



## TRY MOTORCYCLE TOURING WITHOUT TRAVEL Is this the future of bike travel holidays?

Peter "The Bear" Thoeming #675

It feels a bit like cheating. Is it really touring if you head out in the morning for a day's ride, only to return to the same place in the evening without "travelling anywhere"? The only answer I could come up with was, who cares when it works?

Edelweiss Bike Travel has made a highly successful business out of taking motorcyclists to all kinds of places around the world. The usual procedure is that a couple of tour guides with the bikes and a van meets participants at a hotel.

After an evening of familiarisation and a night's sleep full of dreams of the tour, the van is loaded with luggage and one of the guides prepares to follow the group with it. The other guide and the riders fire up their bikes for a day's riding; late that afternoon, everyone meets at the next night's hotel. The guide in the van distributes the luggage to the rooms, then it's dinner and the process repeats.

Then someone at Edelweiss came up with an idea. There were numerous destinations on the company's books which were surrounded by what were effectively great day rides, where there was little point in moving hotels; it was easier for both guides and riders if they used one as a base for the entire "tour". There was no need to unpack every night, or for a van. The Touring Centre was born.

The first time I sampled this was in the Canary Islands. Distances are short in the islands, so it was a logical way to cover their roads. When I thought about it, the Dolomites were just as obvious a Touring Centre destination, especially since the scenery and the riding vary so much

over quite a small area. I signed up.

From the base hotel in Klobenstein near Bozen in South Tirol, we headed out every day to sample the wonderful views and roads of the Dolomites. And whether you call it touring or... well, whatever else you can think of, it's a great way to "travel"!

The Bear took part in this event at the invitation of Edelweiss Bike Tours ([www.edelweissbike.com](http://www.edelweissbike.com)). He rode a Yamaha 700 Ténéré, in anticipation of Edelweiss launching a series of tours equipped solely with Yamahas. Check them out on the website!

