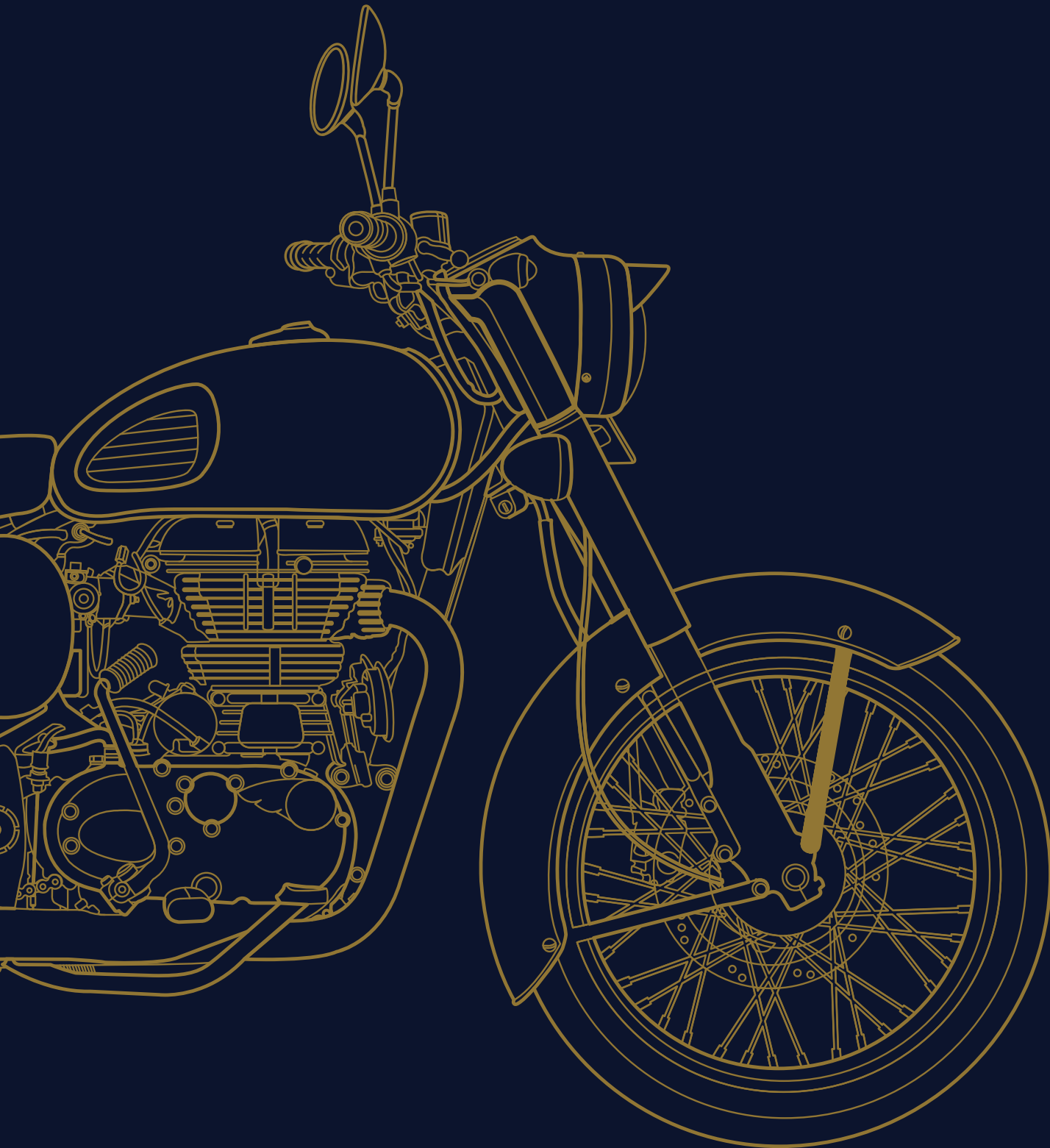


India

ON AN ENFIELD



India

ON AN ENFIELD

Author:

Rajiv Yadav

Published by:

Royal India Bikes LLP

Copyright © 2018 by Royal India Bikes LLP, Hill View Farm, IT Park Road, Manimajara, Chandigarh 160101

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

CONTENTS

LEH & LADAKH & SPITI VALLEY **01**

NEPAL **96**

RAJASTHAN **122**

GOA – MUMBAI (BOMBAY) **152**

SOUTH INDIA **174**

KHALSA RIDERS **222**



LEH, LADAKH & SPITI VALLEY





Soon we were at Pangong Lake and thanks to the Hindi movie 3 Idiots, we saw many idiots spoiling the serenity of this magnificent lake. Women dressed in red as in the last scene of the movie, perched themselves on a bright yellow Vespa. They were getting photographed as though they were the stars of the sequel.

Couples were running at each other in slow motion to be photographed, small road-side 'dhaabas' proudly displaying "Shouting point of Shah Rukh Khan' in xyz movie. It was all a bit much. With population and rampant commercialization come plastic bottles, empty chips packets, shoes and plastic bags. It was sad to be here. Luckily, our camp was 12 km down the road...







It was the first time in our 6 years of operation that a customer asked me to raise a supplementary invoice for 'adventure surcharge' as no kind of team building workshops and adventure and sports boot camps came close to what this Leh ride was.

People not known to each other rode together and built bonds that were stronger than their strongest friendships. Multi-lingual and multi-cultural riders got along like a house on fire emanating camaraderie only experienced upon a battlefield. Javier, Fernando & Juvencio, the Spanish contingent hugged and thanked each other with a genuine sense of achievement and joy. They had ridden together all over the world, but nothing seems to have come close to this.

For me, as Road Captain and Group Leader, it was fulfilling and overwhelming to see how well we connected. What started as a professional tour ended as a group of friends meeting after many years to live their dreams, ticking their bucket list and planning their next ride!





Himalayan Hero

Pioneering a Himalayan adventure on 150cc trail bikes, Dirt Action's Adam Rieman drags his father through an epic 4,500 km ride surviving cliff-edge trails, altitude sickness, eating goat guts with mountain men and encountering more machine-gun clad soliders than you's care to see in a lifetime.

Getting lost in the mountains of Nepal, they escape torrential floods and crumbling mountain trails, they are befriended by village children and experience a place where people go to die. You've never seen a dirtbike video like this before.

For more, check out >> <https://motologyfilms.com/himalayan-hero/>



LEH, LADAKH & SPITI VALLEY



NEPAL



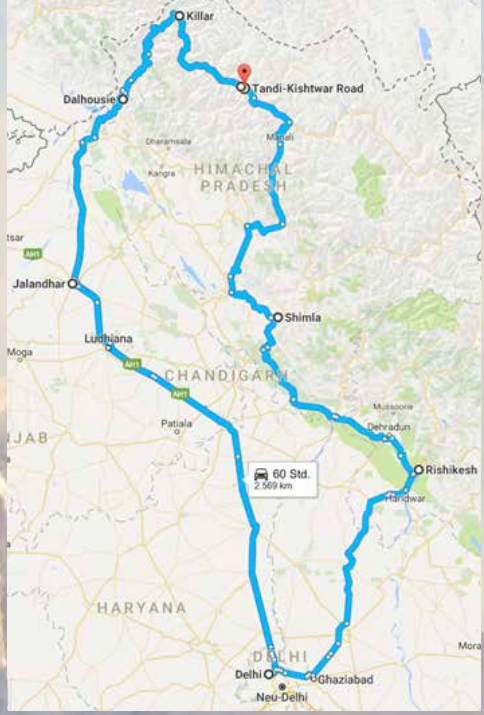


EWALD SCHMITT & ÖZGÜR GÜLCEHRE

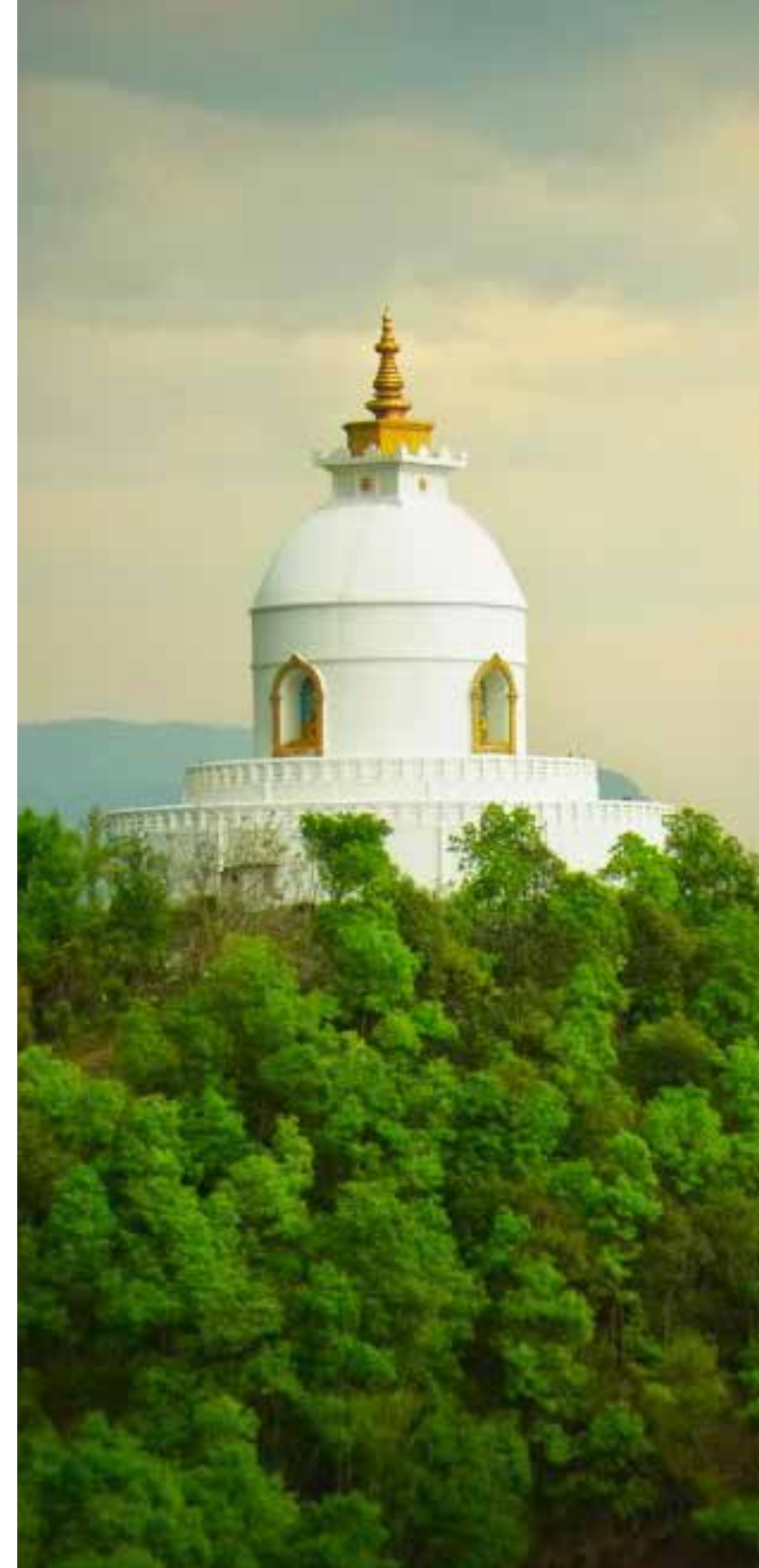
Ewald Schmitt (64) an Automotive Engineer, has been a biker before his drivers license allowed him to ride legally on roads. His off-road experience dates back to when he broke the front forks of his child-bike while wheelie-ing.

After some years with knobby tires he started off-road-racing and has since 1958, been travelling on his Royal Enfield. For over 10 years, he has undertaken long off-road adventures with his friend Özgür, an IT engineer across the world in Lesotho, Chile, Romania, Turkey, Italy, Spain and Maroque.

One of their most liked adventures was the Nepal spring ride from New Delhi to Kathmandu, Pokhara and Sidharta-Highway back to Delhi. Nowhere in the world are people closer to heaven than in the Himalayan mountains. This made the adventure extra special.













RAJASTHAN





B&B BETTINA (52) & BERND (54)

A long way round India...7 years of travelling in slow motion...

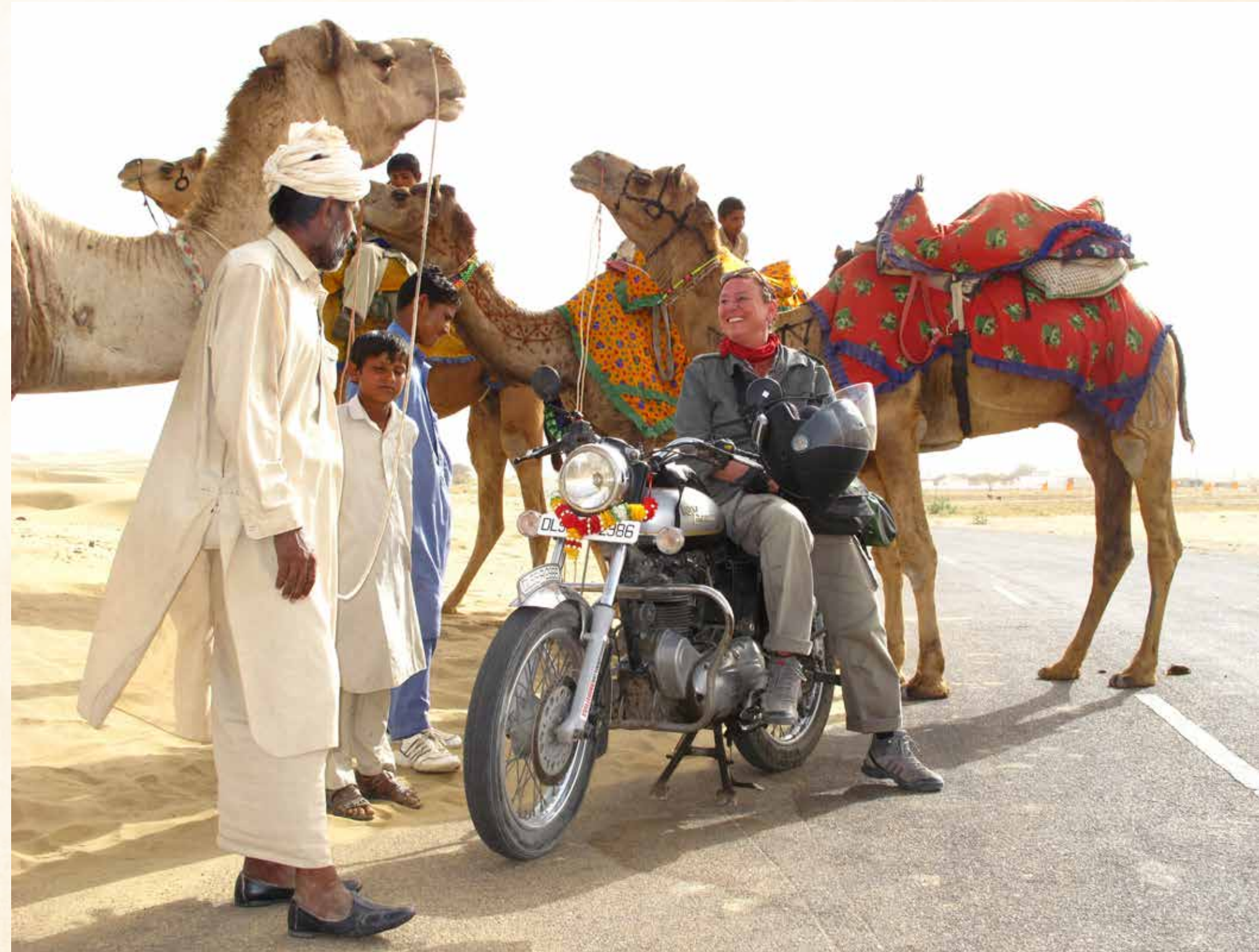
We have been married for 35 years and travelled around the world since we got together. After exploring the far east countries by motorbike; Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Cambodia and Vietnam, we rode to Goa. This was our introduction to India and we got the fever! We wanted to see more and more.

So, we climbed mountains, crossed rivers, explored the desert and visited many holy places with strange celebrations! Our last adventure was from Kathmandu to Pokhara, with 250 other Royal Enfield riders.

Since 2016 we are both riders of Bullet Classic 500 at home (nice birthday present).

After being disappointed by another bike rental, we arranged a contract with Royal India Bikes in 2012. With Rajiv and Royal India Bikes we've found the perfect travel agency with the best bikes you will find in India with full service, including spare parts and continuous contact during travel time.

The bikes are safe and in perfect condition, so we'll keep on riding!











BRENT & HAMISH

Brent and Hamish hail from country NSW, Australia, where they went to school together in the town of Armidale from 2004. They now both live and work in the capital of NSW, Sydney.

The idea of a motorcycle adventure trip somewhere in the world was born one night over a few beers and immediately became a fascinating idea for the next trip abroad. India was a clear choice of the destination, and the Royal Enfield motorcycle was essential as the mode of transport.

They were both drawn to the Royal Enfield by its classic looks, simplicity and cult status in India and abroad; not to mention its famous exhaust note. Although it's as about as reliable as a fire extinguisher filled with gasoline, these trusty steeds safely saw them through over 4,000 km of bitumen, back roads, highways, dirt, mud, sand, rocks, salt lakes and snow, plus countless speed bumps and potholes...with just a few small hiccups but countless smiles along the whole way!

One day saw them in the desert battling 43 degree heat in western Rajasthan, and only three days later they were freezing riding through snow north in Himachal Pradesh. The Enfields took them there, wherever they desired, providing an immersion within nature and culture that no other mode of transport could offer.

All in all, the Royal Enfields added their own character and charm to our journey, plus more than a few priceless stories along the way.

BRENT WORKS AS A RADIOGRAPHER AND **HAMISH** AS AN ENGINEER IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. They are currently planning their next motorcycle adventure to the island of Tasmania, Australia.





BOMBAY & GOA







GOA CARNIVAL RIDE - 2017

Bombay to Goa via Ganpatipule | NH 17
(A.k.a Bombay Goa Old Road and now will be called National Highway 66 or Route 66)

After taking my Royal Enfield Desert Storm for a pre-trip inspection, I fueled up and readied for the ride to Goa. As I lived in Bombay for 30 years and worked at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Pore area, I was knew the traffic conditions well and thus, decided to get on a ferry from Bombay to Alibaug and then ride to Goa from there.

At 0600 hrs, I left my house for the ferry wharf which is also called 'Bhau Ch Dhakka' in Marathi. Because of the new flyovers in Lower Parel, I reached 20 minutes before the first boat to departed to Alibaug. The Royal India Bikes Royal Enfield 500 cc was hot and the loading crew asked me to cool her before they could load her on the upper deck. I bought four bottles of chilled mineral water and poured it on the exhaust pipe to cool. This resulted in both on-lookers and me get annoyed at the blasphemous waste of water, but alas, I had no choice.

By 0700 hrs, we were locked and loaded on the upper deck and cast off for Alibaug – an hours sail. An inexplicable nostalgia swept over me as we sailed past the Bombay harbor, past the Indian Navy Battery and the many berthed cargo vessels which were mostly registered in Panama!

At 0815, we berthed along side the Alibaug jetty and I was the first one disembarked - as they wanted to get rid of the bike for stability and safety, at least that's what I was told. Taking the ferry to Alibaug saved me at least an hour and more importantly helped evade the container trucks at the Navi Mumbai and Panvel exit.

I got in my gear and off I went to NH 17 on my Royal Enfield Desert Storm for Mahad which was a 110 km from here. The plan was to stop every 100 km to take a 15 minute break. A few bad patches, but by and large a super ride. Parts of the road were under construction and some bits very newly laid. I covered the distance in a little over two hours and stopped for my first water break at Mahad.

The next stop was Chiplun, 90 km from Mahad. The traffic began to thin as I crossed the industrial towns and catchment areas of steel plants and power stations. I was able to maintain a good speed and enjoy the Western Ghats. It was quite magical being parallel to the Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary with abundant green cover along the villages of Malwan and the waft of the fresh fish curry and paired with photos of the same at many restaurants along the way. I simply had to stop for lunch at Chiplun. After Chiplun, the twists and turns of the hills got intense. An 85 km ride to Kalambaste took much longer than I expected even though there was less traffic and great road conditions. I stopped to take pictures of the forest and the landscape, which reminded me of Coorg.

Finally - Kalambaste! The point at which I am was to turn right for Ganpatipule! To my dismay, the signs said 30 km more. I was dead and decided to take a coke break and cool my nerves as the twistees had taken a toll on me and tested my riding skills.

The State Highway 106 (SH 106) deserved an award for the best road conditions. It seemed that they knew I was coming as the entire stretch was freshly metaled. Riding through fewer twists, ups and downs, I began to smell the sea and experience the cool sea breeze that swept through the opening of my jacket.





Ganpatipule, the Sychelles of India as they call it revealed a vista of calm blue seas and one last mile of the worst road of State Highway 4, which for some reason was entirely neglected.

As I came down the hills, I began to look out for seemingly good accommodation. As it was 1630 hrs, and I had a mild headache, I desperately needed a shower and tea. When I left for Goa, I had set a budget of INR 20,000 for the 5 day trip but then saw The Blue Ocean Spa & Resort and the budget went out of the window. <http://blueoceanresort.in>
I walked to the reception, almost collapsed and told them I am a walk-in customer. I had no booking and was extremely hungry and did not have the time or energy to look for cheap hotels. I bent over the desk at the reception and told the lady at the reception in Marlyn Brando's voice ' make me an offer I cannot refuse' and boom - I was given a USD100 plus offer. My mind said - one life - great ride - let me splurge.

Never before had I seen a resort so close to the beach, so serene and so quiet. Seemingly, I was the only person there. It felt like a super luxurious private villa with an amazing pool, a zen cottage with Thai-esque spa. For a minute I thought I was in Phuket.

After gorging on 'pakodas' and 'masala' tea, I took a long walk along the beach. One must say the Konkan & Ratnagiri belt has some amazing beaches, which are possibly better than the ones in Goa. It's just that they have not been advertised or marketed well, paired with infrastructure that is lacking; this paradise is not usually on the international travelers list. Maharashtra Tourism should make a note of this.





Day II

The next day, I checked out, fueled up and rode off for Kankavali (150 + 30 km). My main aim was to reach Goa and have my first beer at You & Me Bar, outside our house in Arpora.

I went full steam ahead on the super roads flanked with mesmerizing terrain and thicker forest cover. I was riding with caution as a week before this ride, a Harley Davidson rider passed away on the way to Rider Mania 2016 which was held in Vagator, Goa.

It took me approximately 3 hours to reach Kankavali. After a quick Coke, under bright sunlight, I took off for Sawantwadi (55 km) and here the Goa feeling began to sink in....

I set a target to reach Arpora by 1330 hrs. It was 1200 and I needed to cover 55 km more. With 35 km left, the road opened up into a median divided highway that resembled an expressway. I pushed the Royal Enfield to its limits - 120 kmph. Mapusa sign boards were in sight and so was Happy Da Dhabha with a smiling and healthy Sardarji cutout! In my great India, Punjab can be found around every corner. The last 40 minutes took their toll on me. The Goa heat emanated, I was soaked in sweat and dying to get out of the heavy riding gear.

At 1340 hrs, I was stripping at You & Me Bar, Arpora, Goa! Devender Rawat, the owner had laid out the wet carpet for me - beer was on the house and so was the food. It was good to be home. Sussegad! Viva Goa – Viva King Momo!

One more memorable road journey on the iconic Royal India Bikes, Royal Enfield came to fruition.



SOUTH INDIA



I was Born in 1971 in France and have now been living in Montreal for more than 25 year. I am married and a father to 3 boys by love, photographer by passion, and carefree rover by choice!

Biking came late in my Life, as I just followed my father's advice which was 'take the handlebars after being comfortable behind the wheel' which meant that good experience driving cars is recommended to understand traffic and its laws...which was especially useful in India where traffic is, well, quite unique ;)

Always after a good adenture, when my great friend Raphaël told me one night in a restaurant with our wives, he was going to India for a month, I had to be a part of it, especially if we could make it on two motorized wheels!

We settled it the same night, we just had to find a road captain to make it happen. We found RIB very rapidly, easy choice with the great reviews he had from plenty of bikers from all over the World.

The Royal Enfield 500cc were the perfect machines to discover the sweet taste of India... efficient but not too comfortable - soul and muscles a great combination and that engine noise...a poem for me.

Rajiv and Giri were the perfect guides for this extraordinary journey that we had the chance to live.

Always there with their great advice and professionalism, it was great to have them for our first ride through India and it won't be the last.

LADISLAS KADYSZEWSKI







Mysuru–Coorg | 190 kms | NH 275

This was the second best day of the ride, filled with forests, sprawling coffee estates and very friendly people. Coorg, also known as the 'Scotland of India' is home to the bravest of the brave - having given us two COAS (Chief of Army Staff) and one Field Marshal. It is said, the people of Coorg are descendants of Alexander - The Great, who camped there before returning to Greece. Coorgis are fierce and formidable, with a flair for India's National game, Hockey. Not many know this, but according to the Constitution of India, a Gorkha is allowed to carry his Khukri, a Sikh his Kirpan and a Coorgi, his Gun!

After the Greeks, the Arabs arrived with coffee beans (hence the name 'Arabica'). Coming from North of India, I always thought that land holdings in Punjab were huge, but seeing the land parcel sizes in Coorg & Madikeri, I was happily mistaken!

While our homestay was close by, we suffered a navigational error that took us 30 km off-course, thanks to poor network connectivity or our dependence on technology. However, this error took us through some beautiful roads and coffee estates that one only sees in movies.

Arriving at the Appachu residence, called The Moorings was like coming home. Nestled in the pristine tea & coffee estates of Chaitally, 12 km from Madikeri, this was an ideal place to stop by after the long ride. From here, we ventured out to see the Mandalpatti and Abbey Falls by bike and jeep. The Abbey Falls were a bit of a disappointment as they looked more like a gutter that is flowing down, with smelly water and plastic litter.

The Last 5 km to Mandalpatti required a T-72 Tank as even a faithful Mahindra Jeep rolled over like it was about to die. Mars possibly has better roads, but reaching on top of the hill was worth the most breath-taking view and to our happy surprise, all plastic was in bins which was commendable. Three cheers for the Forest Department that mans the place.

The ride back to The Moorings was an eventful one with Lad, one of the riders losing concentration while negotiating the bends and curves and slipping down the road. Fortunately, besides some bruises, a broken headlight and bent handle there was not much more damage. We were able to limp back to the Madikeri Market on a quest for both medical & Royal Enfield help. Not finding either, we had our second fall while trying to navigate. We decided to ride back to The Moorings and relax there...not before stopping at a local hooch joint where we bought beer and whisky to wash our wounds both internal and external. But, as it was still daylight, we had fresh coffee straight from the estate with Mrs. & Mr. Appachu of The Moorings.

What pleasant personalities and warm hosts, they went out of their way to ensure that our bruises received medical care and that our bikes were safe as wild elephants were regular visitors to their estate. Mr Appachu was kind enough to share his brothers number in Coonoor for any assistance that we may need on our journey onwards. He also asked us to text him from our next destination. We were very touched to have him request this and complied as soon as we got mobile signal.

At dinner, we were treated to a fine meal of Coorgi cuisine with akki roti (bread made of rice flour), Coorgi chicken and cottage cheese made to perfection. We lost track of how many rotis we had and with the warmth that it was served to us...we will definitely visit this homestay again...







We love India, especially South India for its landscapes, its smiling, kind people, its great food and its customs.

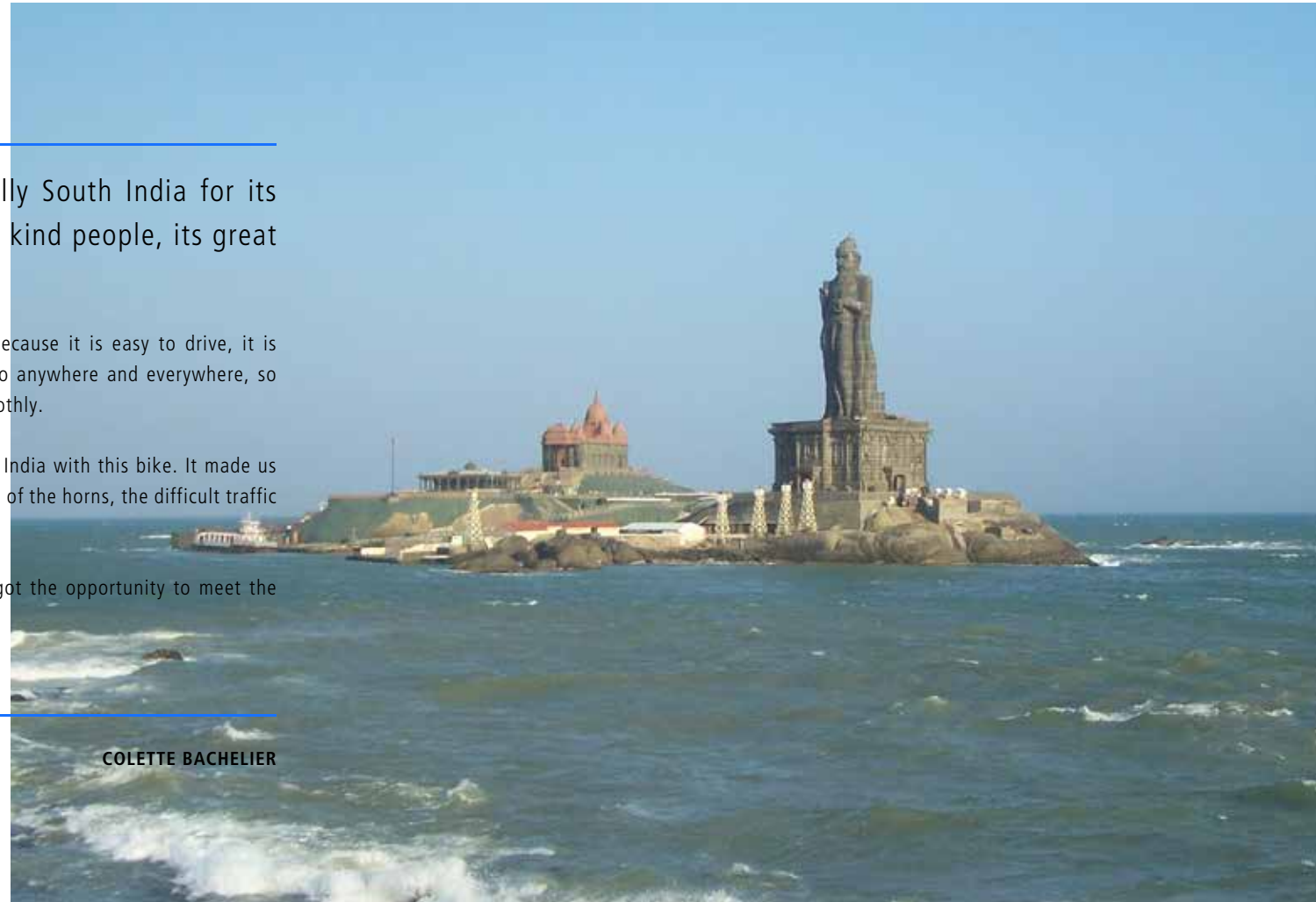
We like the Royal Enfield bike because it is easy to drive, it is reliable, it is practical and can go anywhere and everywhere, so we can enjoy the landscape, smoothly.

That's why we travelled to South India with this bike. It made us happy, it made us forget the noise of the horns, the difficult traffic in the cities and the pollution!

Thanks to the Royal Enfield we got the opportunity to meet the population.

We love Incredible India!

COLETTE BACHELIER







KHALSA RIDERS









Runjodh Singh Nihang | CEO | London, UK

Runjodh has been motorbiking since 2000. He has been on extensive tours all over Europe, every year. However, his last three tours were across the Himalayan range.

Harjot Singh Gill | Ex British Army Captain | Northampton, UK

Harjot has been a keen motorbiker for many years.

Sukhvir Singh Cheema | Managing Director of Regents | UK & India

Sukhvir is very passionate about motorbiking. His current ride is a Harley Davidson.

Manmagan Singh | CEO | London, UK

Manmagan has only been motorbiking for a few years but he loves it!



