

# TOURING TIPS, TRICKS & TECHNIQUES

Includes

# 43

point packing  
checklist! ✓





## 33 Secrets For Smart Touring

There's nothing like the feeling of loading up and heading out on a big motorcycle trip.

And there's nothing like the security of knowing you're prepared for the ride.

It can take years to develop that knowledge through trial and error. So we've devised a shortcut. We've asked AMA staff members to share with you the experience they've accumulated over decades on the road.

Here are 33 insider tips—useful suggestions that have made our tours more organized and more fun. We guarantee you'll learn something.

1. Eat at weird times. Everyone and their dog eats around 8 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. To get in and out of restaurants in a hurry, don't be hungry then.
2. A short metal cable with loops on both ends (like those made to keep people from stealing bicycle seats) is perfect for securing a jacket and helmet to your bike's helmet lock.
3. Carry a spare key. Hide it somewhere on your bike with a zip-tie or duct tape, or better yet, trade spare keys with a traveling companion.
4. Cellphones are great, but they don't have coverage everywhere. Portable weather radios do, and the first time one saves you from running right into a massive storm, you'll wonder why you ever traveled without one. Find one at accessory companies like Aerostich or Radio Shack.
5. On high-mileage days, you'll feel a lot better if you carry eyedrops and use them every time you stop for gas.
6. If you're nearing the end of your riding day and want to set yourself up for a quick getaway in the morning, consider riding to the far side of the next city you reach before you stop for the night, eliminating urban traffic the next morning.

7. Take a tip from off-road riders: carry a backpack hydration system so you can drink while you ride. A must for arid weather.
8. Going on a long, complex trip? Keep yourself organized with the envelope system. Before you leave, prepare one envelope for each day on the road. Mark the dates and locations on the outside, then stuff things like hotel reservation info and lists of things to see inside. Instead of juggling your entire stack of literature to find the information you need, you can just open up that day's envelope.
9. A simple map case attached to your bike's tank can keep you on course without the bulk of a tankbag.
10. Keep your stuff dry in saddlebags by using trash compactor bags as waterproof barriers. They're thicker and more durable than standard garbage bags.
11. Use earplugs to help reduce wind noise. You can get them from most mail-order shops or dealers, or in bulk from safety-equipment supply houses. Note: they are illegal in some states.
12. Don't forget that pack-and-ship places are just about everywhere these days. They're perfect when you spot that antique umbrella stand you're dying to buy hundreds of miles from home.
13. Don't forget a small towel or rag for wiping dew off seats, windshields and mirrors, and even for doing a quick whole-bike cleanup. Synthetic chamois cloths work particularly well.
14. Pack extra bungees and zip-ties. 'Nuff said.
15. Go ahead, buy that GPS you've always wanted. They're perfect not only for finding yourself, but also for allowing you the freedom to get lost in the first place.
16. You've heard it a million times, but we'll say it again: look over your bike carefully every morning on the road. Checking the simple stuff—air pressure, oil level, loose or missing fasteners—can save you from big trouble.
17. Sign up for AMA Roadside Assistance. To sign up, call the AMA at: (614) 856-1900.
18. Stash a little hidden cash somewhere on the bike or on you, so you can make something happen when all else fails.
19. Before you take off from the hotel or campground in the morning, double check every strap on tankbags or soft saddlebags, and every latch on hard luggage.



20. Wear a dog-tag with your name and contact info, especially if you're riding alone. You can get them lots of places, including your local army surplus store.
21. Take a look back at where you were parked every time you leave someplace. You'd be amazed at what you forgot.
22. A cellphone can be a lifesaver in an emergency. You can dial 911 for help anywhere you find cell service, but you'll need to tell a dispatcher where you are. Keep track of route numbers, interstate exits, towns you've passed, mileposts—anything that can save emergency officials time in getting to you.
23. Good motorcycle gear really is worth it. Waterproof, breathable linings in boots and jackets will transform the way you think about bad weather. A number of companies offer materials that work well, but always test your gear on a rainy day at home before facing a storm on the road.
24. Do routine maintenance at home with your bike's toolkit, so you're sure you have what you need along the side of the road.
25. On a long tour, plan for at least one day every week of doing nothing. Time is the ultimate luxury, and can mean the difference between a vacation and an endurance run.
26. Be realistic with your daily mileage. In really scenic areas, 150 miles may make a very full day. Don't assume you can achieve freeway mileage on good back roads.
27. Guidebooks can be invaluable, but these days, an internet search can add spice to your trip by revealing special-interest locations most books fail to include. One of the sites we've used is [www.roadsideamerica.com](http://www.roadsideamerica.com). World's largest concrete bison, anyone?
28. It is possible to use a kit to make emergency repairs on tubeless or tube-type tires alongside the road. But before you count on this as your safety net, practice using the kit on an old tire in your garage.
29. A packable motorcycle cover not only keeps your bike clean and dry overnight, it also discourages thieves. And don't forget a stout lock of some kind for the bike itself.
30. If you can afford it and are short of time, you could always ship your bike somewhere cool and ride it back. Call STI/Federal Companies at (877) 518-7376 for details, and be sure to ask for your AMA member discount.
31. If you call a hotel—even if you're two blocks away—you can often get a better rate than if you just walk in. And there are usually great Internet-only deals available. Either way, do yourself a favor and have a reservation by 4 p.m. You never know when a convention will take over your destination city. Remember that AMA members get a discount at several hotel chains including Choice Hotels, Red Roof Inn and Motel 6.
32. A nap can do wonders on a long day.
33. If you're traveling east or west, schedule your breakfast or dinner times near sunrise or sunset so you don't have to stare into the sun when it's low on the horizon.







## Group Riding: 16 Tips To Ensure Everybody Has A Great Day

The engine purrs beneath you as a string of motorcycles snakes through the hills in front of you. With a quick look in the mirror, you see your buddy following close behind with a smile on his face that matches yours. The camaraderie forms because, at just this moment, you're all on the same page.

That's what a group ride is all about. It's an opportunity to share the open road and wonderful scenery with other like-minded people.

But like most motorcycle experiences, this one is best enjoyed by following a few simple guidelines that keep everyone safe. Here are a few group riding tips from the country's foremost motorcycle safety experts—the Motorcycle Safety Foundation ([www.msaf-usa.org](http://www.msaf-usa.org)):

- 1.** The first thing you want to do is organize the ride. This can be as informal as standing around in a parking lot, or as formal as a special meeting to hand out maps and cellphone numbers.
- 2.** Remember that riding in a group does not mean you surrender any decision-making when it comes to your safety. Ride your own ride, and don't go any faster than you feel comfortable going.
- 3.** When picking your route and the stops you'll make along it, consider the stamina of the group, the experience of all the riders, and the limits of the motorcycles in the group. Remember, these are your friends. If it's going to be a long ride, be sure to take a few breaks along the way.



4. You'll need to communicate while on the ride, so make sure everyone knows the hand signals you'll use.
5. When creating your formation, it's wise to have your experienced riders at the lead and running sweep. Consider positioning the less-experienced riders immediately behind the leader. This allows the front rider to adjust the pace if necessary.
6. If the goal of the ride is to keep the group together, the leader should only go at the pace of the least-experienced rider.
7. While riding, don't fixate on the motorcycle in front of you. Instead, remember your basic training. Look well through the turn to where you want to go.



**8.** If the group is riding faster than you are comfortable with, let the sweep rider know you're dropping out and ride at your own pace. So you may reach your destination a few seconds behind the others, but you will get there, and that's what's important. Keep in mind, it's all about fun.

**9.** All riders are also responsible for making sure their motorcycles are mechanically up to the task. Before you even meet up with the group, make sure you've got plenty of fuel in the tank, and that you've taken care of all those maintenance issues. You really don't want to be the reason for stopping the group for something mechanical you could have prevented.

**10.** If it's going to be a large group, consider establishing a buddy system among the riders, or divide the group into smaller five- or seven-rider packs. That way, if something goes wrong, you don't have 25 motorcycles sitting on the side of a busy highway. Also, smaller groups can more easily navigate through city streets.

- 11.** On the road, motorcyclists should have at least a 2-second cushion in front and behind them. If you want to keep the group tight, consider a staggered formation. Leave enough room per lane so each rider can maneuver side-to-side if need be. Avoid side-by-side formations as they shrink your space cushion.
- 12.** Trikes and sidecars should stay in the center of the lane, and should be given the same amount of cushion as if they were a car.
- 13.** As turns get sharper, or as visibility decreases, move back to a single file formation. You'll also want to use single file when entering or exiting a highway, at toll booths, or when roads have a rough or questionable surface.
- 14.** At intersections where you've come to a stop, tighten the formation to side-by-side to take up less space. As the light turns green, or when traffic opens up, the bike on the left proceeds through the intersection first.
- 15.** Remember we share the road with many other vehicles, and it's against the law to block an intersection.
- 16.** When parking, try to get the group off the roadway as quickly as possible. If you can, arrange in advance to have pull-through parking at your destination, or at the very least, make sure there is ample parking for your size group.

Want more group-riding tips for your club or group? Order the MSF Guide to Group Riding DVD and materials at [www.msf-usa.org](http://www.msf-usa.org).







## Touring Essentials: Don't Leave Home Without 'Em

You've been planning this motorcycle trip for over a year. The route's all settled, the bike's been serviced, and you think you're ready to go. Are you sure you have everything you need? Are you and your bike prepared?

To make sure, break it down into three areas: Your bike, your gear, your comfort.

### Your Bike

Motorcycles are more reliable than ever, and a cellphone and AMA Roadside Assistance can get you out of a lot of trouble without getting your hands dirty.

But it still makes sense to carry some basic tools and repair items with you.

- Probably the thing most likely to immobilize your bike is a flat tire. You can usually get to someplace that can do a permanent repair or replace the tire just by carrying and using a simple plug kit and a means for inflating your tire, such CO2 cartridges or a small pump, either powered by your bike or by hand.
- To help avoid tire problems in the first place, an air pressure gauge should be an ever-present part of your travel gear, and should be used frequently.
- Like a tire repair kit, a flashlight and a spare fuse at night could mean the difference between being blind and stranded on a dark road (and maybe in danger of being hit by other traffic) or being back on your way quickly.



- Know your bike and know what special tools it requires. Within reason, carry along anything that a repair shop might not have.
- Is there a weak spot on your machine? Carrying a spare electrical relay, headlight bulb, fuel filter or whatever else is known to fail, due to vibration, wear, or quirks of your particular machine, can save you a lot of wasted time seeking spare parts on tour.
- It really all comes down to knowing your machine and intelligently assessing what you're most likely to need on tour to keep it happy, healthy, and humming down the highway.

## What To Take

The difference between a good tour and a bad tour could very well depend on what you remember to pack for the trip.

- The best bet is to make your own list. Then, after each tour, cross off the things you didn't need and add things you needed but didn't have with you.
- If you need a starting point, begin with our list at the end of this guide, which is based on input from experienced road riders.



## Your Gear

The first goal of your gear is to keep you safe. But you'll also be safer if you're dry and warm and focused on your riding, instead of wet and shivering and searching for a rest area with a hot-air hand dryer to thaw your frozen digits.

- The farther you travel, the wider the range of weather conditions you may encounter. But even a short ride can put you through a 40-degree temperature swing. Just ask anyone who's ridden to the peak of Mount Evans in Colorado or Mount Washington in New Hampshire.
- You need to be prepared for 45 degrees in the morning, 85 degrees in the late afternoon, and the rain that will hit somewhere along the tour—all without having a chase truck along to carry extra gear.
- Instead of carrying different gear for every situation, consider versatile pieces that work together. A jacket with adjustable vents and a removable lining can cover a wide range of temperatures. In warm seasons, a mesh jacket and a rain suit to wear over it (and shut off the ventilation) covers a wide range with little bulk.



- An extra pair or two of gloves takes up little space. But having dry gloves to put on if the weather turns cold and wet is worth a lot.
- Adding electrically heated gear greatly extends the riding temperatures in cold weather, while taking up little packing space.

## Your Comfort

Anything that's even the most minor annoyance on a short ride will really, really get on your nerves on a long tour.

- Are your levers adjusted properly? When you rest your fingers on the levers, the back of your hand should be in a straight line with your arm, so your wrists aren't bent and putting pressure on your nerves.
- If you're traveling a lot, is it time to spring for an aftermarket seat? Several manufacturers will make one suited to your kind of riding. For other riders, greater comfort is as simple as adding a sheepskin cover or a pad to the existing seat.



- If wind buffeting is bothering you, consider a different-size windshield. There are also add-on lips you can get to extend your existing shield. Remember that a little buffeting that is barely annoying on your 20-mile commute will have you ready to rip off your windshield and chew it up in anger after four 500-mile days on the road.
- Don't forget things like a tinted faceshield for your helmet or sunglasses, earplugs, a bottle of water, aspirin, sunblock, etc. These things can greatly improve your comfort when you need them.

## Make Your Own List

Armed with these guidelines, make a list of the things you think you'll need on your tour. Then, revise it after each trip. Cross off things you didn't need and add things you needed but didn't have with you. To get started, use our list, which is based on input from some experienced road riders. Then get out there and enjoy the ride.

# Motorcycle Security: Lock It Or Lose It

“I felt a sickly, sinking feeling in my stomach...”

“It was just like a nightmare...”

“I stared for about two minutes at the incredibly empty spot where I had parked the bike the night before...”

No matter how you look at it, walking out to discover that your motorcycle has been stolen is guaranteed to make you sick. Unfortunately, it's a feeling a number of AMA members have experienced firsthand.

We've distilled scores of AMA members' tales of woe down to the following nine key ways to keep your bike from disappearing:

## Lock It

Keeping Your Bike 101, first day of class, lesson one: Lock it, or you just might lose it. A determined, professional thief may get your motorcycle no matter what you do, but plenty of motorcycles are stolen by opportunistic miscreants.

Your fork lock is just a start. Adding a disc lock is better. But why stop there? Use a strong, motorcycle U-lock and a chain to attach your bike to a solid object, or another motorcycle. Looping the chain through the frame is better than draping it through the wheel, which can be removed.

Make the chain as tight as possible to offer less access for bolt-cutters, and don't let it drape on the ground, where it can be chiseled. Put the locks in hard-to-reach spots—if it's more work for you to put the lock on, it's more work for a thief to get it off. Maybe he'll move on to an easier target.

On some bikes, you can lock down the centerstand, so the motorcycle cannot be dropped off the stand and rolled or ridden away.

A lever lock on the clutch adds another layer of hassle for the thief, especially if you leave the bike in gear, unbolt the shift lever and take it with you.

And remember that the same chain you use to secure your bike can also secure your gear. Run the chain through your helmet and jacket sleeve so you won't have to carry them around all day.





## Cover It

No, a motorcycle cover won't stop a determined thief. But it might mean your bike attracts less of the wrong kind of attention. So after you've locked it, cover it.

A plain cover is best. After all, the purpose is not to advertise your loyalty to a particularly valuable brand of motorcycle, but to avoid letting thieves know what you've got.

A cover with metal grommets can be locked in place to help keep prying eyes away, and to prevent the cover itself from being stolen.

## Consider an Alarm

An alarm in conjunction with a lock can be a difficult combination for a thief, especially if the alarm is hidden. Cutting chains and removing locks is likely to set off the alarm, which could stop a theft attempt before it succeeds.

But what if your bike is parked where you can't hear the alarm? What if you live where nobody pays attention to screaming vehicles any more because they're always blaring false alarms?

Simple. Get an alarm that notifies you when someone tampers with your bike.

Some riders find that an alarm attached to a cover can be really effective. Lift the cover, and the noise starts.

## Don't Be a Show-Off

Some people are so proud of their bikes that they park them in high-visibility places for everyone to admire. That just makes it easier for thieves to case your ride.

Always park your bike inside a garage if possible. Keep the door closed and consider covering the windows.

If you must park outside, use a cover.

It's simple: The more your bike is out of sight, the more it's out of a thief's mind.

## Reinforce Your Garage

Use your lock and/or alarm in your garage, just the same as elsewhere. But don't stop there. Beef up your garage security as well.

Don't confuse a garage-door opener with a lock. A simple lock on the frame inside the door will keep it from opening unless the thief seriously mangles it. And by then, he might have created enough noise to wake you up.



Installing a U-bolt in the garage floor gives you an easy way to lock your bike. Want more protection? Consider a baby monitor. Put the monitor in your garage and the receiver in your bedroom, and you're less likely to sleep through a theft attempt.

If you're really serious, you can extend your home security system to include the garage. Some people even mount a closed-circuit video camera so they can check on their bikes from inside the house.

Lastly, use other vehicles as additional obstacles. Make the thief hoist your motorcycle over the car if he wants it that bad.

## Disable Your Bike

Locking your bike to something stops a thief from lifting it into a truck and hauling it away, but you can also temporarily disable the motorcycle to keep someone from riding it away.

This can be as simple as removing the main fuse and dropping it into your pocket after you park. Some owners install hidden cut-out switches that disable the ignition. Just tap a secret switch onto the existing kill switch circuit. Got fuel injection? A switch that cuts power to the fuel pump will keep the engine from firing.

The key is to hide these anti-theft measures so that the thief runs out of patience and abandons the bike before finding them.

## Choose Parking Spots Carefully

In a parking lot, don't park next to a panel truck, van or other vehicle that can conceal thieves at work. For the same reason, try to choose a spot where thieves cannot intentionally use their stolen-bike transporter to block the view of your motorcycle.

On the road, ask the motel operator if you can park by the front door, within sight of an all-night desk clerk. When you can, pick a ground-floor room with a parking spot right outside the door.

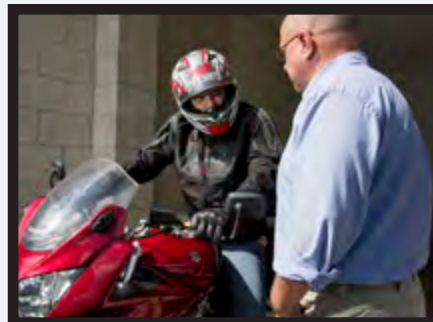
We've heard of motel guests making a homemade alarm of sorts by perching a glass ash tray out of sight on top of the rear wheel. It'll clatter to the asphalt if someone tampers with the motorcycle.

## Be Wary of Test Rides

Some thieves pose as buyers of used bikes. An AMA member was selling his off-road motorcycle a few years ago and a potential buyer showed up after dark, on foot, claiming a friend had dropped him off at the corner.

The buyer took off on a test ride. When he didn't come back, the AMA member chased him down. The AMA member got the bike back, but he only caught the guy because the "buyer" got lost on unfamiliar streets.

"Buyer beware" has always been good advice, but sellers should be careful, too. Instead of a test ride, some sellers get payment first and offer a money-back guarantee if the buyer brings the motorcycle back in the same condition within an hour. It's a no-risk test ride for both sides.



If you let someone test-ride your bike, at least ask for identification. Take down the person's drivers license number and the license plate number of the vehicle in which the person arrived, and gather any other information possible.

## Mark Your Territory

If all else fails, and your bike is stolen, at least don't make the thief's job easier.

Professionals nab bikes so they can break them down into parts, obliterate the VIN numbers and resell them here or overseas. If the thieves get caught, you stand a better chance of getting your bike or parts back if you've marked them so police can identify them. Consider marking your drivers license number or other identification in hidden locations on key parts, such as the engine and frame.

In addition, make sure you can quickly put your hands on all the pertinent information about your bike, especially the VIN and license plate numbers. The more time that passes before police have this information, the less chance you have of recovering your motorcycle. Don't leave documents, such as the registration, on the motorcycle, but have it handy. It also helps if you have a photograph of the bike so police know what they're looking for.

## Lastly

And finally, make sure you have theft coverage on your bike and accessories. Don't assume your homeowners or renters insurance will cover a vehicle stolen where you live—it likely won't.

Insurance won't keep your bike from getting stolen, but at least it makes the aftermath a little less traumatic.



## Tips For Visiting Our Neighbors – And Getting Back Home

Planning a trip to Canada or Mexico? There's plenty of fun riding to visit our neighbors to the north and south, but you'll need to be mindful that crossing U.S. borders is not quite as simple as it was before our heightened sense of national security.

Ever since Sept. 11, 2001, crossing U.S. borders has become a bit trickier.

One very important change that took effect in 2008 is the requirement for U.S. citizens to have a passport to re-enter the United States. A drivers license or birth certificate are no longer sufficient.

If you're crossing the border to do some off-road riding and you're hauling a trailer or driving a larger vehicle, you may face special scrutiny.

"Everybody and everything is being hit a little harder, especially if you've got a vehicle with a lot of space," said Steve Darling, a salesman with Inglis Cycle Center in London, Ontario, Canada. "Winnebagos, enclosed trailers — anything with a lot of cargo space is going to draw some attention."

Darling admitted, though, that the scrutiny is all for the best, and it usually goes pretty quickly. Be patient and try to have all your paperwork in order, in advance.



"Our customer base includes some from the states," he said. "Because of that, we know what the rules are when you cross the border."

Recently, Darling got some first-hand experience when he crossed the border with two bikes that were not registered.

"They stopped us, and they checked us out, going and coming back," he said. "It was pretty routine, it took about 20-25 minutes to get into the states, and about five to get out. Now, I am pulling an enclosed trailer, so they're going to ask what's in the trailer. I go across in a car and its nothing. If you go across with cargo space they're going to look at you."

His suggestion: Register the bikes before you cross borders.



“Off-roaders really should have a title, even if it’s used strictly for off-road use,” he said. “It’s not impossible to get through (without the title), but it’s really going to slow you down. Just bring all your receipts and information that shows where you bought it. The more documentation you have to prove your point, the better. So fill them full of information.”

Darling also said large amounts of cash can raise suspicions.

“If you’re going to carry (a lot of) cash, you need to claim that,” he said. “We tell guys to bring certified checks or money orders (when making a major purchase).”

Another thing you may want to check is how well you know the person you’re riding with.

“Don’t bring a buddy who’s got a criminal record,” he said. “I knew one guy who had to leave his buddy at the border until he got back.”

Lastly, Darling said to leave any firearms at home, especially handguns. Canadian laws do permit some hunting weapons, but Darling said there are procedures and forms you’ll need to get beforehand. Handguns aren’t allowed at all.

South of the border in Mexico, things are a bit different. For example, most automobile and motorcycle insurance policies will cover you if you’re riding in Canada, but Mexico requires that you carry a separate policy. To be sure, check your policy before you go.

Tim Morton, who runs Baja Bound Adventures, has been riding dirt bikes in Baja, Mexico, for 29 years. He said, “Before 9/11 things were so much more lax, now things are a lot tighter.”

As far as driving or riding into Mexico, he said anything you ride on the street will need Mexican insurance. Oddly enough though, to ride a dirt bike in Mexico, you won’t.

He said to basically look at it this way: if you cross the border riding something, you’ll need insurance, but if you tow it in for off-road use, you won’t.

He also said you must have a title or registration if you plan to cross any border with just about any vehicle, echoing what Darling said about Canada.

As far as traveling with weapons, Morton said it’s a seriously bad idea that can get you serious jail time. “Absolutely not — don’t go across with any guns,” he said. “As a matter of fact, make sure you don’t even have a bullet in a backpack.”

Morton offered some financial advice, too. “You really don’t need to change your money into pesos,” he said. “You’ll still want to make sure you do your basic math when it comes to paying for things, though, to make sure you’re getting something close to the exchange rate.”

He also mentioned that folks traveling deeper into Mexico might want to consider having plenty of cash for their trip. “Don’t plan to use your credit cards,” he said. “Unless you’re staying in a big tourist town, most local places won’t take them.”





The quality of fuel in Mexico used to be an issue, Morton said, but not any more. “Pemex is the standard fuel in Mexico,” he said. “And it’s improved greatly over the last 10 or 15 years. It’s about 90 octane, if you’re lucky. But we run XRs and DRZs, and they’ll run on just about anything.”

He said if your bike has an octane issue you might want to buy octane booster, which is available at just about any automotive store in Mexico.

One other idiosyncrasy Morton mentioned while traveling on Mexican highways is the signal to pass. “If you come upon a car that signals left, that means it’s OK to pass them on the left,” he said. “Like if you’re following a big semi and he turns on his left turn signal, it means he’s looked ahead and it’s clear for you to pass.”

Obviously, Morton said extreme caution should be exercised, and this occurs mostly on narrow straight highways where there isn’t anywhere the trucker or car driver can pull off.

## Helpful links

### TOURING MEXICO

For further information on traveling through Mexico visit the official Mexico Tourism Board’s website at: [www.visitmexico.com](http://www.visitmexico.com)

### CANADA

Canadian Tourism Commission, [www.canadatourism.com/](http://www.canadatourism.com/)

The official website of the Canadian Tourism Commission at [www.travelcanada.ca/](http://www.travelcanada.ca/) (Yes, similar names but two different sites.)

Some vacationers planning to enter Canada from the United States have been turned back at the border because of past criminal convictions. “In most cases, a conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol is what trips up visitors,” said Phillip Lupul, consul and immigration program manager at the Canadian Consulate in Detroit. Traffic tickets are no problem, but other convictions may be, even if they are not felonies. If you have a concern, you can apply in advance of your trip for a permit to enter Canada. Visit the consulate’s web site at [www.detroit.gc.ca](http://www.detroit.gc.ca), click on “Visas and Immigration” on the left-hand menu, and look for information on “Persons who are inadmissible to Canada” at the bottom of the page. The application costs about \$100, Lupul said, but it prevents the risk of being delayed or turned away at the border.

### U.S. CUSTOMS

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection website has tons of good information, including border crossing guides, travel advisories and more, at: [cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home.xml](http://cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home.xml)

# A Quick Check List Of Stuff To Take On Tour



Here are a few items you might want to consider including in your own personal moto-touring packing list:

- Clear contact paper or low-tack tape (great for protecting motorcycle bodywork from luggage)
- Soft-hook tie-downs (great for creating bungee cord hooks)
- Bungee cords
- Siphon hose
- Ziplock bags (thousands of uses—you can even drain gas into a bag from one bike's petcock, then pour it into another bike)
- Zip-ties
- Duct tape and electrical tape (wrap a small amount around each leg of the pliers in your bike's tool kit to save space)
- Flat repair kit (tube or tubeless, depending on your machine)
- CO2 cartridge tire inflators, or another type of inflation device
- Tire pressure gauge
- Extra fuses
- Chain master link
- Handi-wipes
- Cellphone
- Camera
- Bike cover
- Flashlight
- Multi-tool or Swiss Army knife
- Shop rags
- Extra ignition key
- Towel
- Aspirin
- Earplugs
- Sunblock
- Chapstick
- \$20 bill hidden on bike
- Up-to-date license and registration
- Spare glasses
- Spare dark or light faceshield
- Rain-X (check your windshield manufacturer for use)
- Faceshield cleaner
- Bandana (protect your neck from cold or your mouth from dust; or, in hot weather, soak it in water and tie it around your neck)
- Laundry detergent (powder)/clothespins (for washing out a shirt in your room)
- Space blanket
- Lighter
- Water (a backpack hydration system can be a lifesaver in hot weather)
- U-lock/disc lock
- Raingear (with glove and boot covers)
- Walking shoes
- Weather radio
- Spare helmet hardware (plastic screws)
- Garbage bags (for rainproofing your luggage or even as an extra windproof layer on you in extreme cold). Trash compactor bags are extra-thick.
- Emergency medical and contact info in wallet



When you join the AMA you have access to thousands of AMA sanctioned tours, adventure rides, races and local AMA-chartered clubs all over the country – plus discounts on cool motorcycling products and services.

Most of all, you will be part of the country's largest organization protecting the rights of all motorcyclists.

As an AMA member you receive:

- **Your Rights Protected** - Take an active role to fight distracted driving, motorcycle-only checkpoints, insurance discrimination and many more issues restricting our freedom to ride.
- **No Cost AMA Roadside Assistance** - Coverage for you and family members for all your vehicles including motorcycles, cars, RVs and trailers.\*
- **Motorcycle Clubs & Rides** – Choose from more than 2,400 rides and rallies or, participate in 1,200 AMA-chartered clubs, it's easy to connect with riders in your area.
- **Great Discounts** - Enjoy incredible savings on motorcycle parts, accessories and gear, leather goods, lodging, rentals and a whole lot more.
- **American Motorcyclist magazine** - Stay current on motorcycling threats, industry news, upcoming events, gear reviews, rider editorials, safety tips and more.

When you join, you'll also be entered to win our 2015 Sweepstakes.\*\* With two motorcycles to give away — a 2014 Suzuki Boulevard M109R and a 2015 Yamaha Super Ténéré — you'll have two chances to win! \*



\* Restrictions apply.

\*\* Visit [www.americanmotorcyclist.com/membership/renewsweeps\\_rules](http://www.americanmotorcyclist.com/membership/renewsweeps_rules) for complete sweepstakes rules.