

'man cannot live on motorbike alone'. Sadly we men are simple, weak, tortured wrecks controlled by hormones and ironically, not ours! The three months of winter grief is worth it and let's face it, it's all forgotten in the first few SECONDS, yup the big 'Y' for Yeeeeehaaaaa!

I got up early Sunday morning, which goes against the grain, to begin my pre season pilgrimage, checking the tyre pressures, oil, water, tools, tyre repair kit. Cleaning my helmet visor I suddenly realized that I'd been cheated out of an hour because of daylight saving. Dang, no morning coffee, I've got to get my kit on, grab my camera and out the door, garage door that is. So with best intention and the desire to complete the first season initiation ceremony I found myself on my bike daydreaming to the tune of the throbbing exhaust note, so much so I almost forgot to stop at the meeting place - Full Throttle Motorcycles here in Pukekohe.

What a brilliant turnout of riders, over 120 bikes. There are all makes and models, colours, sizes and that's the bikers I'm referring to here! It's just so great seeing everyone getting out and enjoying their passion. First topic by most I talked to was 'I thought it was going to rain'. I chatted with so many fellow bikers it felt more like a reunion, it truly is one of the great things about these sorts of events, the social aspect. It doesn't matter what your ride is so long as you're doin' it.

Michelle and AJ had totally outdone themselves on organizing everything down to a 'T', actually it was coffee (right on), a map and a briefing by AJ. A St Johns medic and a breakdown truck was also present on the ride should it be necessary. Unfortunately, one rider hit some unmarked road works and ended up in a ditch with a broken collar bone and his pillion rider nursed a few grazes and bruises. This brings me to a point that the road conditions after this last winter in places are just plain dangerous and safety is paramount. Bikers beware, what happened to that rider could have happened to anyone of us. AJ did bring this section of road to our attention at the pre ride briefing.

So, the ride..... totally awesome. The road was dry most of the way, weather great, scenery just stunning and the riders all well mannered on the road (191 km approx 3 hours ride time). Even if you don't have a bike, go for a drive, you will not be disappointed. Pukekohe, Pukekawa, Opuatia, Glen Murray, Naike, Pepepe, Dunmore and lunch at the pub at Waingararo. A gorgeous, traditional kiwi pub with very friendly owners. Onward to Ngaruawahia, to Huntly, going left before the power station back to Naike through Rotongaro and back through Pukekawa over the Waikato river on the Tuakau Bridge, back to Full Throttle Motorcycles for a 3pm BBQ and spot prizes

We bikers really get behind charity events and Hope Unlimited Trust is a worthy group of people who offer professional counseling, support services and personal development programmes. Over \$1200 was raised and it all helps those who need it! We are so lucky to have wonderful people in our community who organize these events. Get behind these events and help those in need. Truly a great day and I was honored to be a part of it. See you all next time. ED

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