

India's history, heritage, culture and climate are a marriage made in heaven for tourers. Sights of exceptional beauty are in every nook or cranny of the country, some can only be accessed by mountain treks. I cant think of a better way to visit these treasures than with a packed lunch, backpack, tent and motorbike. You can be close to nature, see the night cosmos, the sun rising over the horizon, refresh your face in the early morning dew, drink tea made with mountain water or have wind rustling through your hair (or not if like me, bald). Indian roads being as they are, a bike takes you to spots where other motorised transport like cars just dont cut it.

'Perfect' you scream, 'I am feeling wild. I want to be in touch with my youth again – lets ride'.

Now hold on there bald eagle! Wifey person is an obstacle to our adventures. Used to 5 star hotels, business class and limo rides to the feet of gods, worries about coming off a bike. I say 'You are more likely to injure yourself going to the WC'. 'Yeah right' she adds. We will see....

Chance gave yours truly an opportunity to photo shoot at a motorbike showroom of some of Indian made top end bikes.

Here is that story... On the day, up at 6.00am (couldnt sleep), made my own breakfast, read the papers, collected equipment and off to the office where the party is due to set off from.

Final check of gear, load car. Hemang, Soraya (back from hang-gliding out of the window caper), Sid and I are driven to the Bajaj Probiking Showroom at Kanjur on the outskirts of Bombay by our new driver Shanker.



EXTERIOR OF THE PROBIKING SHOWROOM

We are greeted by manager, Mr Janaki Ram.

He took us through the ethos of Probiking. The Bajaj family, its history, its aims, developments, its future, technology behind Bajaj Bikes and why they are the favouites amongst bikers in India adding 'Do you shave everyday?' Blaah de blaah de blaah, just show me the monsters!



PULSAR 220 DTS-I THE FASTEST INDIAN



INTERIOR OF THE SHOWROOM

Finally get to roller ride the Pulsar 220 upto its capability of 140kmh (impossible on most indian roads) and then listen to the roar of the exhaust of these lovely machines. Well rather listen to a Harley but beggars cant be choosers!

I got a feel of my favourite Indian motorcycle, the Bajaj Kawasaki built Avenger.



I WANT TO TAKE THIS HOME!



NICE MOTORBIKE EH?

Mr Janaki Ram gave me a quotation and signed it 'Thank you for the booking'.

Having had an enthralling 2½ hour session we set off back to the office. Was looking forward to luncheon out but sadly no-one would commit to a place which I would be suitably impressed with so were left with a crap take-away which had 6 small pieces of meat (one shared with Lucky the dog). I did buy some flowers along the route thinking they may come in handy later as I hatch a plot.

The bunch of flowers where placed with the quotation for Preeti to find. She glowed on sight of the flowers and frowned on seeing the order for the bike. Well, I chickened out of a weekend

mood or an atmosphere so told her it was a joke and I hadnt ordered a bike. Purkk, puk, puk.



PREETI ON AN AVENGER

Preeti did manage to get into the bike euphoria and signed up to the Mumbai Wild Hogs. Her natural instinct with a metal horse, called Kantibhaya the WadaPowe person, put her in good stead to be unanimously voted as leader of the Worli Wandering Wolfs who are now adopted as a Chapter of the Wild Hogs.

In her inaugural speech to her Pack, Preeti promised to run the gauntlet of the Rajasthan Deserts, scale the heights of the Himalyas, see the east coast ocean, glide across Kerala waters to the tip of India, catch fish whilst in Goa and have a big party on her return to Mumbai where the whole of Maharashtra will be invited. Even chi people, formerly referred to as Kreeechers will be made most welcome!

She was given a standing, rousing ovation by all who had congregated and forced to do 3 encores! The Pack adopted her moto of 'a car moves the body, a bike moves the soul' screaming, 'Glory, glory Preeti Pirate, glory, glory Preeti Pirate Chair of Worli Wanderers!'

On a recent business visit to Ahmedabad, Preeti had a calamitous exchange with the bathrooms at her friend Archanas home, she slipped. Oops!

Immediately cancelled the rest of her tour, she returned to Mumbai with more than what she took in her hand luggage. An ankle fracture and 2 sprained ankles. On landing was swiftly wheelchaired to the local medicine man who put her leg in a cast and advised to remain off her feet for 6 weeks.



GOING TO THE BATHROOM IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN A MOTORBIKE AFTER ALL! I SHOULD HAVE BEEN A PROPHET!