

I had read a lot about Malshej Ghat from other riders. So one weekend in March I took off solo to see the area for myself.

Got my google maps, sandwiches, drinks ready and took off after waving bye bye to 21 gun salute. **(Wifey)**

True to form, I got lost in Kalyan and spent over an hour trying to find the correct road. But I can direct you to Chandu the Chaiwala is! **I know, fat lot of use that is!**

My knowledge of hindi can be a real handicap somerimes but it does add to the fun when I recall incidents. Not many panwalas got speak english except the odd word like shit or ph@#k!

I gave this ride up as a real bad job but wifey was pleased to see me home so early for a change. **Should I go back out? Best not!**

Not to be outdone, I consulted my google maps to see where I had gone wrong and my Malshej 'expedition' was rescheduled for the following Sunday.

Sunday, I was on my way early doors.

Navigated Kalyan like I should have done last weekend and I was feeling pretty pleased with myself. **Woohooo!**

I stopped a little after Saraigoan at a fly



infested place. Being starving and feeling this may be my last opportunity to eat



something warm. The reassurement I had was that many cars were parked up outside. **that doesnt count for much as credentials for a place, in India crowds of people can mean different things.**

In my broken hindi I asked the waiter 'khan-na kya he?'. He rhymed off 20 odd items beginning or ending with idli or powe. Yuk!

The thing that stood or was familiar to me was bataka pouwa. 'One of those and a coffee chinni kum, please'.

Having dulled my hunger I was off.

The heat was stiffling. **I wish I hadnt been wearing my thernals! Just joking.**

The scenery was like any other ghat and fairly barren looking at this time of the year. I could see and smell smoke everywhere but not ascertain the source. Strange I thought (even checked that my pants werent on fire).

The roads where good and the ride excellent which cleared the cobwebs of a week sat at a desk. But really, it is nice to have company or companion riders, they add so much more to a ride.



Surprisingly there was little traffic on the roads but found out why my wife asked me to be careful of the indian buses which

have notoriety! More of these buddies later.



I rode through Madh and then onto Otur.

I had heard there was an old fort in one of those hills, Not knowing the points of

interest for sight seers or where to look, I turned around to head back home.

Stopped near Madh for a dose of nicotine and my favourite riding drink of honey and lime. Lovely. Under a shady tree with a scirroco breeze blowing across my bows. Life is LG.

Continued my way back to Mumbai and more about these darn Indian buses.



God they can develop some speed and lean around those ghat bends like a racing biker not dis-similar to that chap Rossi. I realsie that its stretching it a bit comparing a hippo to a gazelle.

More often than not, one would be stuck up my exhaust seemingly whilst the driver had fallen asleep on his horn – the buses!

The only thing to do is let them pass unless you fancy something hard and heavy carrying 50 fifty plus passenegrs up your buttocks.! Not for me thank you.

The final stop came at a reasonably looking restaurant.

In my pidgeon hindi as asked for a mutton curry, runny and not too thick gravy as they didnt sell a thali.

The waiter uttered 'Mutton Masala?' OK, that will do!

It would be difficult to describe the taste or give it any grading, but a hungry biker will eat anything.

Having already passed a petrol station that had run out or didnt sell fuel for my bike, I asked the waiter for the nearest gas place towards Mumbai.

'10 kilometres' pointing in the direction I was riding. He also asked is (pointing) that was my bike. **I thought 'No. its my wifes but she is out of the country so dont tell her I am out on it, she will kill me!'** 'Yes'. End of conversation.

Hit the tarmac and arrived at home around 7.30 just in time for dinner.