer classic journeys such as Alaska to Argentina, London to Beijing or Trans Africa. For those thinking of starting out on their two-wheeled motorcycle adventures, her advice is quite simple:

"Choose a bike that is right for you and that you feel comfortable on – not the bike your friends want you to buy – and it doesn't have to be the biggest or the newest on the market. Do, however, buy the best riding gear you can afford and if you are heading into Asia or Africa fit a loud horn and use it! Above all though, take a deep breath and relax – it is easier than you think."



Whether you're an experienced rider or just a beginner who wants to give it a go, many of the journeys described in the book will open a whole new world of motorcycling opportunities. With a foreword by Ted Simon, *Great Motorcycle Journeys of the World* is published in hardback by New Holland and costs £24.99 (or local equivalent). The 192-page colour book is available from all good bookshops and at all the usual online retailers.