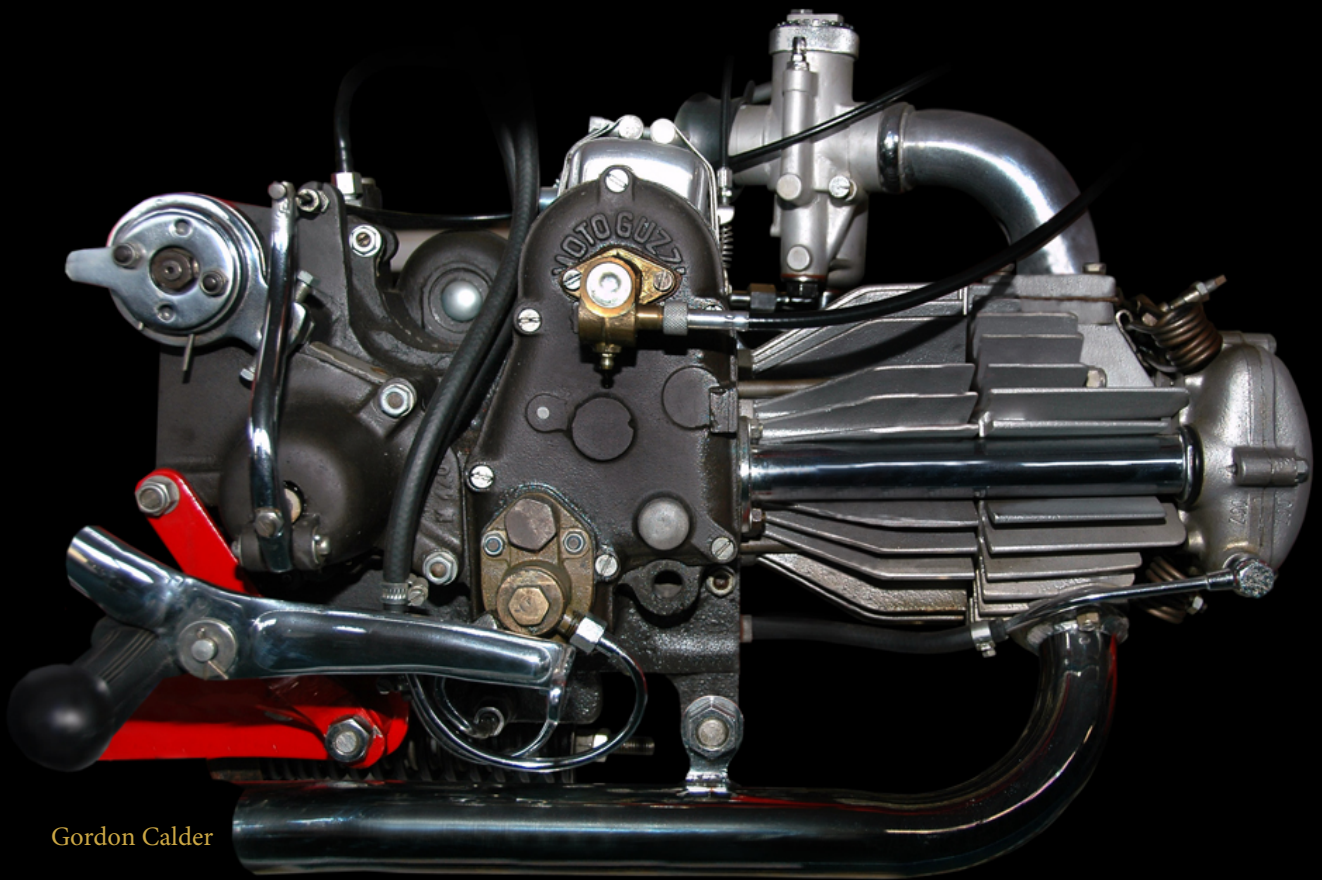


VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE NEWS

# V M N

SPECIAL EDITION N°19 • SPRING 2023



Gordon Calder

# Moto Guzzi Motorcycles



VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE NEWS  
**VMN**

A motorcycle publication  
for the vintage enthusiast.



**EDITOR**

Pat Castel  
VMN.Canada@gmail.com



**COVER PAGE**

Moto Guzzi engine  
by photographer  
Gordon Calder



**Notice**

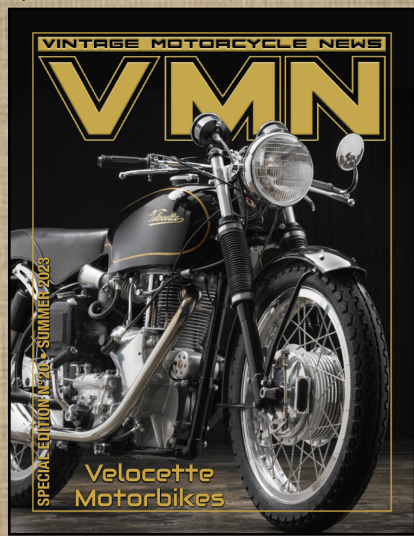
All information furnished herein  
is provided by and for Vintage  
Motorcycle News.

Unless otherwise stated, none  
of the information (including  
technical material) printed  
herein necessarily bears  
endorsement or approval by any  
manufacturer or the editor.

The editor and publisher cannot  
be held liable for its accuracy.

**NEXT EDITION**

Velocette was a small family  
owned firm, selling almost as  
many hand-built motorcycles  
during its lifetime, as the  
mass-produced machines of the  
giant BSA and Norton concerns.



**FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK**



When I started my editorial, it felt like I was walking into a new building or a new job. The cover page is a lot different and reflects very well the emails I was getting. The newsletter name had been shortened to 3 capital letters and the general layout slightly altered. Well, it was time for a change, a new image, a new logo, a new direction.

The cover page artwork is the creation of wellknown photo artist Gordon Calder. The motor is Photoshopped and appears as if it is floating on a black background. This type of artwork is typical from Gordon Calder. You should check his complete exhibition on flickr, at:

[www.flickr.com/photos/gordoncalder/sets/72157612757443903/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/gordoncalder/sets/72157612757443903/)

Once upon a time, way, way back in time when I was a lot younger, I stray from BMW and got myself a Moto Guzzi 850 T3. it looked like the picture below. Yes I did enjoy the rides on the Guzzi but it was not as smooth as my BMW 750 and after a year I went back to my Beemer.

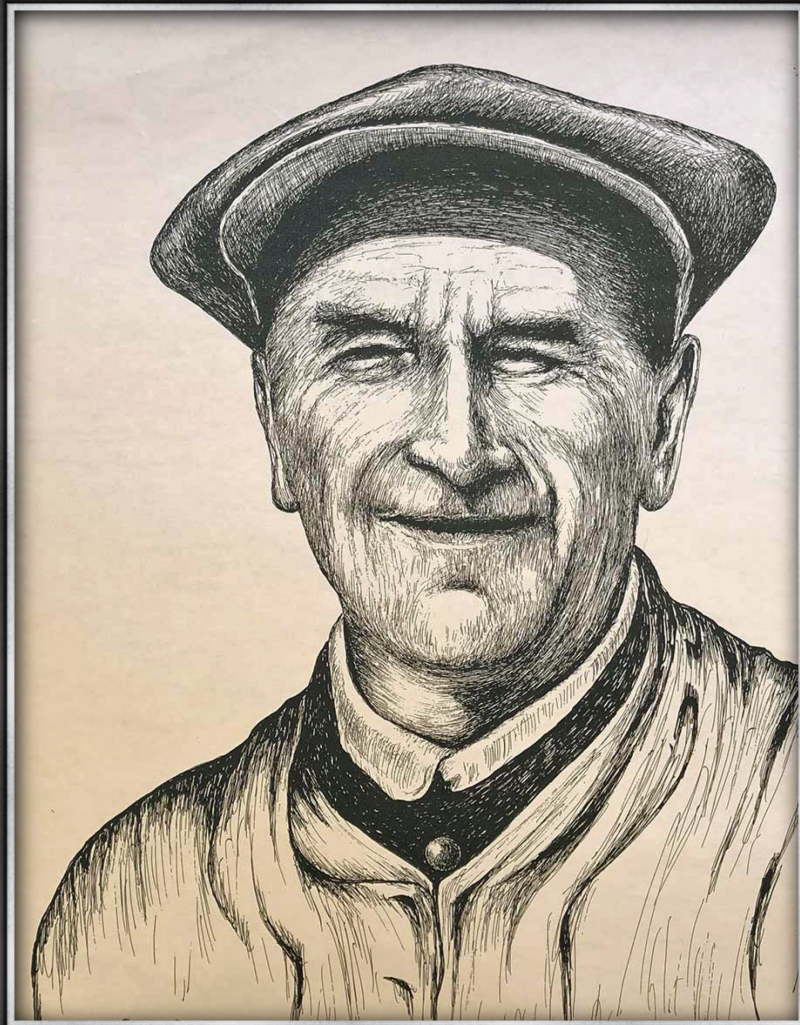
This edition covers lots of stuff and was fun to put together. Of course I could have had more articles and many will probably noticed the important ones that I missed. Well, surprise! Down the road, we have another edition on the works which will brings all the stuff we have missed on Moto Guzzi. The theme for the next one would probably focus on the Moto Guzzi Le Mans. Your input as usual is always welcome.

*Finally, I am calling for your help. I want to release a Special Edition on the Panther motorbike. I can't hardly find any stuff on this bike. So if you know of someone riding a Panther, please ask this rider to get in touch with me. This bike deserve to be shown around and any story or anecdote will be welcome.*

Till next time... Ed.







## CARLO GUZZI

Born in 1889, Carlo Guzzi (nicknamed Taj) moves from Milan to Mandello Del Lario as a young man and within a short time is learning the ropes as an apprentice in Giorgio Ripamonti's vehicle workshop. This proves to be the spark that lights his passion for engines, particularly motorbikes. Just before the outbreak of the First World War, he manages to land a place in the test driving department of the renowned luxury brand Isotta Fraschini. He enlists in the Royal Marines as an engineer and becomes friends with pilots Giovanni Ravelli and Giorgio Parodi. Like Carlo, they are enormous motorcycle enthusiasts and the three of them often talk about how they will build a new bike together once the war was over.

In 2011, the Mandello town council and the "Amici Guzzisti" association (Friends of Guzzi) dedicated a monument to Carlo Guzzi in Piazza Leonarda da Vinci, created by sculptor and biker Ettore Gambioli and architect Paolo Gambelli.



# One hundred years of outstanding motorbikes, incredible victories, thrilling adventures and intriguing personalities that together created the Eagle legend

- 1889: Carlo Guzzi is born
- 15 March 1921: Moto Guzzi and the factory are established.
- 1921: The newly-founded company adopts an eagle as its logo.
- 1921: The first motorbike produced is the GP 500.
- 1925: Over 300 staff build 1200 motorbikes at the Mandello site.
- 1928: Giuseppe Guzzi (Carlo's brother) embarks upon what will become an iconic itinerary to North Cape.
- 1929: Production hits the 2500 units mark.
- 1934: Moto Guzzi is the largest motorcycle manufacturer in Italy.
- 1939: The Airone 250 is launched, going on to be a huge success with 29,926 units being built.
- 1939-1945: Almost all production is given over to military manufacturing, resulting in the Alce, Trialce and Airone being built for the Italian Army.
- 1946: The company goes public and becomes Moto Guzzi S.p.A. Production begins on its first twin-stroke small engine motorbike, the Motoleggera 65 which is nicknamed Guzzini, meaning Little Guzzi. Over the next three years, 50,000 units of this lightweight model will be sold and in the Fifties it is marketed under the name Cardellino, with an increased capacity of up to 73 cc.
- 1950: The Falcone 500, the last Moto Guzzi with a horizontal single cylinder engine, is launched.
- 1950: A wind tunnel is established at Mandello.
- 1950: The Galletto enters the market, the first ever high-wheel scooter.
- 1958: Moto Guzzi produces the first engine in the world with a chromed cylinder barrel. This innovation is integrated into the Zigolo.
- 1964: Carlo Guzzi passes away.
- 1965: Giulio Cesare Carcano designs the longitudinal 90° V-twin that will become a defining Moto Guzzi characteristic.
- 1967: SEIMM (Società Esercizio Industrie Moto Meccaniche) takes over the management of Moto Guzzi. The V7 703 cc with 90° twin-V is produced.
- 1971: The V7 Sport, a sports bike destined to enter history, is launched.
- 1971: Special, California and Ambassador versions are developed for the US market.
- 1973: De Tomaso Industries Inc., owners of Benelli, acquire the company and Alejandro De Tomaso takes over as Managing Director.
- 1973: After the success racked up in competitions by the V7 Sport, the 750 S is introduced, followed by the 750 S3, complete with three disc brakes.
- 1974: The 850 version of the Moto Guzzi California is developed.
- 1976: The Le Mans, the bike that will become the most popular and successful of these years, is launched. Four versions, known as I, II, III and 1000, will be produced.
- 1977: The Moto Guzzi Museum is created.
- 1987: The California III makes its debut.
- 1988: A new company called Guzzi-Benelli Moto (G.B.M. S.p.A.) is formed.
- 1992: The Daytona 1000 IE makes its debut.
- 1996: The company name changes back to the original title of Moto Guzzi S.p.A. Finprogetti purchases a significant share of the business, later going on to take control of De Tomaso Industries Inc, at which point it becomes TRG - Trident Rowan Group Inc.
- 1996: The V10 Centauro, designed by Marabese Design, is unveiled.
- 1999: A press conference is held on the Moto Guzzi premises to present a new 1000-cc liquid-cooled engine named the VA10. It features the classic V architecture, but configured at 75°, and can deliver over 140 horsepower.
- 2000: Aprilia acquires Moto Guzzi and implements an overhaul of the business. The first resulting product is a special version of the V11, called the V11 Sport Rosso Mandello.
- 2001: Electronic injection is introduced to Guzzi engines.
- 2004: Moto Guzzi becomes part of the Piaggio Group, European leader in two-wheel motor vehicles and one of the major global manufacturers.
- 2005: The Brevia 1100 makes its debut, signalling a new Italian offering with the Naked.
- 2005: The Griso 1100 is launched.





- 2006: The 1200 Sport (a stylish Naked) and Norge 1200 make their debut, marking the return of Moto Guzzi to Grand Touring.
- 2007: The Mandello company demonstrates its commitment to providing new offerings with the new Moto Guzzi Griso 8V, Bellagio and Stelvio.
- 2007: Giornate Mondiali Moto Guzzi (GMG or World Moto Guzzi Days) counts among its attendees actor Ewan Mc Gregor, who is visiting Mandello del Lario to collect his California.
- 2009: New additions include the V7 Classic and V7 Cafè. At Milan's EICMA event, Moto Guzzi steals the spotlight as it presents a trio of futuristic prototypes designed by Miguel Galluzzi and Pierre Terblanche. Respectively the V12LM, V12 Strada and V12 X, they are recognised with the Motorcycle Design Association Award for the best motorcycle design of the year.
- 2010: The Stelvio 1200 8V, Stelvio NTX and Norge GT 8V are launched. All three are built around the new V 1200-cc twin-cylinder with eight valves. This year also sees the debut of the V7 Racer, a particularly special series model.
- 2011: A monument to Carlo Guzzi is unveiled in the town of Mandello del Lario.
- 2011: Moto Guzzi turns 90 and celebrates with a special edition of the California.
- 2011: The new premium range of the Stelvio and Norge 8V is launched.
- 2012: The new V7 range, with its revisited high-efficiency engine is launched and in just a few months becomes the company's most sold bike.
- 2012: The California 1400 Touring makes its European debut.
- 2013: The California 1400 Custom makes its European debut.
- 2014: The Clan is founded. The exclusive club offers members access to the latest Moto Guzzi news, fascinating previews, sneak peeks and looks behind the scenes. On top of this, there are invitations to rallies and special events, along with content designed to make every experience in the saddle of a Moto Guzzi even more memorable.
- 2014: The Eldorado and Audace are launched, while a prototype of the futuristic MGX-21 is unveiled at EICMA.
- 2014: The Moto Guzzi V7 II - second generation of the beloved Guzzi of all time – makes its debut in the Stone, Special and Racer versions.
- 2016: The Stornello, an offroad (scrambler) version of the V7 II, is launched.
- 2016: The MGX-21 Flying Fortress launches, a unique limited edition version of the bagger presented two years earlier.
- 2017: The Moto Guzzi Experience is created.
- 2020: In the lead-up to the Mandello Eagle's centenary, a project to restore some of the historic vehicles in the Moto Guzzi Museum takes shape.
- 2021: Moto Guzzi celebrates 100 years.





# HISTORY

## A LEGEND, FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS

On 15 March 1921, the company "Società Anonima Moto Guzzi" was constituted in the offices of the notary Paolo Cassanello in Corso Aurelio Saffi, Genoa, for "the fabrication and sale of motorcycles, and all other activities pertinent or correlated to the metalworking and mechanical engineering industries". The partners in the Company were the renowned Genoese ship owner Emanuele Vittorio Parodi, his son Giorgio and his friend Carlo Guzzi.

Guzzi was a former comrade of Parodi's in the Italia Air Corps, as was another friend Giovanni Ravelli, an aviator - like Parodi - who died, however, on 11 August 1919 during a test flight. It was in memory of this friend that the spread-winged eagle motif in the Moto Guzzi badge was chosen.

The company's first motorcycle was the legendary 8 HP Normale. This was followed by successful models such as the 1928 Guzzi G.T., dubbed "Norge" to commemorate the expedition to the Polar Arctic Circle, and the Airone 250 (1939), which remained Italy's best selling medium capacity motorcycle for over 15 years.

In the meanwhile, the marque also notched up numerous racing successes. The first was in the prestigious Targa Florio in 1921,

which marked the beginning of an impressive succession of victories: up until its withdrawal from motorsports in 1957, Moto Guzzi accumulated an enviable collection of accolades including, among other titles, an astonishing 14 world GP championships and 11 Tourist Trophies.

The years following the Second World War spawned models such as the Guzzino 65 ("Cardellino"), which was Europe's best selling motorcycle for over a decade. This was followed by the legendary Galletto (1950) and the Lodola 175 (1956).

In 1950, Moto Guzzi installed a state of the art wind tunnel at Mandello del Lario, making it the first constructor worldwide to do so.

The company's racing division was a team of brilliant minds, with engineers such as Umberto Todero, Enrico Cantoni and the Milanese Giulio Cesare Carcano, who would soon achieve legendary status for creating the 285 Km/h Guzzi Otto Cilindri.

At the end of the 1960s, Moto Guzzi presented the 90° V-twin engine that was to become the very symbol of Moto Guzzi itself. This powerplant was used as the basis for models such as the Guzzi V7, the

V7 Special and yet another icon, the Guzzi V7 Sport.

The glorious V-twin was also produced as smaller capacity V35 and V50 variants. The largest iteration of this engine powered the definitive Gran Turismo - the Moto Guzzi California, which evolved to include electronic injection and a triple-disc brake system.

Dedicated to the US market, together with the Ambassador and Eldorado variants, the California boasted the classic 850 cc engine capacity, a displacement that has since been rediscovered and brought back into the current range.

Models like the Le Mans, Daytona, Centauro and Sport 1100 kept the sports heritage of the marque alive. The unmistakable style and character of these bikes were brought right up to date in the 1990s with the new California, Nevada and V11 Sport series.

On 30 December 2004 Moto Guzzi became a part of the Piaggio Group (chairman and managing director Roberto Colaninno), the European leader in the two-wheeler market and one of the world's major constructors in the sector.





Expressing the spirit of this renaissance was the Brevia 1100 presented in March 2005, a new and successful Italian offering for the naked segment.

September that same year saw the widely acclaimed launch of the Griso 1100, a bike boasting original engineering solutions and unique styling. From April 2006, the Brevia and Griso have also been offered with Guzzi's hallmark 850 cc engine size.

In May 2006, the Norge 1200 marked Guzzi's return to the Gran Turismo genre: a bike offering total protection from the elements, the new 1200cc V-twin engine and uncompromisingly generous standard equipment for devouring miles in complete comfort.

The Norge earned the admiration of the 14 journalists who, in July 2006, rode a convoy of the bikes 4,429 Km to Cape North, following the route taken in 1928 by the bike's predecessor - the GT 500 created by Giuseppe Guzzi.

Testifying to the great passion that unites all Moto Guzzi owners, between 15 and 17 September, 15 thousand Guzzisti from over 20 different countries flocked to Mandello del Lario for the fourth edition of GMG ('Giornate Mondiali Guzzi' - World Guzzi

Days). Overseen by the Moto Guzzi Club, the countless Guzzi owners' associations around the world boast an unparalleled loyal following. T

here are over 25,000 Motor Guzzi motorcycle club members worldwide (the largest group of which in the USA, with 52 clubs in the country), and more than 70 internet websites dedicated to the brand.

Moto Guzzi has answered the dreams of its loyal fans, and the sporting heart of the Mandello Eagle is beating once again: in March 2006 at the legendary Daytona circuit, Gianfranco Guareschi scored a historic double victory by winning both heats of the Battle of Twins.

On 6 March 2007, Guareschi repeated the performance and won the following year's edition in the saddle of his trusty Moto Guzzi. Spurred by these racing victories on the other side of the Atlantic, a new model was created to embody the sporting spirit of Moto Guzzi - the 1200 Sport.

Presented in October 2006, the 1200 Sport is a sophisticated naked, brimming with personality in every aspect of its design, chassis architecture and ergonomics, and

powered by the latest 1200 cc generation of the 90° V-twin.

2007 saw the Mandello based brand bursting with even more life than ever. At the 64th edition of the Milan EICMA Show at the end of 2006, Moto Guzzi presented the Griso 8V - an evolution of brand's mesmerizing naked powered by a new 4-valve engine producing over 110 hp - and the Bellagio, a custom powered by an oversquare 940 cc engine. During the global Piaggio Dealer convention held in Berlin in February 2007, the project for a new Moto Guzzi was unveiled - a large street enduro with the evocative name: Stelvio.

On 26 March 2007, against the backdrop of Lake Como, Moto Guzzi once again proved that it keeps its promises by presenting the definitive version of the Bellagio to the press just a few months after the Milanese show, while the following September, it unveiled the powerful Griso 1200 8V.

2007 was also the year of the Giornate Mondiali Moto Guzzi event, which was given an even more exclusive touch by the appearance by the cinema star Ewan McGregor. The actor had come to Mandello del Lario to collect his white California Vintage, which he had purchased a



MOTO GUZZI SPORT  
14BJ 1928









few months previously when filming scenes for his adventure TV show *Long Way Down* at the Guzzi factory.

EICMA 2007 was the setting for the world preview presentation of two models at opposite ends of the spectrum in the comprehensive Moto Guzzi range: the Stelvio 1200 and the V7 Classic. The Stelvio 1200 was presented to the international press in March 2008 in the medieval town of Rocca Salimbeni, the home of the Monte dei Paschi di Siena bank, while the following May, journalists were given their first chance to test the abilities of the nimble V7 Classic on the streets of Milan.

A significant testimony to the brand's quality came when Guzzi won the contract to supply 35 Moto Guzzi Norge GTs to the Berlin police, while 20 Moto Guzzi California Vintage bikes were delivered to the Corazzieri Italian Presidential guard corps the same year.

2009 saw the introduction of the V7 Cafè, a sports variant of the V7 to join the existing Classic, presented in Rome together with the Griso SE in March, and of the Stelvio NTX, which marked the introduction of ABS on the Guzzi's maxi enduro. This bike, presented to the international press on the roads of the Dolomites, is powered by the first upgrade of the "Quattrovalvole" engine, with new camshafts.

At the end of 2009, during the 67th International Motorcycle Show in Milan, Moto Guzzi captured the world's attention with three futuristic prototypes designed by Miguel Galluzzi and Pierre Terblanche: V12LM, V12 Strada and V12 X, which immediately

received the Motorcycle Design Association Award (a design association with 165 members in four continents) for the best motorcycle design.

In late 2009 the Piaggio Group also announced a significant investment programme, which involves not only the development of future Moto Guzzi product ranges but also the Mandello del Lario production facility, where a major restructuring project is currently in progress to make the plant more modern, functional and efficient to reflect the rebirth of the brand.

A spate of new Moto Guzzi models was also unveiled at the 2010 edition of EICMA Milan. The all-new family of large 1200 8V bikes with four valves per cylinder – namely the Stelvio 1200 8V, the Stelvio 1200 NTX and the Norge GT 8V – was presented at the show, while the press launch for the bikes was held on the roads of Tuscany in Spring 2011.

This year also saw the launch of the V7 Racer, a genuine production special with a 750cc engine inspired by the tuned specials of the 1970s based on the V7 Sport. The V7 Racer celebrates Moto Guzzi's traditional styling cues in a savvy mix of technology and exquisite craftsmanship.

Details such as the chromed tank embellished with an elegant leather strap, and metal accents in the Moto Guzzi badge colour-matched with the red frame capture the attention at first glance.

Boasting a small block engine of the same capacity is the Nevada Anniversario, which celebrates twenty years of the "baby" Guzzi with a new sports custom to join the ever popular Classic.

2011 - the year of the 90th anniversary of Moto Guzzi - started off with a pleasant surprise: an all new version of the Moto Guzzi California. The prototype for the new California, powered by an all-new 1400 cc transverse 90° V-twin, reinterprets the legacy of a legendary motorcycle in an original new design that emphasizes both the architecture of the engine and the generous dimensions of the saddle and the tank, which is sculpted around the cylinders.

But 2011 has many more exciting things in store to mark the 90th birthday of the Eagle brand: on 15 March, the Piaggio Group celebrated the official anniversary of the foundation of Moto Guzzi with a highly anticipated announcement: Mandello del Lario will once again set the stage for the GMG event in mid September.

Preparations are already under way for an extraordinary "90th Anniversary" edition of the Giornate Mondiali Guzzi, to give thousands of loyal Guzzisti from all over the world the chance to celebrate together with Moto Guzzi, discover the brand's future models and see at first hand the modernization and restoration work to transform the historic Mandello del Lario factory into a modern production facility, in which ninety years of glorious motorcycle history live side by side with the latest manufacturing technology.

2012 starts under the sign of the new V7 range. New engine, revamped design, brand new equipment: the legend of the V7 reaches its highest expression yet.

The new V7 (available in three versions: V7 Stone, V7 Special, V7 Racer) is a completely new bike,



more powerful, faster, thriftier, more ecological, better refined and more comfortable than the previous version, and yet still with a cardan shaft driven 90° transversal V two cylinder engine and double frame.

Even before its presentation at the EICMA motor show in Milan, November 2012, the new Moto Guzzi California 1400 captured the attention of motorbike fans all over the world. The announcement heralding the debut of the new cruiser built in the historic factory in Mandello del Lario, and a few early rumors, were all it took to arouse curiosity and anticipation about the latest representative of a tradition that has established Moto

Guzzi as an aristocrat among world motorcycle brands.

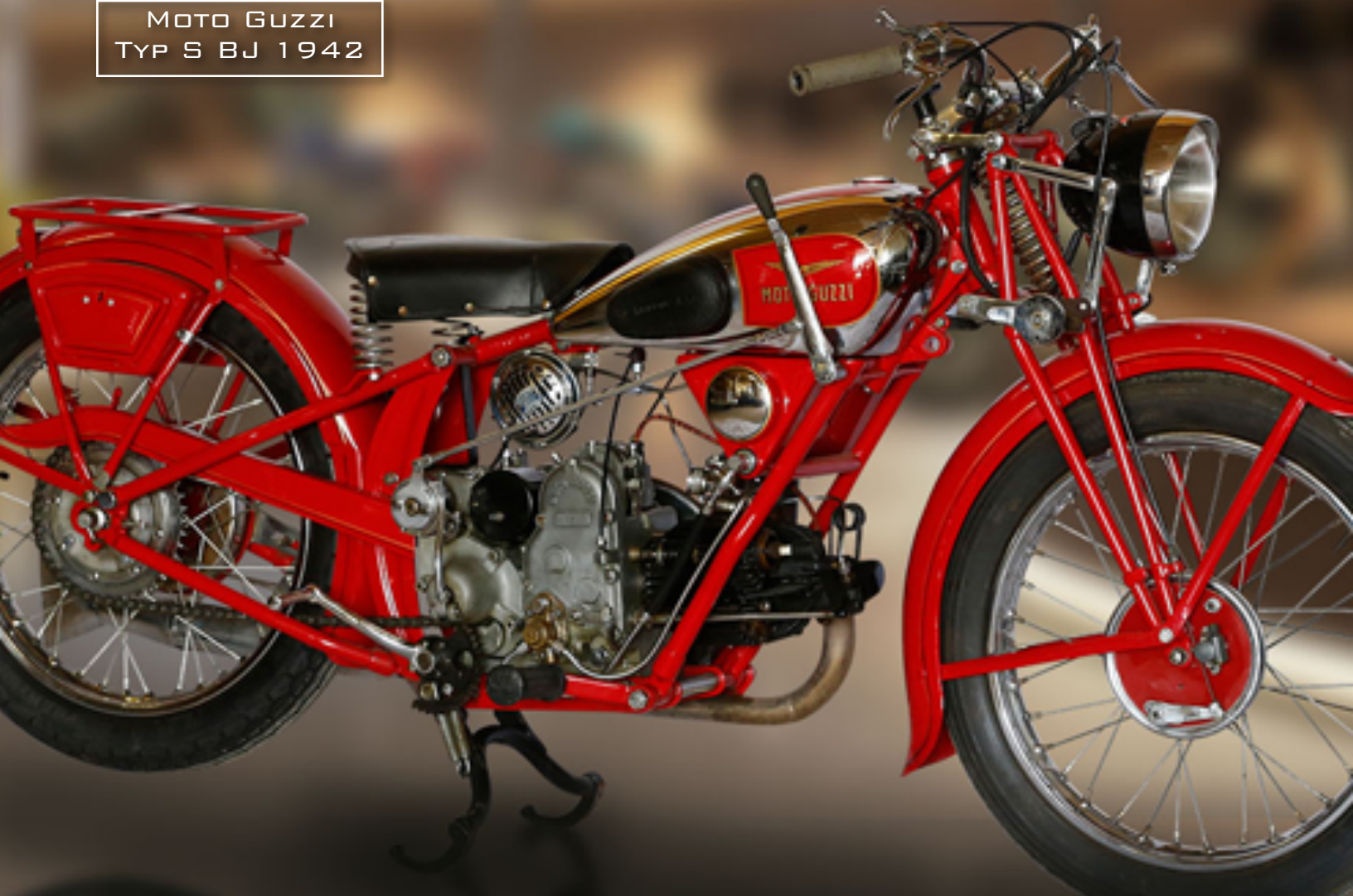
Refined style, cutting-edge technology and exceptional dynamic features characterize the new California 1400 in the Touring and Custom versions, two distinct models in terms of personality and intended use.

The new California 1400 is a bike of firsts, starting from the 1400 engine, a record engine size for a V-twin motorcycle engine in Europe. The powerful 90° transverse V-twin, elastically mounted on a brand new chassis, delivers a torque of 120 Nm at just 2750 rpm.

Everything on the California Touring and the California

Custom contributes to combining the best of modern, cutting-edge technology with the classic style and elegance of the Moto Guzzi brand: multimap Ride by Wire accelerator, cruise control, MGCT traction control system and two-channel ABS. Hand built in the Mandello del Lario plant, where Moto Guzzi bikes have been turned out without interruption since 1921, the California 1400 models stand out for the attention to craftsmanship which each single component is assembled. A level of care that makes every Moto Guzzi California a unique piece, with the power to match and accentuate the strong personality of a passionate and exclusive clientele.

MOTO GUZZI  
TYP S BJ 1942





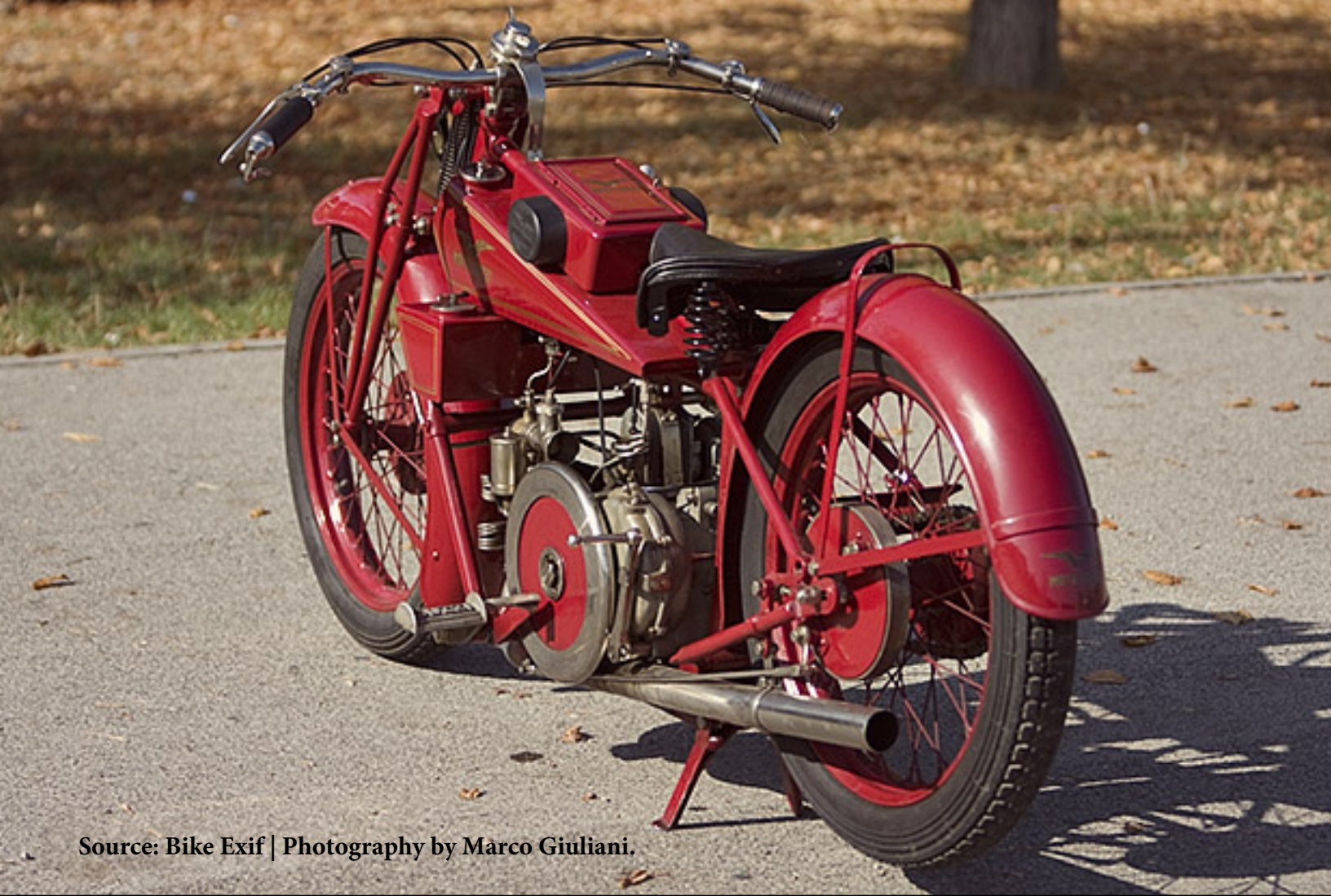






1924 MOTO GUZZI  
C2V 500CC OHV





Source: Bike Exif | Photography by Marco Giuliani.

## VINTAGE MOTO GUZZI CORSA 2V

Exclusive barn finds don't get much rarer or more exciting than this: here's a privateer racing motorcycle built to order in 1928 by Moto Guzzi, just seven years after the company began manufacturing. The story comes from Adam Bolton of Italian Motor Magazine, and you just couldn't make it up. The current owner of the bike, Giuliano Tamburini, takes up the tale:

*"My brother Sandro was on holiday in Reggio Calabria, in the south of Italy, around 1981. He drove past a scrap yard—there were lots of them in those days—and he happened to notice an old bike hanging from the jaws of a crane, ready to be smashed or crushed. He went in, recognised that the motorcycle was an important early Guzzi of some sort, and had a word with the owner. The owner was happy to do a swap—for three motocross bikes."*

In the late 70s trials and motocross bikes were all the rage in Europe, so Giuliano and Sandro bought three, drove them down to Reggio Calabria, and did the deal.

*"It's probable the man didn't know what the Guzzi was. In those days they were just old bikes, with no value to most. Being a race bike, it would not have come with registration documents, making it even less appealing to hold on to."*

The lack of documents wasn't a problem for Giuliano and Sandro, though. The frame number tallied perfectly with Moto Guzzi's archive: this Corsa 2V was built at Mandello del Lario in early 1928, and sold to Guzzi dealer Mario Altomare of Cosenza. (The price would have been roughly 10,000 lire.) According to Sandro, "Dealers had to pay up front for machines, and then sell them on. Bikes were ridden down through Italy from Mandello and delivered to the dealers personally. It's almost certain that Altomare had a firm order from a customer who wanted to race, and this bike was the one delivered."

From the beginning, Carlo Guzzi was convinced of the merits of racing to develop and sell road machines. And





his C2V, meaning Corsa Due Valvole or two-valve race bike, was the first product of this desire. The horizontally placed single cylinder motor was derived from the first Guzzi ever made, the GP, and the flat single configuration was to remain the preferred choice for most Guzzi road and race machines for the next fifty years. An oversquare 88 x 82 cylinder gave 498.4cc, and the motor and three speed gearbox were of unit construction—virtually unheard of when the C2V was introduced in 1923.

The C2V also featured twin overhead parallel valves, exposed pushrods, rocker arms and valve springs, and

dual ignition. And its low weight of only 130 kg allowed it to be propelled to a heady 75 mph, from an estimated 17 bhp at 4200 rpm. Best of all, the C2V could be bought as an over-the-counter privateer race bike and raced by anyone who could afford the price.

The factory C2V raced in the 1923 edition of the Giro d'Italia, with rider Guido Mentasti taking the chequered flag. It also won a brilliant victory at the Circuito del Lario in the same year, and so became a popular machine for racers taking part in hill climbs and dirt road races. But unfortunately, the racing life of Giuliano's motorcycle is unknown. There are no







records of this particular bike between 1928 and 1980, despite the Tamburini brothers' efforts to jog the memory of dealer Mario Altomare before he died in the early 90s.

But the rest of the news is good. *"The bike was luckily pretty much complete when we got it,"* Giuliano explains. *"There were a couple of levers missing, as was the exhaust pipe. The oil lines were wrecked, and the fuel tank was dented and bashed about. The motor was given a fairly straightforward rebuild, with all new bearings. The worst part was the top frame tube, distorted and broken by the crane, which had grabbed it in the scrap yard. That was the toughest part of the restoration, replacing this tube, while keeping the frame straight on a jig. The paintwork has been done in the same nitro-cellulose paint they would have used in the factory in 1928, to the correct Lechler colour code for the period."*

In fact, the bike wears the ASI brass plaque only given to motorcycles in Italy that are in or restored to impeccable original condition, and restorer Sandro Laici and Giuliano are rightly proud of this—especially as only 200 or so C2Vs were built.

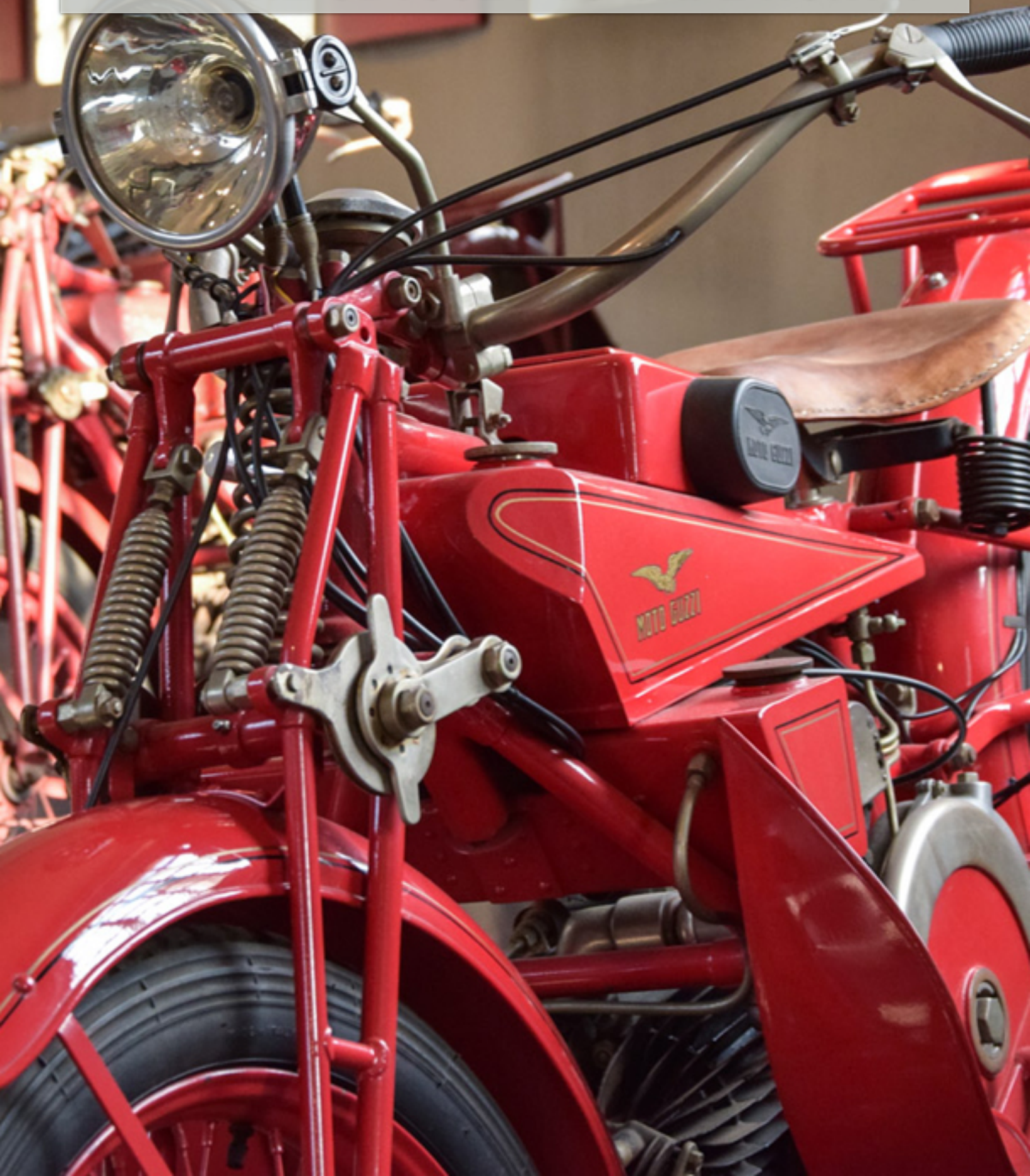
Adam Bolton, editor of Italian Motor Magazine, rode the Guzzi round a track in Tuscany, Italy. *"I have to say*

*it's the most exciting Italian motorcycle I've ridden to date (and probably the most valuable). The sound from the straight-through exhaust pipe is loud, raw and stirring—and rather intimidating!"*





**GIUSEPPE GUZZI, THE G.T. 500 NORGE  
AND THE ODYSSEY TO CAPE NORTH**







Irrespective of his biking background, every European biker grows up with one particular exploit firmly entrenched in his mind, namely the odyssey to Cape North.

Every year this trip drives thousands of bikers to take on the narrow Scandinavian national roads that skirt along the fjords to get to Nordkapp. This is often a long and tiring trip but it is something that any rider can manage and has long since become a kind of rite of passage that any bike tourer would find very hard indeed to resist.

Not everyone knows, however, that behind this legend lies a truly Italian story, a story that bears the Moto Guzzi hallmark, a story that is 90 years old this year and that saw Giuseppe Guzzi, brother of Carlo (the founder of Moto Guzzi), take a magnificent and revolutionary bike known as the G.T. 500 on an odyssey that smacked of the incredible at that time.

In order to tell this story we have to begin by telling you something about Giuseppe Guzzi and the kind of guy he was. Carlo's older brother was nicknamed "Naco" (every member of the family had a nickname and Carlo's was "Tai") and he was a brilliant mechanic and

engineer. Having graduated as a civil engineer, he had designed some of the company's factory buildings, as well as the power station that provided the company premises with hydroelectric power (it was also he who designed Moto Guzzi's famous wind tunnel after the end of the Second World War).

Unlike his brother Carlo, who was extremely outgoing and extrovert, Naco was a somewhat quiet and contemplative individual who loved his design work and worked all alone in his office at the Mandello del Lario works. Since he couldn't handle hot weather, he was known for working bare-chested at his drawing board, eagerly awaiting the arrival of the summer holidays when he could finally head off on one of his much-loved solitary bike tours in search of the cooler mountain climes.

Whereas Carlo was the racing soul of Moto Guzzi, Giuseppe was the one who loved touring and adventure and year after year, with his Sport 13 (known as the Sport 500 at the time) he would head off on ever longer and more extreme trips, during which the dirt roads of the time would put a lot of strain on his Moto Guzzi's mechanicals and often force him to rely entirely on his own ingenuity and mechanical ability.

In 1926, while he was riding in the Carpathian Mountains, the rigid tail-end of his Sport bike frame snapped. Far from being disheartened, Naco used some tire inner tubes to hold the tail-end triangle of the frame to the saddle part of the front section and managed to get all the way back to Mandello del Lario with a bike that was no longer a hardtail but somewhat more "flexible", although perhaps it would be more accurate to use the word "bouncy".

When he got back to the factory and met his brother Carlo, Giuseppe said just a few words in strict Mandello dialect that would soon go on to change the entire bike industry all he said was "Te set che la va mej insci?" ("You know what? It's better this way.").

Thus Carlo and Giuseppe got the idea to create a suspension system that would allow the rear section of the bike frame to pivot up and down independently of the rest of the frame. This system was something totally new for the biking world in which, at the time, the rigid frame was still synonymous of sportiness, and the only possible solution to the problem was the decidedly inefficient and even less reliable static drive-wheel assembly.

So Giuseppe sat down at his drawing board and designed a pivoting rear fork assembly connected to a





series of springs positioned under the engine in such a way that the heavier springs would come into play when the lighter springs were totally compressed. Thus the G.T. 500 (or Granturismo) was born.

Unveiled in January 1928, the bike had the same 500cc, opposing-valve engine as the Sport model and was equipped with a new, racing derived, triple-spring front fork assembly, drum brakes and balloon tires, as well as the very first pivoting fork rear-suspension system available on the market.

Riding on the wave of public enthusiasm for another great Italian achievement a year earlier, when Umberto Nobile and Roald Amundsen flew over the North Pole in a hot air balloon called the Norge, the new bike was immediately renamed the “Norge”.

This was a purely promotional move but one that resulted in the publication of a number of negative press releases issued by Moto Guzzi’s competitors, accusing the company of unfair exploitation of the popularity of the aforesaid achievement.

In addition to the already negative press releases, the G.T. 500 was met with a somewhat chilly public response, mainly due to the public’s doubts regarding the “softail” sprung frame.

Thus, in the red-hot summer of 1928, Naco put his reputation on the line and decided to tackle an adventure that was even more extreme than all of his previous exploits. His aim was to take the bike out on a

field trip that would follow the same route as that of the hot air balloon with the same name and would prove to everyone that the new G.T. 500 was not only reliable and competitive, but that it was indeed worthy of bearing the “Norge” name.

The bike he chose for this undertaking was indeed a G.T. 500, but actually it was the very same “Sport” bike that Naco had ridden back in 1926, although it had since been updated with all the new components fitted to the latest Granturismo model and customised by the addition of some special accessories for the trip, including a metal pipe mounted under the headlight to house all his maps, a side-mounted gun-case and a heavy-duty side-stand that could be flipped down from either side of the bike.

It took Naco 28 days to get all the way to the Arctic Circle and then return home, using 182 litres of petrol and three tyres. The 6,000km trip along all of Europe’s challenging roads, all the way to Sweden and then on to Norway was an unmitigated success and the news of this epic solitary bike trip, undertaken by an Italian, riding an Italian bike, spread like wildfire, so much so in fact that thousands of curious onlookers came out to greet Naco as he passed by them on his way back home.

In the end, the very same International press that had previously lambasted Moto Guzzi now instead re-established the well-deserved name of the Moto Guzzi G.T. 500 Norge and effectively created the legend surrounding this exciting trip that still drives



men and machines beyond the confines of the Arctic Circle to this day. A story that, less than a decade after Moto Guzzi was originally established, gave rise to a new and different aspect to the legend of the Eagle.

A story that tells of exceptional, passionate, visionary men, albeit with the modesty of professionals and engineers. Sufficient to say that Naco, after returning from his Cape North odyssey totally exhausted, perhaps more so by the crowds of people than by the number of kilometres he had travelled, left all the glory and public and media acclaim to his brother ... after all, this had been nothing more than his summer holiday in search of some cooler climes.

He limited himself to writing a report on his trip, which was published in the "Motociclismo" magazine in July 1929, which was then split into three monthly articles.

The story goes that as he left the factory to head off on his trip, just a short way from the factory gate and from the crowd of factory workers that had come out to see

him off Naco picked up a puncture in one of his bike's tyres in the railway underpass that leads to the national road.

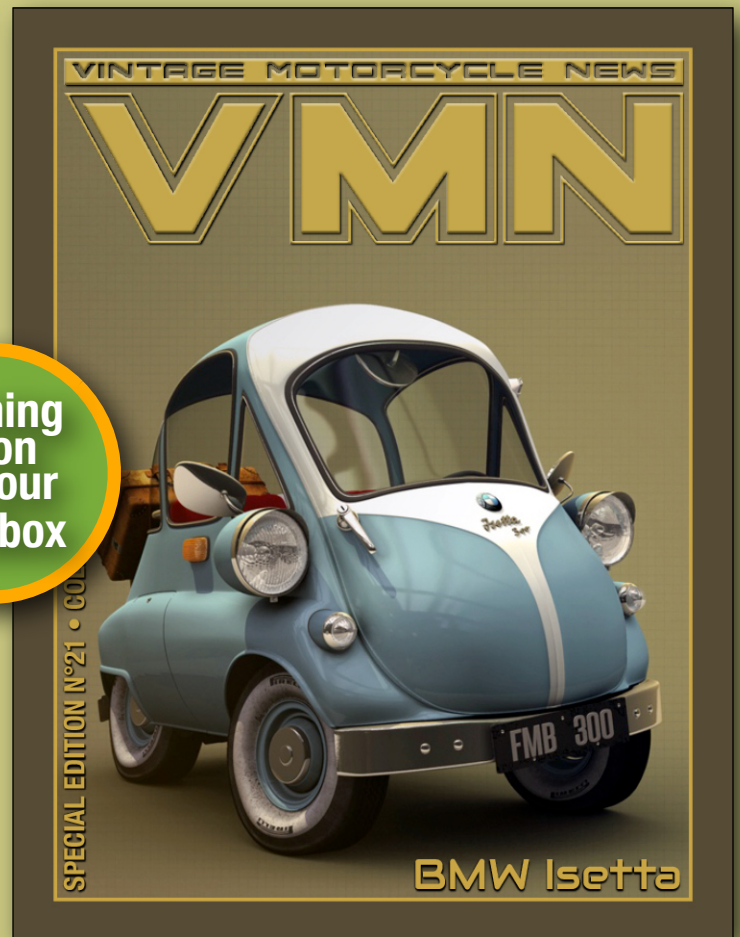
The workers immediately ran to help him repair the tyre, only to be told: «I'm already on my way» he said «and when I'm travelling it's up to me to sort it out! Go back to work, I'll deal with it!». And so it was.

Naco's bike, which he himself had upgraded in the 50's by fitting a modified GT 16 frame, was donated to the Mandello "Moto Club Carlo Guzzi" by the widow of Ulisse Guzzi (Carlo's son) and was brought out once again in 1991 for the re-enactment of the trip to Lapland. On that occasion the bike performed exceptionally well and gave no problems of any sort.

In July 2006 14 sparkling Moto Guzzi Norge 1200 GTs, ridden by an equal number of International journalists, took on the "Raid Norge 2006": a re-enactment that retraced the route of the trip that took Engineer Giuseppe Guzzi and his Norge G.T. 500 all the way to the Arctic Circle 78 years earlier.



Coming soon to your Mailbox





# FROM ERITREA TO TENNESSEE

## 1934 AND 1939 MOTO GUZZI GTS 500

SOURCE: motorcycleclassics.com | Story by Bud McIntyre | Photos by Tammie Bostelman



A former soldier brings a pair of pre-war Moto Guzzi GTS 500s back to the states, of which only 2,952 were made, along with a Parri sidecar.

Sometimes the stories behind vintage motorcycles are as interesting and compelling as the bikes themselves. This is one of those times.

The persistence and talents of one man have resurrected not one, but two discarded, forlorn prewar Moto Guzzis found in a distant corner of the world. This epic began in 1968 when a 20-year-old Army-enlisted man from Tennessee named Spencer Graves was assigned to duty in Asmara, Eritrea. Eritrea became an Italian colony in 1889 and, under the hand of dictator Benito Mussolini, the capital of Asmara was greatly expanded beginning in the early 1920s. With over half of the capital's 98,000 residents being native-born Italians, there were of course many Italian products,

including motorcycles, as we shall see.

Early in his deployment, Spencer found a 1939 Moto Guzzi 500 GTS in sad condition, not running with many missing and cannibalized parts, following nearly 30 years of neglect. Shortly after acquiring the Guzzi, a fellow soldier sold him the sidecar off of his Triumph 650, which Spencer thought would fit his bike. Little

did he know how fateful this purchase was. He found a native Eritrean who was knowledgeable about older Guzzis and who agreed to return it to running and presentable condition. The mechanic's name was Solomon Mashio, and he was not only the first native African to be a certified Moto Guzzi mechanic, but also a Guzzi racer of some repute. Solomon was trained and mentored





by the noted Italian Moto Guzzi mechanic and racer Mario Mancini in the early 1950s. When Spencer picked the bike up from Solomon, it ran well enough, but evidently “presentable” to Solomon was a bit different than what Spencer had in mind: the bike was painted in the traditional Guzzi bright red, but the sidecar was painted like a zebra!

Having seen Spencer dashing around on his old Guzzi, Al Willey, a fellow soldier and friend, decided he had to find one as well, which he did. It was an even older example of the same 500 GTS, circa 1934, in much the same condition as Spencer’s. Al’s goal was to ship the bike home and restore it. Al’s daily ride was a Ducati 250 Scrambler. Imagine two young soldiers far from home, one on the prewar Guzzi and the other on a period Ducati dashing around the dusty roads of Aswara, the nearby port city of Massawa and the surrounding desert. They must have felt like modern-day Lawrences of Arabia! When their tours of duty were up, the two buddies shipped the bikes back to the U.S. and eventually restored them. Spencer’s Guzzi went home to Tennessee and his buddy Al’s bike to Wyoming, now with the sidecar which Spencer sold him just before leaving Africa. It would return, as we will see.

## Restoration

Spencer began working on his Moto Guzzi in 1974, disassembling the bike for body and paint work only to have the gas tank and side covers disappear from a ne’er-do-well local shop. The project was off to a poor start. Through persistent inquiries, Spencer located Jerry Kimberlin in California, who was very knowledgeable about the Guzzi singles and a skilled engine



builder. Jerry undertook the rebuilding of the engine.

As this was going on, Spencer was searching for the parts lost by the body shop, as well as many others needed to complete the project. Along the way fellow U.S. Guzzi enthusiasts Tim Smith and Antonio Ricciardi helped with parts and advice, as did Marco Valentino in Italy. To give you an idea of the difficulties, it took 16 years (1974-1990) to find a correct,

original gas tank to replace the one lost at the start of the project. Other parts were nearly as challenging to find, as was information about the bike itself. Don’t forget that these initial efforts were done before the internet, so snail mail, phone calls and word-of-mouth were the only means available, all of which took much time and diligence.

In addition to the difficulties in sourcing parts, etc., it’s also im-





**The 1934 Moto Guzzi GTS 500.**

portant to note that Spencer was not a mechanic, not a paint and body guy, not knowledgeable about prewar Guzzis GTSs, of which only 2,952 were built, and did not know anyone who was. He also didn't speak Italian. However, he was persistent, focused and found that he had fundamental skills which developed into fine craftsmanship.

He admits to lots of mistakes and do-overs, but he kept at it over the years and, as seen in the photos and the many show awards, he got it very right. He first displayed the 1939 model at the Barber Vintage Festival in 2011 as a solo bike and received high praise for his efforts.

## **The second GTS**

In 1990, Spencer's Army buddy called from Wyoming and asked if he'd like to buy the 1934 500 GTS he'd bought in Eritrea, as he'd

decided that he just didn't want to take the project on. Now that Spencer had many years of experience working on his bike and had developed sources for parts and advice, he readily accepted the offer, so now he had two vintage Guzzis. He wisely waited until he finished

his bike in 2011 before starting on his friend's bike which, as you'll recall, had the sidecar that Spencer sold him in Africa.

Spencer knew that the body on the sidecar was not correct, but the frame fit the Guzzi so well that he thought there was a chance that it



**Spencer Graves' 1939 Moto Guzzi GTS 500, with a Parri sidecar.**





may have been an Italian rig originally made for the bike. Perhaps, but the chances were very slim, as he knew. Still ...

Although there were no markings on the sidecar frame, after much searching on the internet, Spencer located a sidecar museum in Italy

([www.sidecar.it](http://www.sidecar.it)), which not only had many different sidecars on display, but also had a restoration shop and original tooling for several classic Italian sidecars. The founder, Constantino Frontalini, carefully studied the photos Spencer sent and recognized the frame as a

period-correct, Italian Parri S.M.I.T unit! So, fate stepped in and proved Spencer's intuition correct despite the very long odds. The next question was whether original Parri sidecar bodies were available? The disappointing response was "no."

But in the next breath Constantino said *"but we can build a new one for you from the original bucks and tooling!"* What are the chances of finding THE one person on the planet who could recognize the bare frame and who could then build a new, period-correct body for it? So a deal was struck and eight months later the sidecar body arrived in primer at Spencer's doorstep in Tennessee.

In the meantime, he'd continued on with the restoration of his friend's GTS. Then began the painstaking process of filling,





sanding, blocking the new body, matching the new paint to the complex, two-tone scheme shown on original Parri advertising literature and getting the whole assembly brought together into the extraordinary, award-winning rig you see in the photos. He decided to attach the sidecar to his 1939 GTS, since that was the bike on which it was originally mounted. In 2016, after 42 years of diligent and skillful effort, both of Spencer's 80-plus-year-old Guzzis from the other side of the world were completed. They were both displayed at the Barber Vintage Festival that year and again in 2018, to much-deserved praise and awards. Listening to comments by onlookers at these shows, it's safe to say that the art deco design of the Parri sidecar is unlike any other in the world (with the possible exception of the other famous Italian sidecar company, Longhi), and is just stunning when seen in person. The soft, streamlined lines of the Parri and the intricate detailing are simply unmatched.

It is notable and speaks to Spencer's character that, even given the obvious quality of the work and the many awards, he is humble about what he's accomplished and wonders aloud if it is "good enough." The best answer is a simple "job very well done." No doubt Carlo Guzzi would say the same thing, shake his hand, pat the gas tank and murmur "bella macchina" over and over.

These bikes are not trailer queens meant to just garner awards. Spencer pilots the sidecar rig regularly, although he doesn't ride the solo bike as much these days. He has been generous in showing the bikes at many venues large and small, famous and not-so-much



**The 1939 GTS 500 still wears its U.S. forces tag from Ethiopia**

since completing the restorations. It is nothing short of a miracle and a fine example of one man's persistence that these two bikes have been restored to their former glory for future generations to appreciate.

## Technical info

With their exposed hairspring valve springs, the iconic Moto Guzzi "bacon slicer" flywheel, rear friction dampers, handsome alloy engine castings, fishtail exhausts, intricate instruments and controls, both of these Guzzis are mechanical feasts for the eyes and ears.

Sporting a low 4.6:1 compression ratio with a modest 13.2 horsepower moving 323 pounds (solo bike), acceleration is leisurely. With a 4-speed gearbox, a comfortable cruising speed of 50mph and a maximum speed of 65mph, power was certainly sufficient, especially considering the small drum brakes, not to mention the poor road conditions of the day.

While the frame for the Parri sidecar is original, the body was

built from the original bucks and tooling.

Moto Guzzi built several models of the 500 GT series between 1934 and 1949, with the GTS being the less sophisticated, lower-powered model, but it was also less expensive to buy and maintain and was very robust. The higher-performance 500 GTV model produced 18 horsepower with a 5.5:1 compression ratio and an overhead valve/pushrod system, although it weighed slightly more at 352 pounds. Both series were available with either a rigid or a friction-type rear suspension and both had a springer-type front suspension.

It is important in Guzzi history that the prewar 500 GT series motorcycles not only helped establish the company as a builder of fine, high-quality bikes, but they were also the basis for Guzzi's reemergence following World War II.

The 500 GT models were also the basis for the later and more famous Falcone model, which came to market in 1950, as well as the successful Dondolino racing bikes.





**Finished in 2011, the 1939 GTS 500 is ridden regularly.**

Guzzi carried on with the horizontal single-cylinder bikes in 500cc and 250cc displacements until 1967, at which time the famous V-twin engine we see in today's Guzzis came to market. But that's a story for another time.



**Spencer Graves (right) with his 1934 GTS 500.  
Spencer's son Russell Graves (left) and grandson Conner with the 1939 GTS 500.**

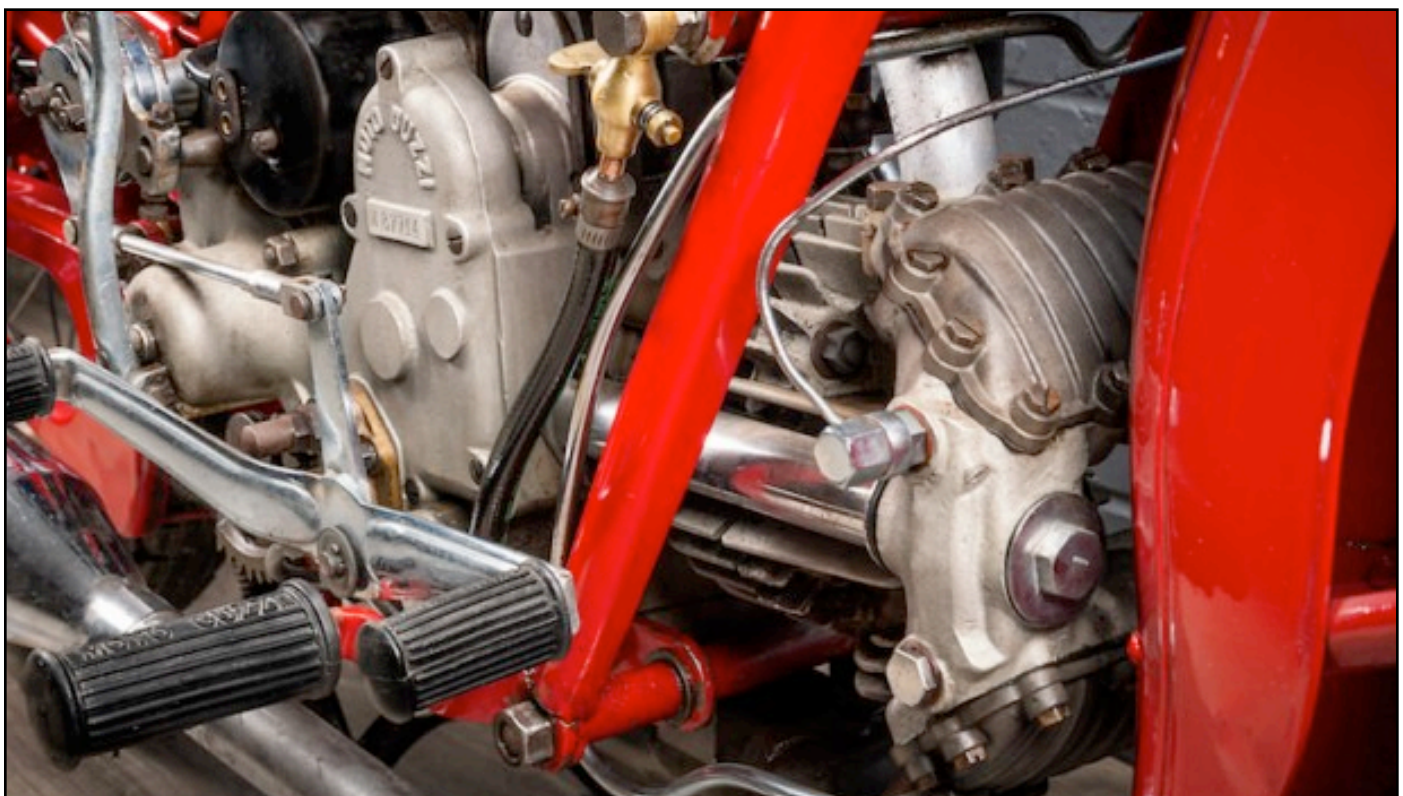


# Moto Galleria



*Moto Galleria is a British motorcycle store with a significant difference over other vintage motorcycle dealers. They focus on selling their bikes as display pieces to offices, homes and public spaces. All of their bikes are in running order and can be licensed and ridden, but the focus is more on the aesthetic appeal of the motorcycles.*

The bike you see here is a 1950 Moto Guzzi Airone Astorino, it's a 250cc single-cylinder 4-stroke with an external flywheel, inverted telescopic forks and hydraulic rear shocks – a relative rarity at the time. It's presented in good but not perfect condition, Moto Galleria prides itself on only selling motorcycles with a certain patina as they feel that it adds to the visual appeal.







*Rome, 11 February 2023*

*The President*

*I'm proud to introduce the new Italian Motorcycling Federation (FMI) project: "Motociclo Italiano", the initiative that aims to rediscover the historical heritage of motorbikes produced in Italy and today owned by motorcyclist living all over the world. The initiative is dedicated to Made in Italy fans who live outside Italy and own one or more motorcycles built at least 20 years ago.*

*They will have the possibility to be part of the exclusive collection available on [www.motocicloitaliano.com](http://www.motocicloitaliano.com) website, showing their motorbike to the visitors and giving it a cultural value.*

*By registering its vehicle to Motociclo Italiano, the owner will confer it greater prestige and obtain important advantages: he will receive a dedicated pack containing the Italian Motorcycle Federation (FMI) Member Card for the current year, the certificate of registration to "Motociclo Italiano", a personal letter written by me and a gadget.*

*I am sure that the Federation's members will be enthusiastic about Motociclo Italiano, that's why I ask you to spread out this project among them as much as you can.*

*Best regards.*

*Avv. Giovanni Copioli*

FMI President

Federazione Motociclista Italiana - Viale Tiziano, 70 - 00196 Roma

Presidenza@federmoto.it - Tel. 06.32488.201 - Fax. 06.32488401



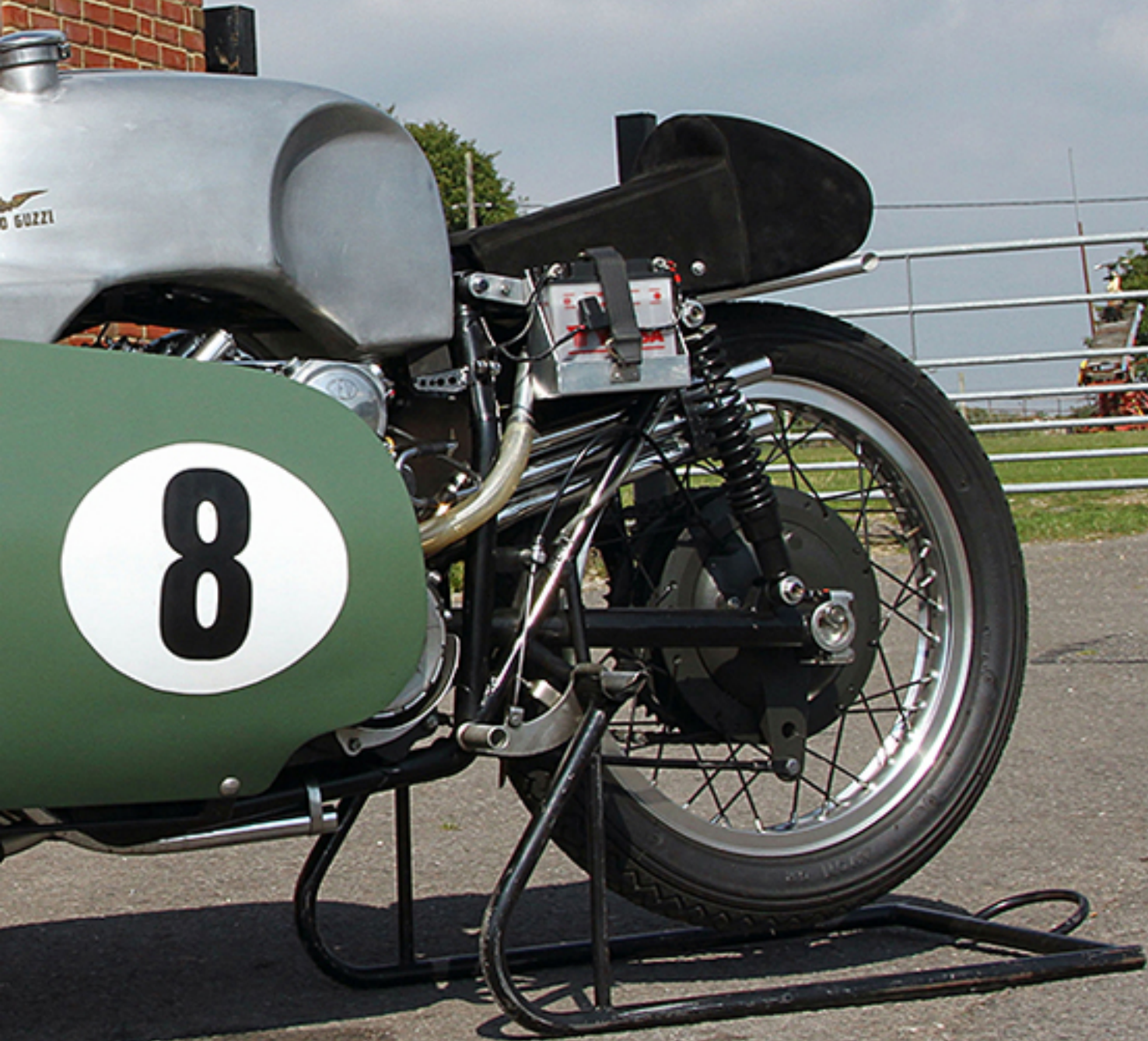
ENTRANCE



MOTO GUZZI



*1955 Moto Guzzi  
500cc - V8*







## Memorable Motorcycle: 1957 Moto Guzzi V8

*By Frank Melling*

Frank Melling is the organizer of the British vintage motorcycle extravaganza known as Thundersprint. Melling began riding five decades ago and remains as much in love with motorcycles as when he drove his first bike into a cow shed wall aged ten. In the last 50 years, Melling has competed in every form of motorcycle sport and now declares himself to be too old to grow up and be sensible.

The Moto Guzzi V8 is wheeled out of Sammy Miller's workshop and into the courtyard of the racing legend's motorcycle museum. Immediately, a group of grey-haired enthusiasts gather round the bike. Eight cylinders – each with its own carburetor. Sixteen valves, two banks of camshafts. Oil in the frame for cooling and mass centralization and with a top speed timed at 178 mph – a bike which would take on a current Superbike, despite being only 500cc. This is no ordinary motorcycle.

One of the aficionados stands proudly by the Guzzi – but still a respectful distance from this motorcycling legend. He pulls in his ample belly and stands up straight like a Grenadier Guard coming to attention.

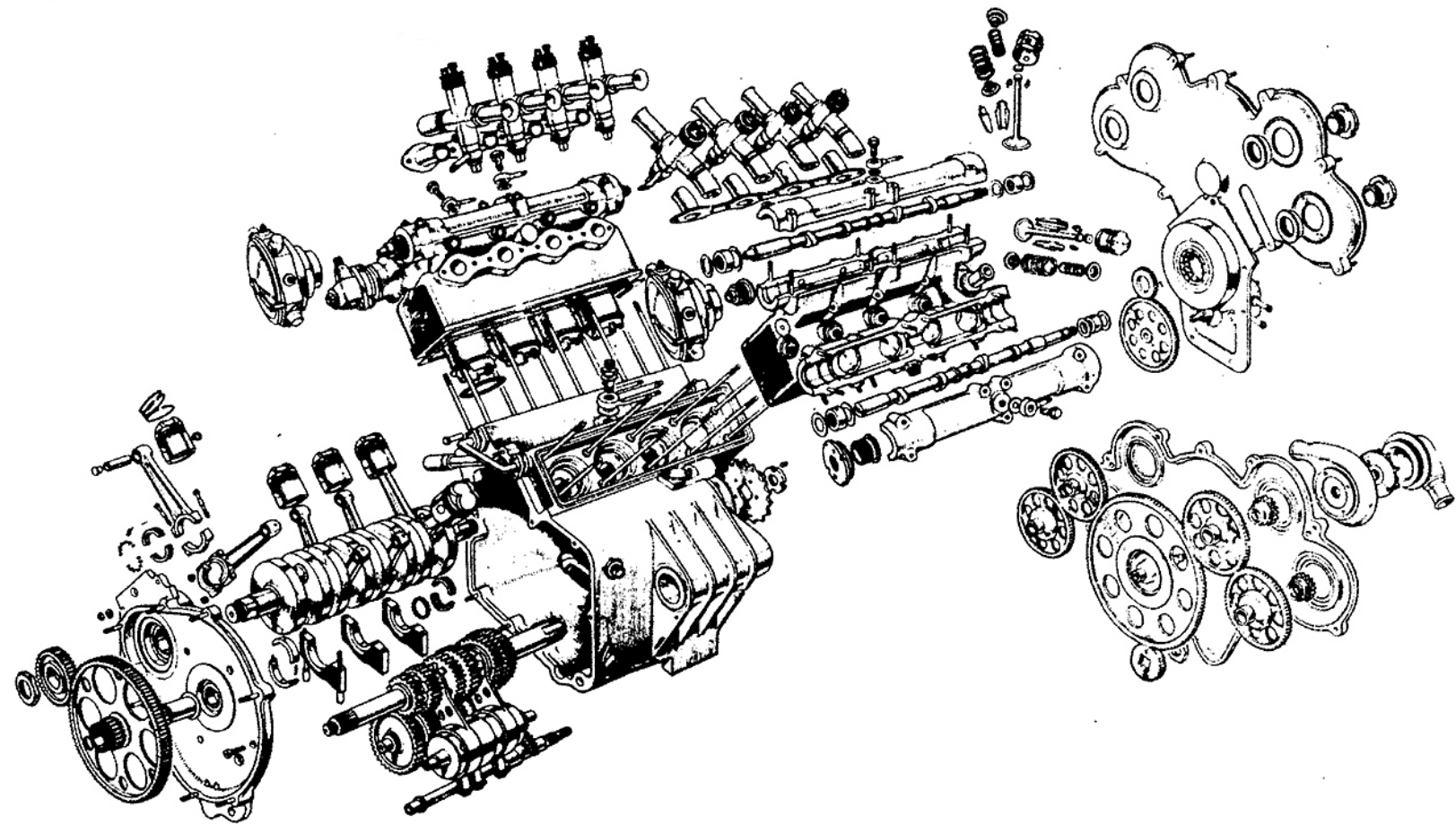
He knows he is in the presence of magic. He tells his mates, "I've waited all my life to have my picture taken next to that bike. I can die happy now."

I don't tell him that in less than an hour I won't be standing next to the Guzzi – but riding it. Like him, I am in awe of this motorcycle.

As I pull on my leathers I am nervous – very nervous. I never doubt my ability to ride exotic bikes but the Guzzi isn't exotic – it is a legend in metal. Maybe ten or so people in the world have ever ridden a Guzzi V8. As for the cost of repairing the bike if I make a mistake – think of any figure and then start adding zeros – lots and lots of them!

You just can't press the starter button on the V8 and ride off. It has to be treated with respect. First John Ring, Sammy's race mechanic, gives each carburetor an individual squirt of Avgas then Bob Stanley, who re-builds all the bikes in the Miller Museum, backs the Guzzi on to the starter, spins the rollers and brings the V8 coughing into life rather like a Rolls Royce Merlin engine firing up on a Spitfire.





After ten seconds, all eight cylinders are running, and the eight, completely unsilenced, exhausts are singing together. Like everything else on this bike, the sound is unique. It's not nearly so harsh as the Gilera and MV Fours I know so well and is much less strident than the multi-cylinder engines from Honda. In fact, it is almost civilized.

Here's what the bike sounds like being warmed up.

Lacking anything worth calling a flywheel, the V8 will stall in an instant so Bob blips the throttle constantly, keeping the revs between 5000 and 6000. It's a skilled job because the V8 is water-cooled, unlike all the other great bikes of its era, so it has to be warmed up carefully. Run the bike too cold and it will seize. Run it too hot and it will also seize. This is not a beginner's classic race bike.

From the outside, the Guzzi looks awkward and almost homemade. But the bike's designer, Giulio Cesare Carcano, was an engineers' engineer and never a stylist. For him, function was all and so the V8 will never win any beauty competition.

However, once on the bike, the hand beaten aluminum fuel tank with all its strange curves and cutaways molds round my knees like a tailor-made suit. It's the same

with the padded leather seat, which doesn't so much push the rider into the tank but holds him there. There is only one riding position on offer but it is a comfortable one and ideal for racing.

After the tension of the build-up, taking off on the Guzzi is a real anti-climax. The motor is so torquey and easy to use that you could go shopping on the V8. The clutch is light and flawlessly judged for bite and once over 10 mph the bike has perfect, effortless balance.

In a few yards, I start to give the V8 some gas and I'm rewarded with a rev counter needle which swings round at light speed and a baritone wail which arrows into my soul.

Conscious of the bill if the motor drops a valve, or seizes, I change at 12,000 rpm rather than the 13,000+ the works riders used and the acceleration is superb. The V8 is not dramatically better than the MVs and Gileras – it's not even worth mentioning the single-cylinder Manx Nortons against which it competed – but it is a much easier ride. Open the throttle, 12,000 rpm and slide in the next gear. It's all smooth and easy and the motor is just so willing.

With modern tires the handling is solid over the bumps and undulations of the old airstrip which we are using







for a test track, and the huge, double-sided, twin leading shoe brakes scrub off speed effortlessly. What wouldn't I give to actually race this bike?

Riding at 150 mph with a full fairing and the rock-hard tires of 1957 would have been a different matter, and it's not surprising that Guzzi's factory riders were often reluctant heroes when it came to racing the V8.

So, if the Guzzi was so good why didn't it win everything? The primary problem with the bike was ignition. On the original bike, Carcano had eight individual sets of mechanically opened points for the eight cylinders and getting them to work in harmony was very difficult. Now, Sammy's V8 has electronic ignition and this explains why the bike runs so well.

The bike also suffered from chronic overheating caused by the extremely compact layout of the engine and the dustbin fairing which, while being ultra-slippery in terms of aerodynamics, provided poor airflow for the radiator.

Guzzi was also hugely underfunded and, despite Carcano's genius, its race team was a real budget exercise. Finally Guzzi withdrew from racing in 1957, just as the V8 was getting sorted. Given another year, and a decent budget, there would have been nothing in the world to touch the bike.

But, there was no increase in budget, and no next year either, so the V8 remains one of the great "What Ifs" of racing.

Perhaps the most amazing thing about the Guzzi V8 is that it went from a blank sheet of paper to a running engine in just five months. It's also important to remember that there were no computer predictions or simulations available to Moto Guzzi. Carcano sat down at his desk with a pencil, sheet of paper and simple slide rule calculator as the only aids to his creative genius. Everything else happened inside his head.

A team of Guzzi engineers worked on the project but they were led by the creative genius of Giulio Cesare Carcano who began work at Moto Guzzi, writing workshop manuals, in 1936. But, like many ambitious young engineers before him, Carcano had racing in his



*Dickie Dale - 1957 German GP with the Moto Guzzi V8.*

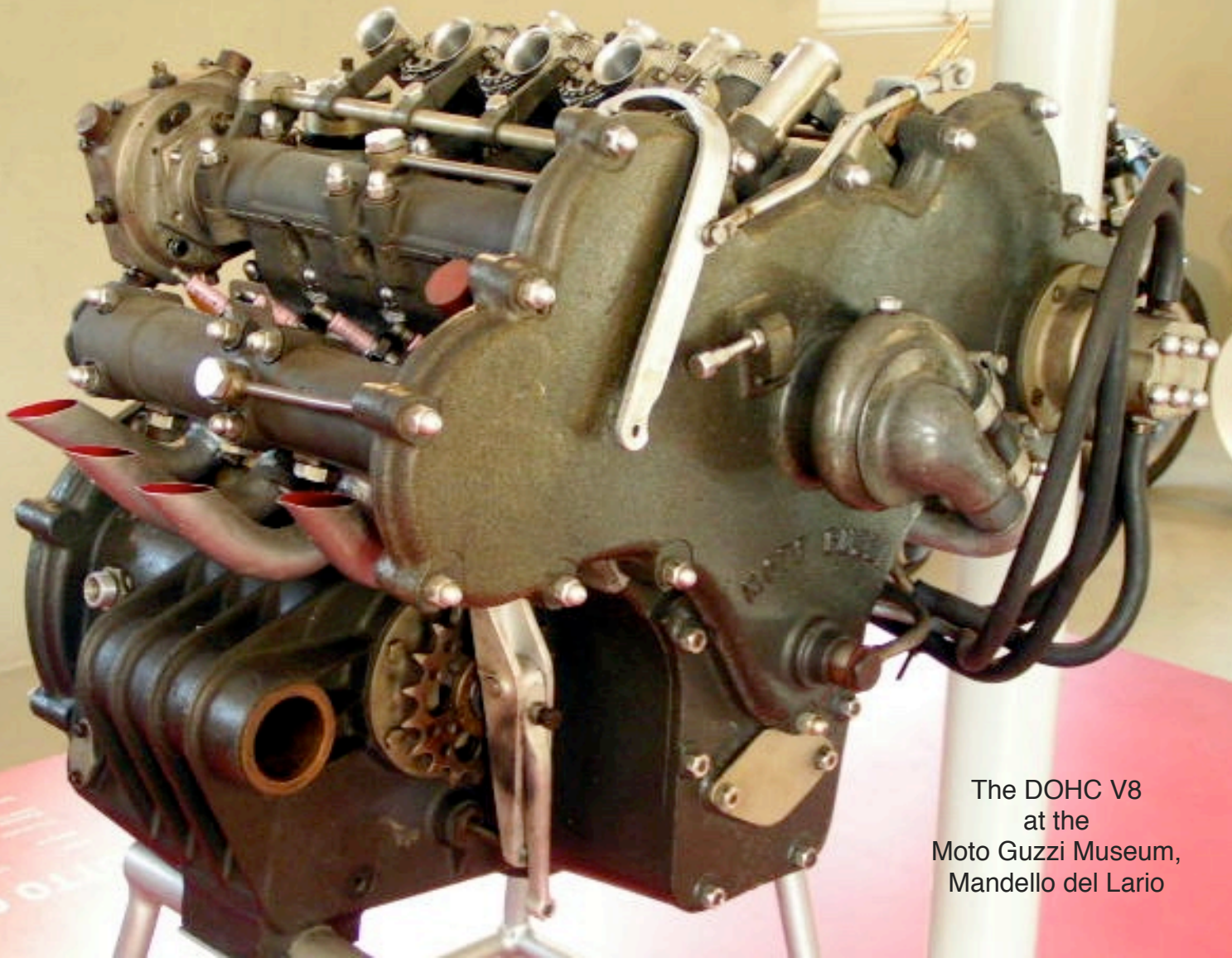
heart and in 1938 began working with Carlo Guzzi on the company's light, narrow and agile 500cc Singles. This bike, and the ideas behind it, stayed with Carcano all the way to the V8.

He was right to be influenced by the horizontal-engined Guzzis because they won five consecutive 350cc World Championships, from 1953 to 1957. In one of his last interviews, Carcano said: "The 350 was an agile and reliable motorcycle and was competitive against the four-cylinder bikes (from MV Agusta and Gilera) which gave ten more horsepower but were 40 pounds heavier."

So, when Carcano began work on the V8 it was lightness and a narrow frontal area which dominated his thinking. Why then did he go down the route of eight cylinders rather than the proven four-cylinder engines of MV and Gilera?

"We thought differently. Once we abandoned our Singles and V-Twins, the obvious solution would be four cylinders. But building a four cylinder meant staying behind Gilera and MV because they started





The DOHC V8  
at the  
Moto Guzzi Museum,  
Mandello del Lario

earlier and we would have had to work at least a couple of years to be at the same level of experience and development.

“Then we thought that if we were aiming for eight cylinders the power was not an issue anymore. On the contrary, weight and dimensions would be important. Our eight cylinder was brilliant because it was no bigger than a 250cc bike.

“When it was tested on the bench for the first time it already gave 63 hp while the Gilera gave 60 hp, and we were just at the very first tests. Then it achieved 70-72 hp and the power would be increased more and more if they did not kill it with the famous 1957 agreement.”

Carcano was as good as his word and built a tiny V8 with a crankshaft just 13.5 inches wide (342mm) and weighing only 330 pounds (150kgs) – which is the weight of a current MotoGP bike.

Confident as he was of his ability and his predictions – and Carcano really was – the feeling at Guzzi was that the V8 would be rev hungry and therefore a six-speed gearbox was specified. As things turned out, the V8 pulled like a train and, if anything, exceeded all expectations.

The bike’s problems were two-fold. First, Carcano’s ideas were right on the very, very edge of what was possible with the technology of the day and, in particular, there was no way of reliably delivering 800 sparks a second which the V8 required.

In tandem with Carcano’s ambition outstretching the limits of 1953 technology, the race department at Moto Guzzi was woefully underfunded and development took place irregularly.

Carcano said: “If you think about modern factories, Guzzi’s organization of that time will make you shudder!



“For example, the racing department didn’t even have a workshop of its own. We had our own staff managing the racing but for the rest it depended on the production department.

“Moto Guzzi was not an organization dedicated to the races as for example today in Ferrari. We depended on the toolmakers and production staff to help us with personal favors to get things made. It was impossible to race properly and professionally like this.”

Emotionally, I want to believe that Carcano’s genius would have been rewarded if Guzzi had stayed in GP racing for just one more year. However, intellectually, I have more doubts. The way which Moto Guzzi went racing was completely normal for the time. The BSA competition department was known as a “Den of Professional Thieves” because of their proclivity for stealing parts from the production line and bribing skilled machinists to make race parts with free tickets for major events.

Norton and Gilera were no better while Ducati was in an even worse state.

The only exception was MV Agusta, where racing motorcycles was Count Domenico Agusta’s personal hobby and funded by his highly profitable Bell Agusta helicopter business – so even MV was not a truly professional exercise.

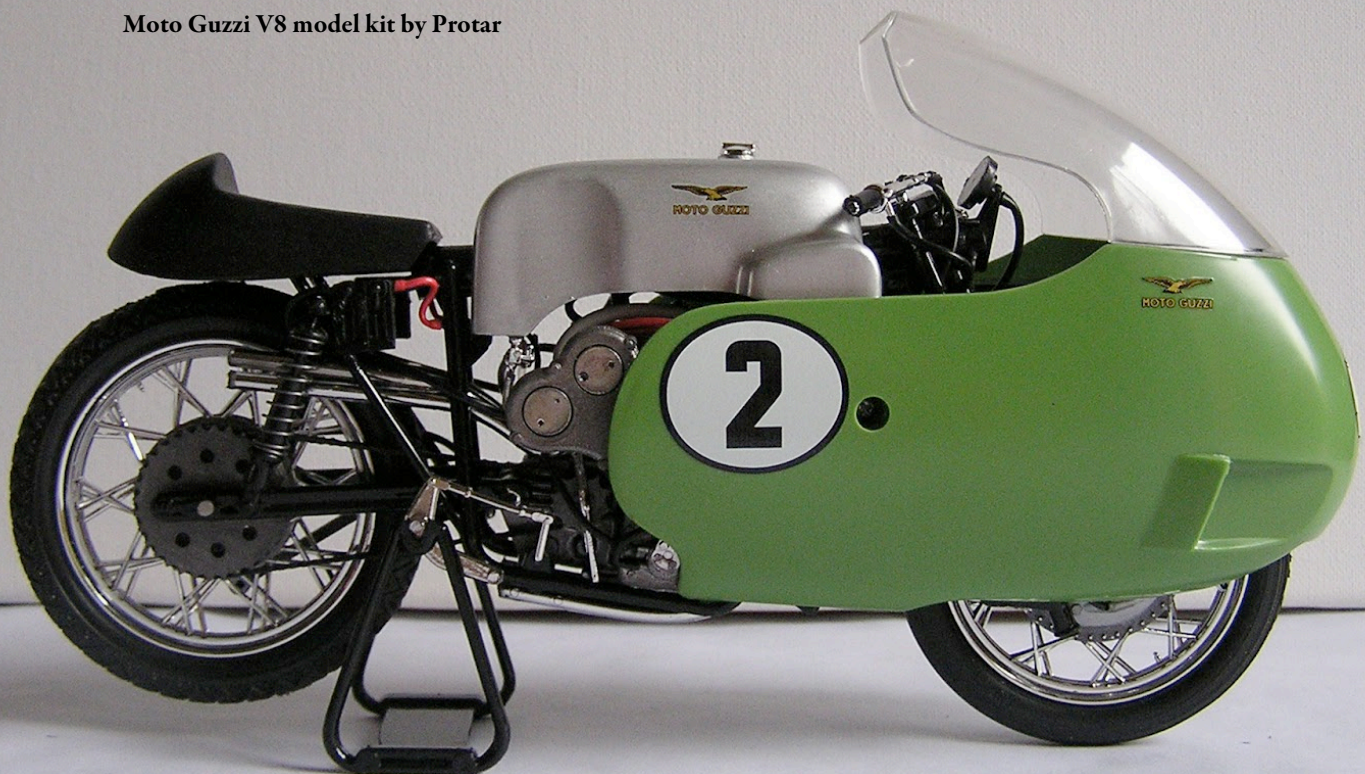
It took Honda, who entered four riders in the 1959 TT, to show the world what real factory racing meant with dedicated designers and race bike production staff – and a virtually blank check to support them.

Probably, Carcano would have continued to struggle with Guzzi in 1958 – predominantly because of the ignition problems the high-revving eight-cylinder bike posed. What Ing. Carcano needed was Soichiro Honda at his side – but that really would be re-writing history.



Giulio Cesare Carcano

Moto Guzzi V8 model kit by Protar







There are many ways of designing a motorcycle, but it takes a great deal of artistic sensitivity to create a legend from only two cylinders. That is exactly what Moto Guzzi, the prestige manufacturer in Mandello del Lario, has done.

Active in motorcycle construction since 1920, particularly in the years after 1945 it created motorcycles that made history, especially those with the powerful V-twin engine installed lengthwise in the chassis.

For forty years the V-twin four-stroke engine has been the Italian company's flagship.

The fine Italians, Le Mans, and California types, and the small 125s, 250s and 350s are described here with accuracy and detail.

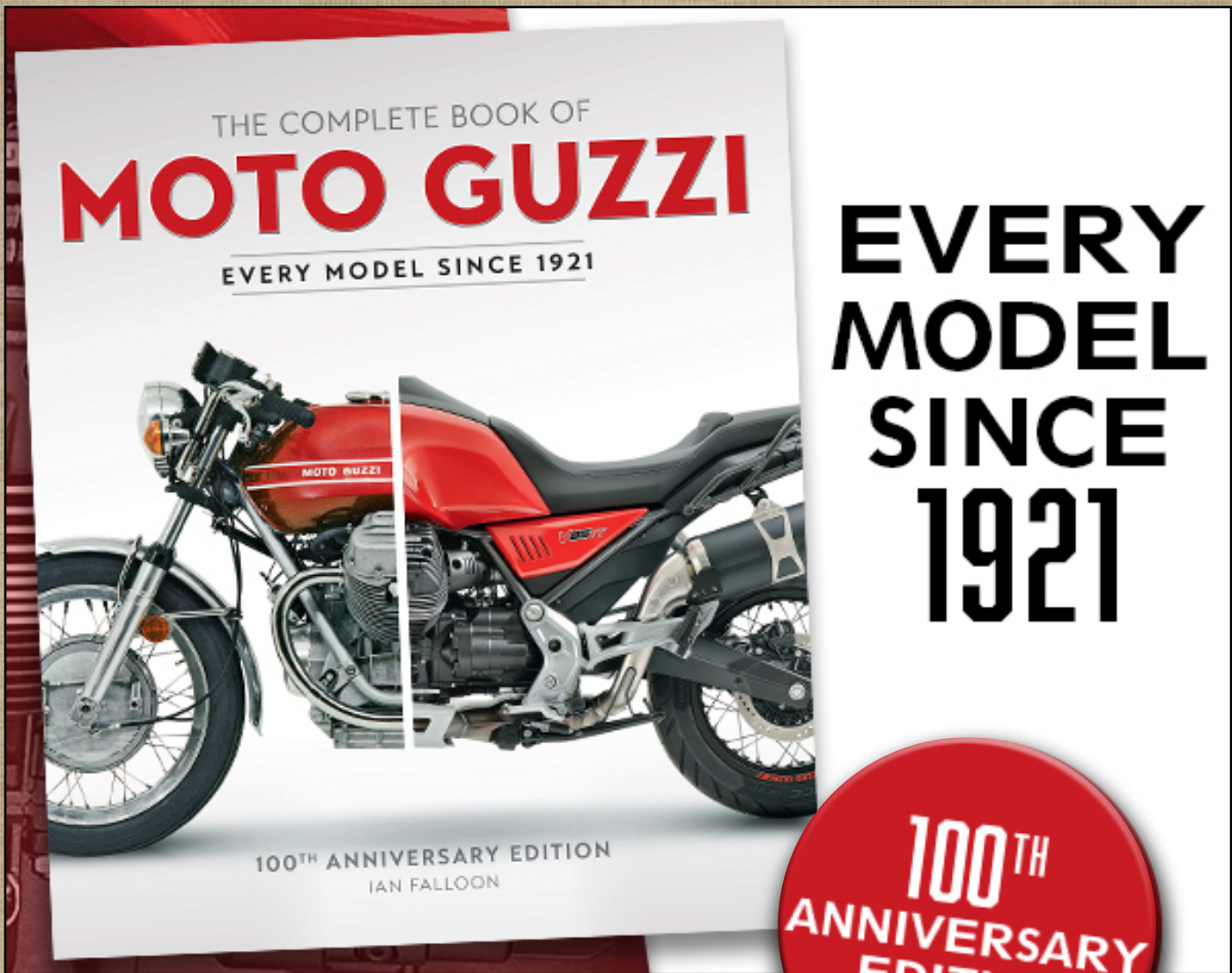
This comprehensive volume describes all models and technical details. As is the style of the authors, they also provide background information about the company and the industry. It is not all about machines and horsepower, but also the people who put their stamp on the operations: not only a treat for fans of serious technical information, but a gripping story as well.

[www.MotorcycleClassics.com](http://www.MotorcycleClassics.com)

1-800-880-7567

Item: 10559 - Price: \$40.00





The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi: 100th Anniversary Edition, Model Since 1921 , written by respected motorcycle expert Ian offers enthusiasts a thorough review of Guzzi's storied 100-year history all of its production models.

Every Falloon, via

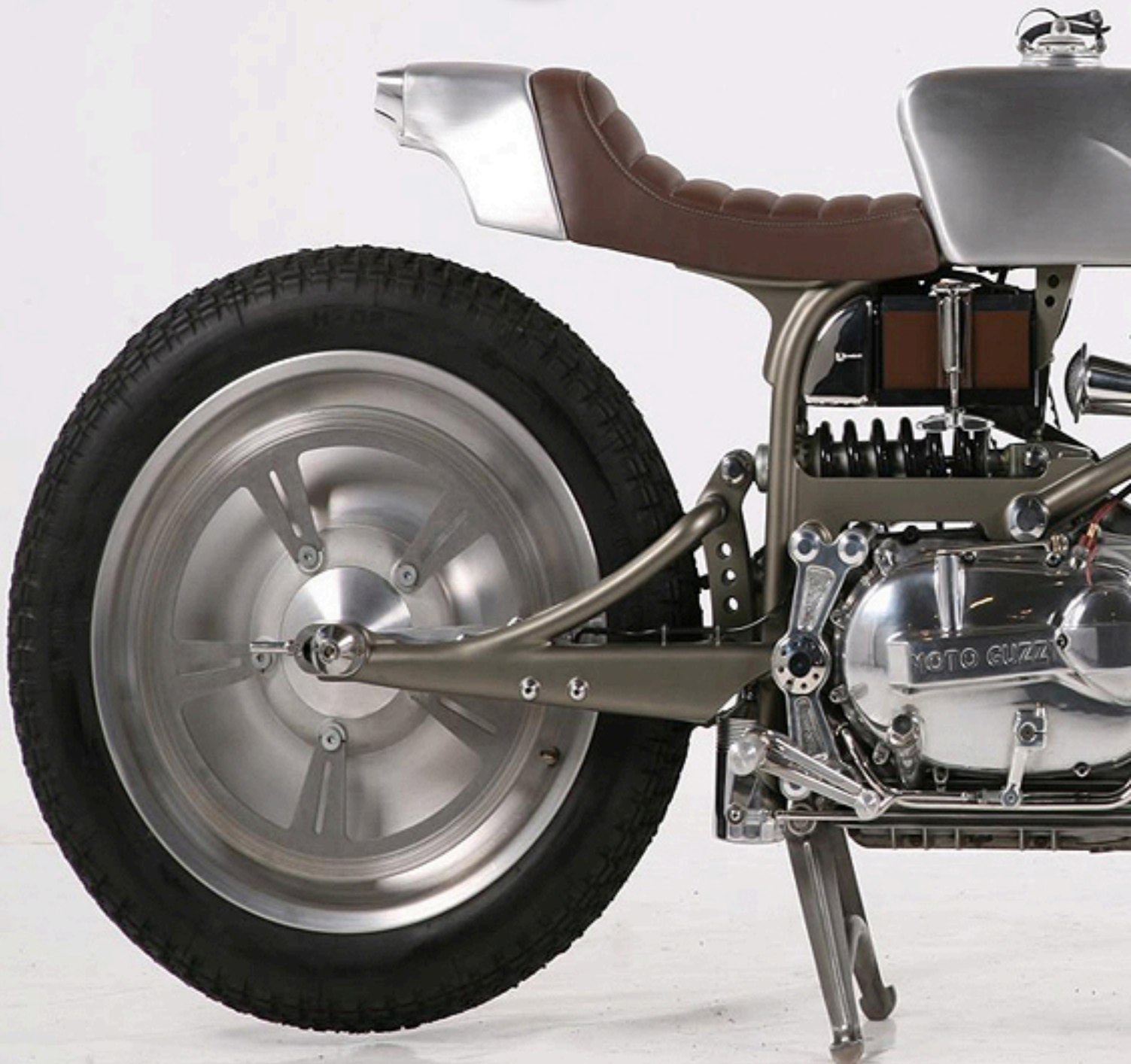
The oldest European motorcycle manufacturer in continuous production, Italy's Moto Guzzi has built some of the most iconic motorcycles ever produced. Established in 1921, the company is one of the most traditional motorcycle makers and also one of the most innovative. Carlo Guzzi's first engine design, a horizontal single, defined Moto Guzzi's road-going motorcycles for the company's first 45 years. In the 1950s, Moto Guzzi experienced tremendous success in Grand Prix motorcycle racing. Today, Moto Guzzi has a higher profile than ever, thanks to its popularity among enthusiast celebrities like Ewan McGregor.

This new edition of The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi includes a 100th anniversary introduction, new photography, and additional pages to cover the newest models from 2018 to 2020. All of Moto Guzzi's production models are covered in detail, including the groundbreaking Falcone, the V-8 Grand Prix racers, the V7 Sport, the Ambassador, the Eldorado, the Le Mans, and the Daytona, right up to today's complete range of modern bikes including the V7, Griso, Stelvio, and V9.

[www.MotorcycleClassics.com](http://www.MotorcycleClassics.com)  
1-800-880-7567  
Item: 10547 - Price: \$60.00



Moto Guzzi Nuovo Falcone  
**THE RONDINE**  
by Medaza Cycles





**MEDAZA CYCLES** is a small outfit based in  
one-off hand made custom motorcycles.

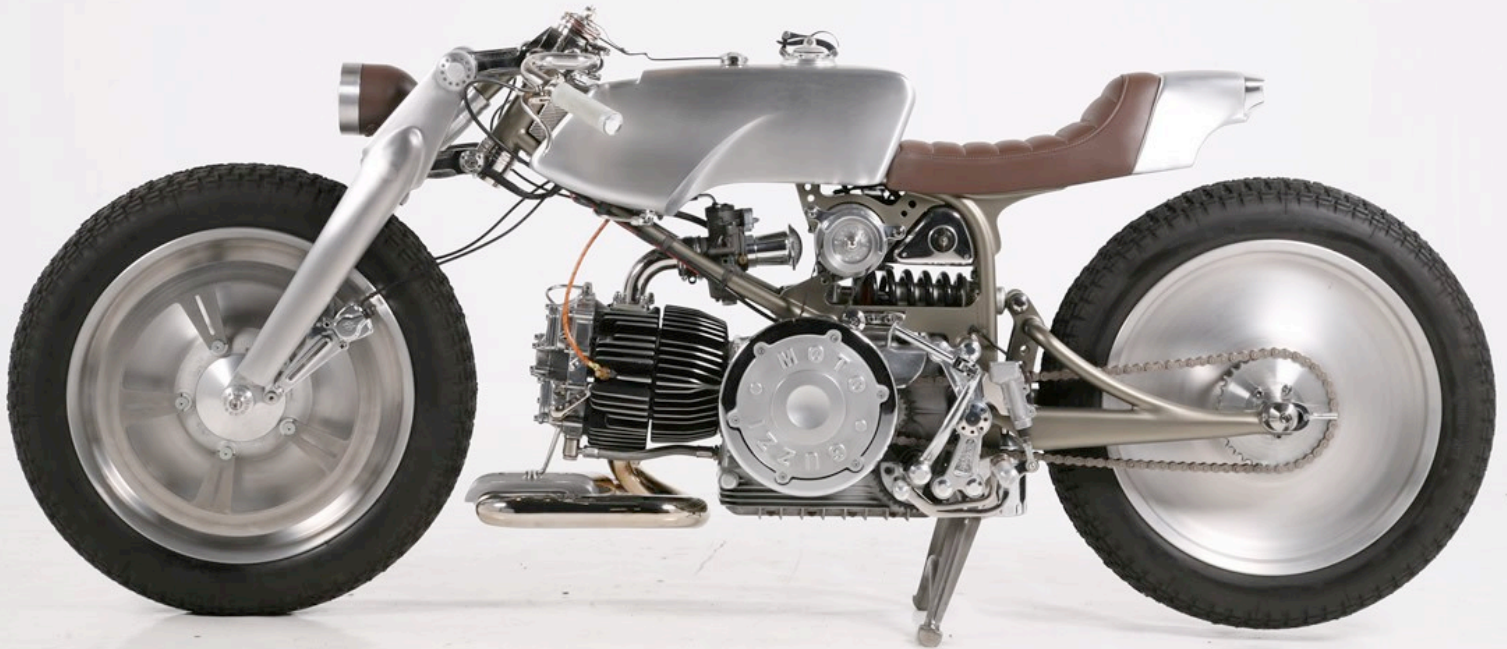
Designer Don Cronin works with friends Michael  
produce unusual and somewhat unorthodox machines.

Medaza produces just a few machines a year, with a  
and original design.

They're enthusiasts with an interest in all makes  
Harley to Zundapp!







Posted on May 27, 2013 by Andrew in Café Racer

The AMD World Championship of Custom Bike Building has some pretty big boots to fill. After all, putting the words ‘World Championship’ in your name doesn’t let you do anything by half measures.

They have to throw a net over the entire custom bike scene in order to live up to the expectations. Sometimes this means they can uncover some real gems, but it also means that they do tend to get their fair share of choppers, ape hangers, and billet.

Not that there’s anything wrong with that. But this year, they’ve really taken it to a new level. All the bikes placed in the top three slots are rides we’d be more than happy to have in our garage.

And the 2013 winner? Well, it’s a bike that we’d tear down our old garage for and build a new one just to do it justice. That bike is a Moto Guzzi single mounted in a one-off frame called ‘Rondine’.

Here’s Don Cronin. He runs Medaza Cycles, and is an Italian-loving Irishman who’s just been crowned best custom bike builder in the world.

*“I’ve built all sorts of bikes over the years. Yanks, Brits, Japs – but I’ve always had a soft spot for Italian machines. I adopted the moniker “Medaza Cycles” in 2009 after building Medaza 500 (a Morini based chop) for the AMD championship in Sturgis. If we had a philosophy it would be ‘ingenuity before bought’. A lot of the real creativity happens in the workshop after hours when myself and a few good friends work on each other’s bikes as*

*a kind of social thing. The bikes are built for the pleasure of it, and I hope it shows.”*

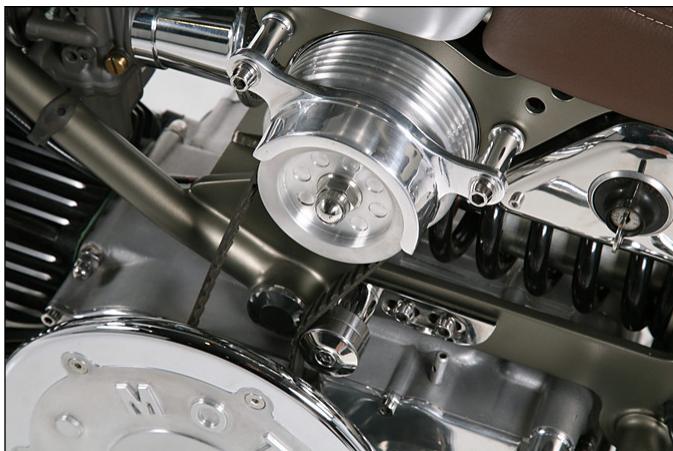
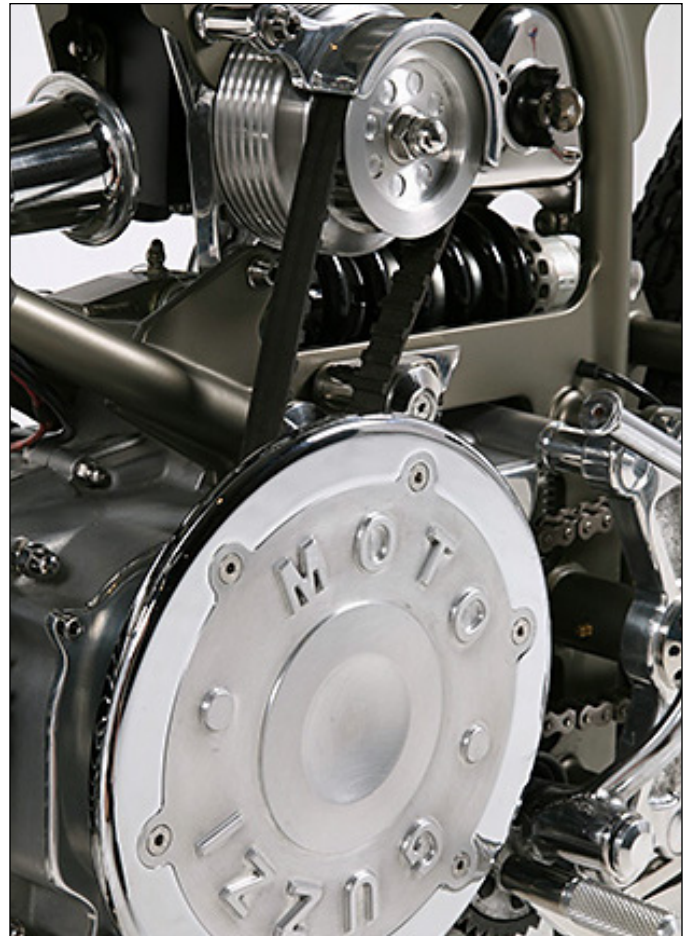
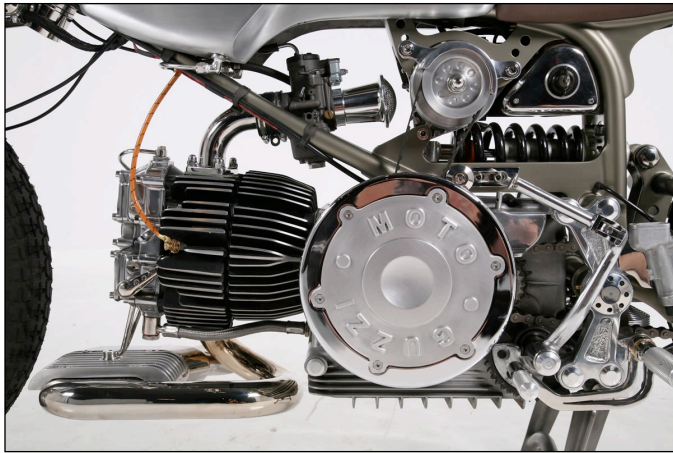
*“I’d had the idea for Rondine for a while but Moto Guzzi flat singles are hard to get hold of and are usually too expensive to break up. The Nuovo Falcone is considered the poor relation of the more venerable Falcone, so they’re a bit easier to source. In standard form they’re ugly as sin, but therein lay the challenge! The donor bike for the build (a ‘71 model) turned up as a project, so fit the bill.”*

*“The engine rebuild included the fitting of a 580cc piston and compression increase, light weight valves with uprated springs, a modified lubrication system, a custom light flywheel, pumper carb, and one-off permanent magnet alternator. Bar the modified V-Rod wheels and the V-rod swing arm used in the girder forks, very few of the bike’s parts are off-the-shelf items. The frame, tinware, and most of the other components were engineered in house.”*

*“I’d like, if I could to a quick shout-out to Harisson Billet U.K. who supplied the brake calipers and S+T Steel in Wichita Falls Texas, who produced the rotors. Many thanks!”*

And here’s something that put a big smile on our faces. Inexplicably, at the bottom of Don’s message to us, and seemingly out of all context, he finished up with these six seven words. “Do it for the heck of it.” Don, for a man that says “words aren’t my normal medium,” we kind of feel that you are selling yourself short. And we can’t wait to see what you do next.







## SPECIFICATIONS

### 1967 Moto Guzzi V7

- **Engine:** 703.7cc air-cooled OHV transverse 90 degree V-twin, 80mm x 70mm bore and stroke stock, 9:1 compression ratio, 50 hp @ 6,500rpm stock
- **Top Speed:** 106mph @ 6,000rpm stock
- **Weight (dry):** 536lb (243 kg)
- **Fuel capacity/MPG:** 5.28 gal (20ltr)
- **Price then/now:** \$1,439/ \$6,000-\$9,000





# **GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY 1967 MOTO GUZZI V7**

By Greg Williams | Photos by Ken Richardson  
Source: [motorcycleclassics.com](http://motorcycleclassics.com)





When Paul Harrison first set out to restore his 1967 Moto Guzzi V7, he wasn't in a rush to finish the job. In fact, his young son, Finn, told him he wasn't sure the Italian motorcycle would ever run, and suggested it would take 10 years to complete.

But then Paul realized that 2017 marked a rather significant milestone. With 50 years gone by since the V7 left the Moto Guzzi factory in Mandello del Lario, 2017 is the machine's Golden Anniversary, and Paul didn't want to miss such an important date. *"When I figured that out, I thought it would be cool to have the project ready for the date,"* Paul says.

Paul started the process late in 2015 with a less-than-ideal candidate for restoration. Purchased from an eBay seller in Georgia, the 1967 V7 was really not much more than a frame, engine and gearbox, with other parts in crates. Someone had attempted to fix it before giving up and improperly storing the pieces. Overall, the Guzzi looked as though it had been run into the ground.

Paul collected the Guzzi when he and Keith Fellenstein (author of the Motorcycle Classics tech column, Keith's Garage) went to the 2015 Barber Vintage

Festival in Alabama, detouring to Georgia on their way home to get the bike before returning to Lawrence, Kansas, where Paul was living at the time.

*"The bike was not the best one I could find, but it had a low serial number of 1204,"* Paul says. Frame and engine numbers weren't matched at the factory; Paul's engine is number 1337. As he understands it, Moto Guzzi started V7 serial numbers at 1000. *"That puts it early in the production run, and I thought if I planned to take a bike down to the crankshaft for restoration it was a good place to start. In hindsight, I don't know that I'd do it that way again — there were times I wasn't sure I'd ever get there with it."*

### TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Paul's trials in the restoration process somewhat mirror the struggles of Moto Guzzi during the 1950s and 1960s. Company namesake Carlo Guzzi established Moto Guzzi in 1921 in a 333-square-foot facility. That first year, 17 employees managed to build 17 motorcycles. The company was not eager at first to enter competitive events and it took pressure from Italian politician and motorcycle enthusiast Aldo Finzi before Moto Guzzi decided to race the single-cylinder

*Early V7s used remote float Dell'Orto SS1 carbs.*



*The valve covers are polished to an other-worldly shine.*





500cc Normale. After early successes, Guzzi was more than happy to bask in the respect those victories earned the company. Over time, Moto Guzzi's accolades included several Grand Prix world championships and Isle of Man TT wins.

By the mid-1950s, however, domestic motorcycle sales were slipping. Faced by this commercial drought, Moto Guzzi pulled the plug on its racing ventures even though development work on a V8 racer was well underway. Moto Guzzi soldiered on selling its line of single-cylinder machines, but by the mid-1960s a new product was needed to reinvigorate the brand.

Coming to the rescue was the twin-cylinder V7 designed by Giulio Cesare Carcano. Working with Umberto Todero, Carcano developed a new powerplant, first as a 500cc and then a 650cc 90-degree V-twin, as something of a design exercise. Moto Guzzi didn't show much interest in the engine, so Carcano installed the V-twin in his personal Fiat Topolino.

According to author Greg Pullen in *Moto Guzzi: The Complete Story*, "almost on a whim [Carcano] decided he would fit his prototype V-twin into the Fiat. Returning to Mandello from Milan one day, flying

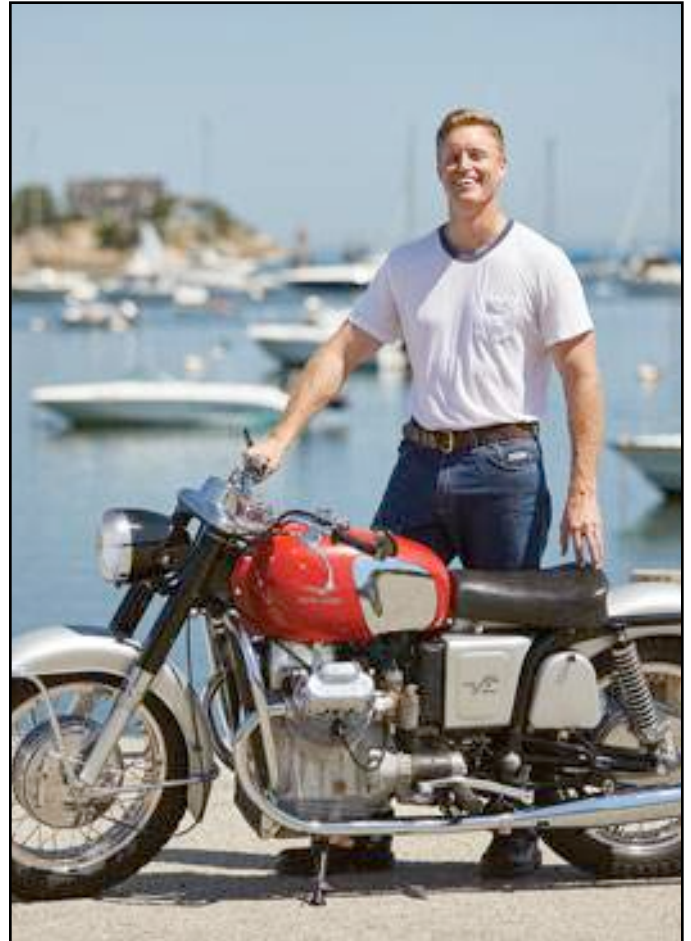
along at some 90mph (140kmh), he was spotted by a journalist from a car magazine who could not believe how quick the Fiat was compared to his own Alfa Romeo. Making a note of the license plate, the journalist tracked the little Fiat down to 'Ing. Carcano of Moto Guzzi fame.' He understandably assumed there was something going on between Fiat and Guzzi, an opinion often repeated since. In fact, there wasn't — Carcano was just having a little fun," Pullen writes.

Nothing further came of Carcano's V-twin design, however, until the Italian police requested a replacement for the Moto Guzzi Falcone. According to motorcycle historian Ian Falloon in *The Complete Book of Moto Guzzi*, the Italian police wanted "a faster and more powerful machine than the Falcone, with a powerful electrical system and a service life of 100,000 kilometers." Certainly, Moto Guzzi's survival depended on the police contract. After taking Carcano's V-twin off the shelf, further development saw the 90-degree all-alloy engine enlarged to 703cc with chrome-plated cylinder bores of 80mm while the stroke measured 70mm. The crank rotated on two plain main bearings, and the connecting rod big end bearings were plain as well. A helical gear at the end of the all-steel, one-piece

*Motogadget LED bar end signals were added for visibility.*



*Owner Paul Harrison and his lovingly restored 1967 Guzzi V7.*





crankshaft drove a matching gear at the end of the centrally located camshaft that in turn actuated the pushrods to operate the overhead valves.

A battery and coil ignition worked with a camshaft-driven Marelli distributor to fire the spark plugs while a Marelli 300-watt generator created electrical power. A large-capacity, 32-amp-hour battery stored the current, and it was much needed when the starter button was pushed. The V7 broke with traditional motorcycle practice by offering electric-start only — there was no kickstarter backup. Other companies, notably Honda, had begun offering electric starters on their machines in the early 1960s but there was always a kickstarter included in the design.

At the aft end of the crankshaft the flywheel carried an automotive-type twin-plate dry clutch. Power was transferred through a 4-speed constant mesh transmission to the 18-inch rear wheel via a shaft enclosed in the right side of the swingarm.

The V-twin engine slotted into a double-cradle steel tube loop frame featuring a beefy 48mm backbone and conventional hydraulic forks up front and twin shock absorbers at the back. A fork-top nacelle housed the keyed ignition switch and speedometer, while a rather

stretched out headlight shell bolted into steel ears. The front wheel matched the rear at 18 inches in diameter and the brakes were 8.5-inch twin-leading-shoe front and 8.5-inch single-leading-shoe rear.

Overall, the machine weighed close to 500 pounds, a heft that author Falloon says “stretched it [the front brake] to the limit.”

While developed with military and police use in mind, Moto Guzzi debuted a civilian version of the V7 — so called because of the “V” shape of the cylinder layout and the 700cc capacity — in November 1965 at the Milan Show in Italy.

In his book *Moto Guzzi Big Twins*, Greg Field says V7 production began in December 1966, with the first 50 machines delivered early in 1967 to the Italian Corazzieri, an elite military unit. According to Falloon, some 813 examples of the V7 came through importer Premier Motor Corporation in 1967 and were sold in the U.S., of which Paul’s is an early model. All of the American machines were finished with a black frame, a red gas tank with chrome panels and silver painted battery cover, toolbox and fenders.





## BACK IN KANSAS

Born and raised in Australia, Paul says he grew up around motorcycles and was on a dirt bike from an early age. His dad always rode BMW street bikes, so when Paul could legally ride on the road he naturally gravitated to the German brand and bought a 1988 R65. He stayed true to BMW while living in Australia, but 10 years ago Paul's wife took a job transfer to the U.S., and that's when he sold off his German bikes and made the switch to Moto Guzzi.

*"I wanted to stick with a twin cylinder, but I like the Italian V-twin style. To me, German bikes are a bit clinical, while the Italian bikes have more passion or flair to them,"* Paul says. *"I first bought a 1976 Moto Guzzi 850 T3, and that continues to be a bit of a rolling restoration. I really love that bike, but I wanted to explore Moto Guzzi's V-twin origins and that's why I bought the 1967 project bike."*

*"The V7 is Moto Guzzi's very first V-twin, and it's where the company's V-twin story really started. They're still making this basic design today,"* Paul says, adding, *"I was interested in sampling an early Moto Guzzi V-twin and I also wanted to see what the Moto Guzzi steel loop frame was like."*

With the V7 carcass in his garage, Paul started to strip everything down, taking notes along the way and placing the various sub-assemblies in tubs for later inspection. As he progressed, for example, he'd take apart the distributor, clean and repair what could be serviced and order the parts and pieces he'd need to

bring the unit back to life before putting it away in a tub for reassembly with the rest of the motorcycle.

The loop frame was in good, straight condition and it was sent out for media blasting before being painted black by Tim Dunham in his Lawrence, Kansas, home workshop. Paul didn't want to powder coat the parts, as he was aiming for a machine as close to factory specification — in appearance — as possible. Paul straightened his bent center stand using some heat and located a used side stand to replace the broken one that came with the bike.

Parts such as the upper fork shrouds and headlight bucket were sourced from Harper's Moto Guzzi in Greenwood, Missouri. Paul also bought a used gas tank with the distinctive Moto Guzzi chrome panels from Harper's, complete with original paint and factory applied decals. "It wears its age with a badge of honor, and there was no way I was going to repaint the tank," he says.

Many other parts, including a rear fender, were purchased from an eBay seller parting out a Moto Guzzi V7. The front fender came from Harper's, and the rear fender had enough original paint to correctly color match the silver hue. Travis Charbonneau from Topeka, Kansas, sprayed all of this paint, and also applied the new-old-stock water slide decals on the fender tips.

The V7 came from the factory with galvanized spokes. The ones in Paul's wheels were a rusted mess, so he bought a later set of Moto Guzzi Ambassador wheels with stainless steel spokes, stripped them out and

*The original off-center seat lettering.*



*The original logo and paint on the tank.*





polished them himself. He had the alloy hubs and Borrani rims professionally polished, then he cleaned, greased and returned the robust tapered roller wheel bearings to service along with the brake shoes, which also had plenty of life left in them.

### TEARING DOWN THE ENGINE

When it came time to service the engine, Paul found the pistons were basically welded in the cylinder bores so he took them to “Doc” at Automotive Machine & Performance in Lawrence, Kansas. Doc’s hydraulic press wouldn’t budge them, so to salvage the connecting rods he cut away the old cylinders.

The crankshaft was in good shape so Doc polished the journals, removing as little material as possible to maintain the shallow nitride heat treatment, a process Moto Guzzi adopted to increase wear resistance. Doc then machined first-undersize big-end shell bearings to fit the crank. Because 700cc replacement cylinder and piston kits weren’t available, Paul chose to fit a Nikasil-plated Ambassador 750cc Gilardoni cylinder piston kit from MG Cycle in Albany, Wisconsin. Doc turned down the bottom cylinder spigots a couple of thousandths of an inch so they would fit in the crankcases, and these were topped with later model loop frame cylinder heads with slightly larger valves. “The engine looks stock externally, but we’ve bumped it up about 10 horsepower,” Paul figures.

The bike’s transmission is a later model Ambassador 4-speed that has some mechanical improvements over the V7, including helical cut gears and a heavy-duty cush spring on the input shaft. Paul replaced all the bearings, seals and gaskets and updated the shift return spring. Guzzi enthusiast Ian Hays machined the gearbox rear cover for a shift shaft O-ring oil seal.

A reproduction exhaust system, including mufflers, came from MG Cycle. MG had every piece except for one header, which was found at Cycle Garden Moto

Guzzi in Huntington Beach, California. Palo Alto Speedometer in California rebuilt the 120mph Veglia Borletti speedometer and reset the odometer to zero. For safety reasons, Paul chose to fit later model Moto Guzzi handlebar switchgear that includes controls for turn signal lights. The V7 didn’t come with indicators in 1967, and wanting to retain the clean lines of the bike Paul adapted a set of Motogadgetm. blaze disc turn signal lights to fit in the bar ends. A replacement wiring harness came from enthusiast Gregory Bender. And finally, a solo seat was located on eBay in Germany.

Proving his son Finn wrong, the Moto Guzzi runs — and it didn’t take 10 years to finish. Paul met the deadline for the V7’s Golden Anniversary, and says Finn will one day ride the V7 himself. “So far I’ve ridden it about 110 miles,” Paul says. “I had some fueling issues to contend with and Keith helped me sort out the Dell’Orto SS1 carburetors with their remote float bowls. They’re specific to this model, and we’ve got them sorted out now.”

To start the V7, Paul turns on the fuel and gives very little choke after twisting the throttle once. The ignition operates like a car switch: turn the key fully to the right to engage the starter and once the engine fires let go and the key springs back. “It starts and idles very nicely,” Paul says, “and it’s a relaxed and solid riding motorcycle because it’s so long and low, like Italy’s answer to the 1960s Harley-Davidson. It just transports you back in time.







MOTO GUZZI

V7

MOTO GUZZI

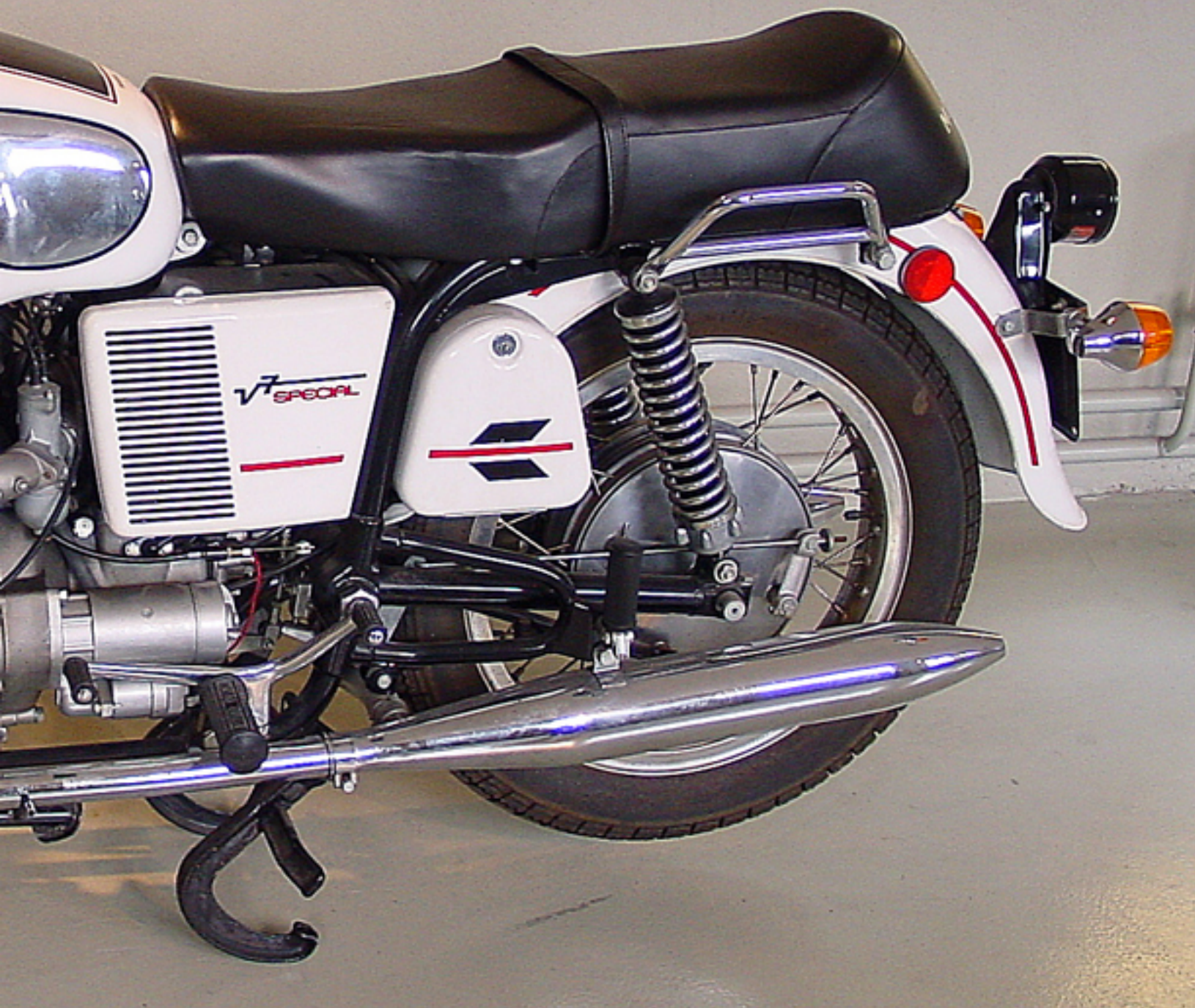
MOTO GUZZI





# 1969 Moto Guzzi V7 Special





The first thing Tonti did was increase the engine size to 757 and the power to 45 HP, launching the V7 special in 1969, a faster, more refined and elegant model compared to the V7 700. He would later develop, initially for the American market, the V7 Ambassador and the California, the latter destined to be one of the greatest Moto Guzzi success stories.





## 1974 Moto Guzzi 850 Eldorado

Article and photos by Robert Smith

Source: [Motorcycleclassics.com](http://Motorcycleclassics.com)

Moto Guzzi rider Alan Comfort revived an unloved 1974 850 Eldorado, but no one will accuse him of having over-restored it.

El Dorado was the legendary City of Gold of Spanish explorers: but it's now thought the "golden one" was instead a person, a chief of the Muisca who was ceremonially adorned with gold. Either way, the implication that gold was plentiful in the Americas.

Whether or not Moto Guzzi named their 1972 motorcycle Eldorado in the hope it would find them a metaphorical empire of gold, the cycle certainly built a loyal U.S. following that the Mandello marque enjoys to this day. Much of the Eldorado's commercial success relied on its being chosen as a police bike by the Los Angeles Police Department and California Highway Patrol.

The Eldorado is a direct descendent of Moto Guzzi's 1967 704cc V7, imported into the U.S. by the Premier Motor Corporation, a division of the Berliner organization. The pot of gold Joe and Michael Berliner

hoped to secure was a contract to supply motorcycles to America's police forces. Anti-trust rules required forces to call for more than one supply bid, and as there was only one homemade motorcycle maker, Berliner





proposed supplying European machines as an alternative. Berliner was the U.S. distributor for Norton, Ducati and Moto Guzzi, and so the company could theoretically have offered machines from any of these firms.

In the early 1960s, the Commando-based Norton Interpol was still some years away, and Guzzi made only singles at that time. So the Berliners turned to Ducati. Their requests of the Bologna company famously led to Fabio Taglioni's 1964 1,260cc V4 Apollo. While this mighty machine could easily meet police requirements, it proved to have rather more power and speed than was necessary — or good for the tires of the day. Faced with a large, risky investment in tooling for relatively small sales potential, Ducati's then owners (effectively the Italian government) pulled the plug on further development.

## The V7

Moto Guzzi had long been the principal supplier of motorcycles to Italy's police and military, usually with the 500cc Falcone or Alce. So when the forces requested a new, more powerful motorcycle with exceptional longevity, it would definitely have needed at least one more cylinder. Together with Umberto Todero, Guzzi's Giulio Cesare Carcano designed a new 90-degree air-cooled V-twin engine. (That the V7 engine was developed from Guzzi's "mechanical mule" military project is now refuted by most authoritative sources, including marque specialist Greg Field in his book *Moto Guzzi Big Twins*.)

Carcano's design followed much automotive practice: The 70mm stroke one-piece crankshaft used a single crankpin, and ran on plain main and big end bearings. The pistons ran in chrome-plated alloy cylinders of 80mm bore. Helical gears drove the central camshaft which operated the four valves by pushrods and rockers. An engine-speed dry clutch drove the 4-speed constant mesh gearbox with final drive by a shaft housed in the right side swingarm.

Also automotive style were the electrics: a belt drove the 300-watt Marelli DC generator mounted in the engine's "vee"; sparks were provided by coil and distributor; and the engine was spun by a 32-amp-hour battery and Bosch or Marelli starter motor driving a ring gear on the flywheel. There was no provision for a kickstarter — the V7 was the first and only production motorcycle to rely solely on electric start until the Laverda 650/750 of 1968.

### SPECIFICATIONS

**Engine:** 844cc OHV four-stroke 90-degree V-twin, 83mm x 78mm bore and stroke, 9.2:1 compression ratio, 64.5hp @ 6,500rpm

**Top speed:** 116mph

**Carburetion:** Two Amal Concentric 930 carburetors

**Transmission:** Engine-speed dry clutch, 5-speed, left foot shift, shaft final drive

**Electrics:** 12v, contact breaker and distributor

**Frame/wheelbase:** Spine frame, dual cradle/58in (1,473mm)

**Suspension:** Telescopic fork front, dual shocks rear, three-way adjustable

**Brakes:** 8.7in (220mm) 4LS drum front, SLS rear

**Tires:** 110/90 x 18in front and rear

**Weight (wet):** 580lb (263kg)

**Seat height:** 31in (787mm)

**Fuel capacity/MPG:** 6gal (13.2ltr)/40mpg (approx.)

**Price then/now:** \$1,985/\$5,000-\$13,000

The story goes that Joe Berliner first saw the Guzzi twin in Italy in 1966 when it had won selection as a military and police bike for domestic forces. Although the 704cc, 45 horsepower twin was perfect for Italy, it fell short of the 55 horsepower benchmark for U.S. police bikes established by the Harley-Davidson FLH — the default police bike of the time. Regardless, the Berliners wooed prominent U.S. police forces, to the point of providing sample machines at peppercorn prices, and, it's said, entertaining influencers in Mandello.

Ambassador

To meet the U.S. horsepower benchmark, the importer, naturally, requested more displacement. The 748cc (83mm x 70mm bore and stroke) 60 horsepower





Ambassador of 1969 was the result. To emphasize its performance and reliability, Guzzi ran a modified Ambassador around the track at Monza, clocking over 145mph and setting a number of speed and endurance records.

The Ambassador was instrumental in opening the U.S. market for Guzzi, both to police forces and civilian riders, and it sold well. However, it did have some shortcomings. There were only four cogs in the transmission, while most new motorcycles had five. And if 60 horsepower was adequate, then wouldn't 65 be better?

## Eldorado

To capitalize on the Ambassador's success and keep ahead of the competition, Guzzi increased the stroke to 78mm from 70mm for more power and torque, and reworked the gearbox with five speeds.

Fortunately, the dual-cradle "loop" frame designed for the V7 could handily cope with the extra power and torque. Attached to the front of the "loop" frame was a "tele-hydraulic" fork with two-way damping but no adjustment, while the twin rear shocks had three user settings. Instruments were from Veglia, lights by CEV and turn signals from Lucas. The 8.7-inch (220mm) drum brakes used a twin-leading-shoe setup in the front, and a single in the rear, attached to wire-spoked 18-inch Borrani alloy rims. Lafranconi mufflers kept exhaust noise to a minimum.

The result was the 850 Eldorado of 1972, the bike that was conspicuously purchased by the Los Angeles Police

Department, and the California Highway Patrol. And as the Berliners anticipated, the cops were their best salesmen. Although there was some resistance from older patrolmen, younger officers took to the Eldo quickly. Guzzi had worked to keep the center of gravity as low as possible, knowing that was an important factor; and the engine sat forward in the frame, providing stability and offering good legroom.

The original footpegs still read "Moto Guzzi." The original seat survives, albeit with some hidden repair work.

Cycle World tested an Eldorado in August 1973. *"It's a bike for crossing continents, not states," they wrote. "It's a bike that can carry 200 pounds of gear for camping and a passenger at the same time. And, it's a bike that can eat up 300-mile sections of expressway and leave the rider free from fatigue. Mountain roads didn't shake our confidence in the handling."*

That said, their tester was less happy with the brakes *"The rear unit is overly sensitive. Contrasting this is the front twin-shoe drum, which fades after a couple of panic stops."* (Guzzi replaced the front drum with a disc in 1974.)

Road Rider concluded: *"In summary, it would appear that the Eldorado basically has everything that it takes to be a very reliable, dependable machine."*

Successful though the Eldo was with police forces, it has to be said that Harley was going through a bad patch, which may have influenced purchasers: new owners AMF had tried to cut costs and streamline production, leading to labor problems. Product quality suffered, and innovation was stifled, opening the door for competition.

Over the three years the Eldorado was produced, it's generally accepted that around 15,000 were built, with the majority going to the U.S. The Berliners had found their pot of gold. Ironically, another change of ownership — at Guzzi — sent things in a different direction. Alejandro de Tomaso pulled the Eldorado from the product line in 1975, replacing it with the sportier 850T. Despite Berliner's efforts, the 850T and triple-disc T3 were never as successful as police bikes.

## Rip Van Guzzi

Alan Comfort has been a Moto Guzzi fan for some time, though until recently the Roberts Creek, British Columbia, resident had only owned singles. He runs a late-1940s 500 Astore, and has a 1930s 500S F-head





and a 250 Airone in progress. He likes to think of his 1974 Eldorado in terms of the Rip Van Winkle story:

“He fell asleep for 20 years and woke up an old man,” Alan says. “This Eldorado fell asleep for 40 years and woke up an old bike!”

Alan’s Eldo is a 1974 *Verziona Polizei* but in civilian trim. That means it’s fitted with the police-spec four-leading-shoe front drum brake. It was last registered for the street in 1978 with 7,000 miles on the clock. The original owner had attempted some simple maintenance — presumably a valve adjustment — then re-sealed the rocker covers with silicone. The silicone squeezed out of the joints and got into the oilways, blocking the feed to the big ends, resulting in a seizure and a spun bearing.

The Eldo was sold to a more mechanically inclined owner who had the crankshaft reground, but there the project stalled for many years, with the bike parts stored in a shed.

Alan picked up the bike as a rolling chassis in 2019 with the engine in pieces. “After a six-hour search of the shed, I found most of the parts,” Alan says. “The bike had been stored in less than ideal conditions. It suffered from corrosion on the aluminum parts and rust bleeding out from under the paint.”

“I briefly considered restoring the sheet metal parts with new paint, coach lining and logos, but that would make the frame, alloy parts, plated parts, switchgear, cables and exhaust look tatty. A \$2,500 paint job would soon turn into another \$5,000 expenditure in plating, powder coating, polishing and replacement parts; none of which would improve the reliability or rideability of this bike. Not to mention that they are only original once. I convinced myself that a full restoration could be seen as vandalism!” Alan says.

Alan then spent “many hours” with 0000 steel wool and Scotchbrite pads to bring the aluminum and plated parts to a more presentable condition.

Painted surfaces were scrubbed with steel wool and rust preventative, cleaned with soap and water then coated with paste wax with care taken to preserve the original silk screen logos and coach lining.

After careful consideration, Alan opted to clean the bodywork and wax it rather than repainting it. They’re only original once!

Meanwhile, Alan was also cleaning the offending silicone from the engine’s oil passages and sludge traps.



In went all new bearings, seals and gaskets. Guzzi had originally used chromium plating on the alloy cylinders, but in the damp storage conditions, moisture had gotten underneath the chrome, causing it to start peeling. Alan sourced new Nikasil-coated cylinders, which Guzzi had used from around 1980-on. Also fitted were new pistons, rings, valves, valve guides and seats. The clutch was replaced, as was the drive spline.

Then came time to fit the carburetors. During 1974, there had been a strike at the Dell’Orto factory in Cabiato, near Monza. To maintain production, Guzzi was forced to find an alternative supplier of carburetors. So for a while, many Eldorados, including Alan’s, were fitted with Amal Concentric 930s. Fortunately, Alan knows the British bikes of that era quite well, so the carburetors presented little challenge. The Amals were thoroughly cleaned, gaskets and seals replaced, and reassembled.

“The Amals proved to be serviceable,” says Alan, but “the rubber boot that connects the carburetors to the airbox had perished from age and a replacement could not be found. New boots for Dell’Orto carburetors are readily available, but the boot for the Amal carb is obsolete.”

So Alan set to work and fabricated a new carburetor-to-airbox connector from TIG-welded aluminum tubing and off the shelf plumbing parts. It



was painted black prior to installation. “No original Guzzi parts were harmed with this modification!” Alan says.

The original starter motor was badly corroded and beyond reasonable repair, so it was replaced with a pattern part. However, most of the other electrical components were in reasonable shape. The DC generator was brought back to life with a thorough cleaning and lubrication, and new brushes. The voltage regulator was too far gone and was replaced with a new one. Alan also fitted a new distributor cap, rotor, contact breakers, primary wires, plug caps and spark plugs.

Most of the other electrics including the wiring harness and switchgear just required cleaning and lubricating and were returned to service, likewise the throttle, clutch and brake cables.

To make the most of the police-spec four-leading-shoe brake, Alan fitted new brake shoes, then had them “arced” to fit the drums. “After a brief bedding-in period and careful adjustment, the drum brakes have proven to be progressive and powerful,” Alan says. Not surprisingly, it was time to replace the original Pirelli

M53 Super Sport tires. Replacements are no longer available, and knowing from period reports that Eldorados can be sensitive to tire choice, Alan fitted Metzler Block C Special Touring tires with Michelin Airstop tubes.

The Lucas turn signals were serviceable with cleaning and polishing, but the plastic lenses needed to be replaced. Fortunately, these are still widely available from British bike parts dealers. The original CEV headlight and taillight were preserved. Alan also repaired and patched a number of tears in the seat cover.

Although the Eldo rides and handles well as it is, Alan plans to dismantle and rebuild the front fork, and the rear shocks are scheduled for replacement. Like many other parts for loop-frame Guzzis, these are readily available and reasonably priced.

So, like Rip Van Winkle, Alan Comfort’s Eldorado is something of a time-capsule. In conserving as much of the original componentry and finishes as possible, the Eldorado is far more evocative of its era than a restoration. And like the fairy-tale’s narrator, it tells us a story of times past — but in the present day.



Owner Alan Comfort aboard his time capsule Eldorado.





## Made in Italy..

by Paul Desjardins

..or as I like to think of it, Down the Rabbit Hole.

After ownership of two Italian motorcycles and two BMWs, one 750/6 and one 1200KS, I have a bike that I will keep forever.

My Ducati 900S (1980) was a good long distance bike with 200,000 kilometers when I sold it to a collector and the K1200S was also a great long distance ride but more expensive to own and service.

Now to the Guzzi. I seem to have a loyalty issue. I fall in love with my bikes. The Guzzi started life in Florida. It was dropped at least once and parked with some dents in the tank and very rusty. I bought it from Harpers in the U.S.A. I ran into problems importing it into Canada in 2015. But finally, with all the proper paperwork in place, I loaded it up from Ogdensburg, NY and got it home. I put gas in it and it started on the second try but did not run long.

After investigating, I discovered that most of the electrical system was bad with lots of shorts in different switches. I began by stripping and cleaning but still the shorts remained. Next steps was new switches (motogadgets) and a new regulator, two different batteries and currently with a lithium battery which is much lighter and seems to be lasting longer.

Next it needed a new paint job. So to get rid of the rust, I stripped it down, moved out the motor, with lots of sanding to repair the tank. I took many pictures before and while I took it apart, but still managed to get some

of it wrong. It was running but still having problems with the fuses and relays. Bring on the moto gadget control box, some new wiring and some problems solved, but never done. Bring on the newer ignition system, Silent Hedktik, was not easy to set up but once it was done, I sent the bike off to JR Motorcycles to make sure it was right. I don't own a disc for checking the sensors and magnetic pick up but I did get very close and then John at JR Motorcycles got it perfect.

Then last year I decided to change the carburetor but the bike ran worse, so back to the original. It also was time for a new speedometer. Thanks again to Moto gadget for a new digital model. Not sure what is next.

Currently I am only buying new tires and can ride mostly trouble free. I have broken down 3 or 4 times, but once was a loose wire and once was the U joint. The transmission can be a little suspect at times, but loving that I can fix most things myself.

If you want to get to know where to buy parts, and what not to buy just ask me. I probably have most of them. It has been a journey and the list of suppliers is long, some from England and Germany have been the most reliable for parts that actually fit and perform.

This **1986 Lemans** weighs about 400 pounds and at 70 years old will be my keeper. It is not a perfect bike, but after seven years into restoring it, I am still happy with all its quirkiness.



**MACCO**  
MOTORS





# 1982 Moto Guzzi 1000 SP

by Martin Hodgson

Photos by Sergio Ibarra



Posted on February 8, 2017 in Café Racer



Italian designs are regarded globally across many industries as things of beauty and their designer's trendsetters around the world. Many companies might produce a product where labour is cheap but are sure to include "Designed in Italy" on the label.

Asked about this phenomenon Italian Architect and designer Luigi Caccia Dominioni stated *"Quite simply, we are the best"* and that *"We have more imagination, more culture, and are better mediators between the past and the future."*

Ok then, but clearly Luigi didn't ever see an early '80s Moto Guzzi ride by, horrific then and even worse today. So when a lover of the marque bought a 1982 1000 SP he was quick to call on Macco Motors to let the Spanish lads turn out this beautiful cafe racer from

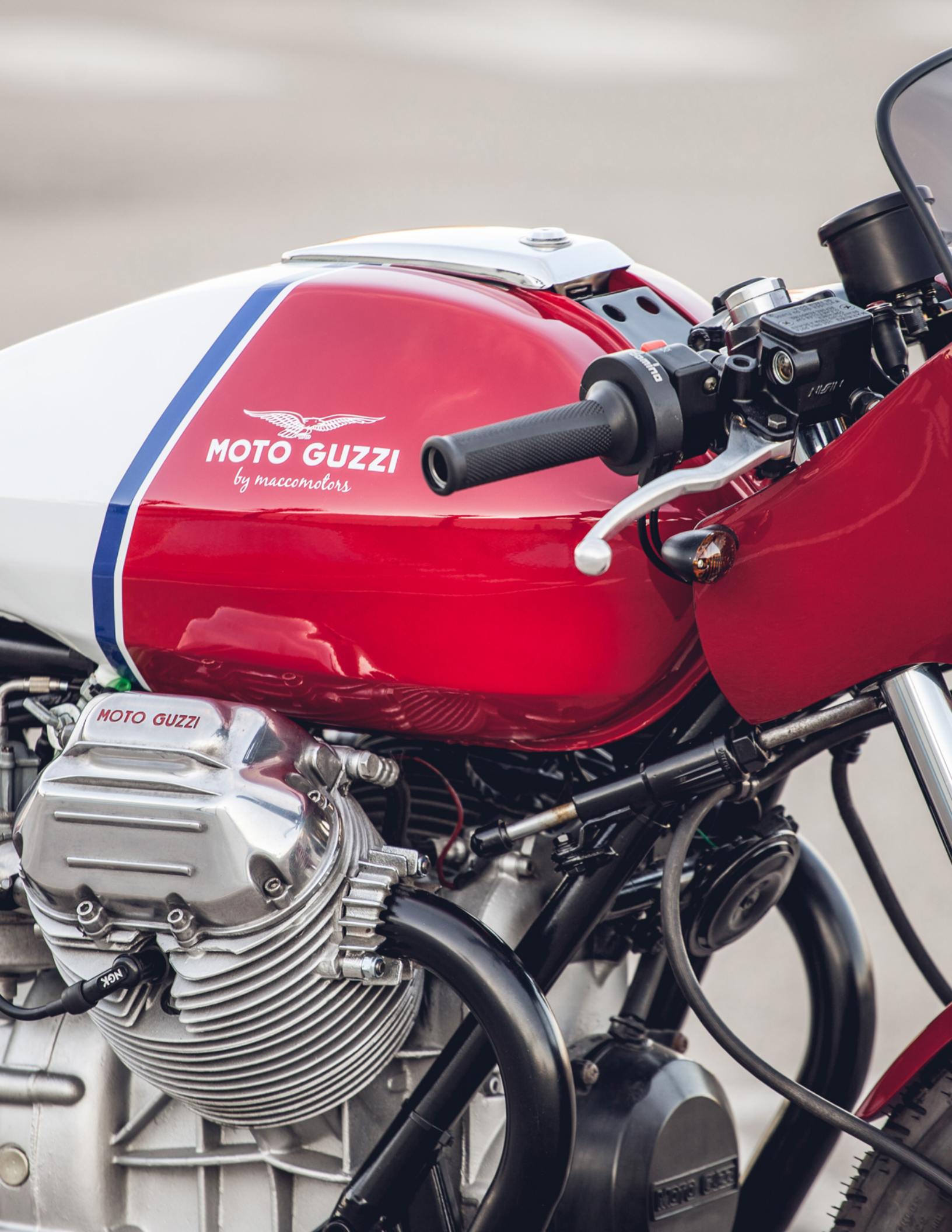
the bones of a machine were the Italian's had quite clearly dropped the ball.

The owner of this machine has more than a little love for Moto Guzzi; he owns a nice collection with some of them purpose-built for competition. But when he test rode this '82 1000 SP, even he wouldn't be seen dead on the thing in stock form.

*"The thing is that we laughed when he told us that he had bought the 1000 SP and tested it in his building's car*







  
**MOTO GUZZI**  
*by maccomotors*

**MOTO GUZZI**

**NGK**

**MOTO GUZZI**





*park, because he felt ashamed of riding the bike as it was,”* laughs Jose, who along with Tito make up Spain’s Macco Motors.

It’s easy to understand the shame, horrible fenders front and rear, an enormous front fairing that had to have been designed with a ruler and some of the ugliest engine covers you’re ever likely to see.

But the Triumph specialists at Macco weren’t daunted by the task, because under the body work of any Moto Guzzi lies the foundation of any great bike, brilliant mechanicals!

But before they could get to the engine they first had to sit down at the computer with their client and using Photoshop come up with a design everybody agreed upon.

With the drawings finalised the SP came under attack with all the bodywork and assorted ’80s ugliness pulled off and shown the door. The bare frame then had the subframe cut off and all the old welds smoothed out.

To replace the big factory rear end a new arrow shaped subframe was fabricated and welded in place. Before the whole frame was de-tabbed and sprayed in a hard-wearing black enamel paint.

*“The 1000 SP tank is not the most beautiful Guzzi tank for sure but the customer wanted to keep it,”* Jose tells us. So to help alleviate the direct impact of some of its squarer lines a new cafe racer styled tail section was crafted out of steel that gives the bikes bodywork a more flowing feel.

Macco hand makes all their own seats and this double stitched black leather number is as good as any. The brilliant design creating a seamless connection between front and rear by rising slightly up the rear of the tank.

The Moto Guzzi GT fairing, they were quick to discover, despite promises, that it didn’t fit. The small fairing was what they wanted however, so with air tools spinning they managed to shape it to work with the SP front end. The front guard is of their own design and made in-house from fibreglass and having made batches of vented side covers from fibreglass for Triumph’s they did the same for the SP.

With all that bare steel and glass work finished it was time for paint, *“We came up with the white, red and blue colours and a racing/street paint scheme,”* explains Jose.

With the major body work taken care of and the aesthetics something the owner could be more than



proud of, Macco turned to making the Guzzi ride just as well.

That all starts with the very best bit of the factory bike; the locomotive like 949cc V-Twin engine with two bolt mains and a forged crankshaft. Not only did it rev well for a big twin it was also unbelievably reliable. The engine fitted to the SP series was designed like a car engine, drop the sump and you can service the bottom end with just a few basic tools.

But such an engine deserves to have a few extra ponies so Jose and Tito rebuilt and re-jetted the factory Dell'Orto carbs before fitting them with a set of K&N pod filters. The exhaust is a neat 2 into 2 system with the centre pipes running parallel to the frame in matching black before finishing out with twin reverse cone mufflers.

Not surprisingly the early '80s Italian electricals were not so good, so the entire loom was pulled from the bike and rebuilt from scratch. A lightweight battery features at one end of the loom with modern switchblocks finishing things out.

Those switches sit on a set of 22mm clip-on bars that transform the look of the front end and do away with the Italian chopper versions from the factory. But that still left the ugly yoke, for which Jose had a plan, *"We worked on the original top yoke. Cut the handlebar risers and weld it up to get a plain and clean surface."* A new set of levers is joined on the bars by a larger master cylinder and Avon grips.

While all the lighting has been upgraded with a classic 6 inch headlight poking through the fairing, mini indicators and an old school tail light. With the controls now far more racer than chopper the rearsets have been switched out for Tarozzi items and the ignition relocated so the owner doesn't wear the key in the chin!

With some hard riding planned the front telescopic forks have been lowered and rebuilt while the rear shocks take a drastic turn for the better with a set of one-off YSS shocks that give a nice level of adjustability.

The factory wheels have been painted body matching deep red before being wrapped in Metzeler Lasertec rubber.

**The result is a cafe racer the owner never has to be ashamed of, free to venture far beyond the walls of his complexes car park. While for Jose and Tito it's another win for their Macco Motors garage and they send this Guzzi home marked "Designed in Spain."**









OFFICINE  
**ROSSOPURO**





# 'Ritmo Veloce 850' Moto Guzzi







## 'Ritmo Veloce 850' Moto Guzzi California

by Martin Hodgson

There are roughly 6500 unique languages spoken around the globe today. More than a billion people speak Mandarin, while many others languages have just a thousand native speakers. But wherever you go in the world, the language of Moto Guzzi fans is universal. While Ducati might be the king of Italian bike makers these days, Guzzi is arguably more important to the nation's two wheeled history. Just ask any Guzzi fan and whatever the language they speak, their hand gestures will leave you in no doubt. The V configured engine, the unique engineering and the mechanical beauty of indestructibility sings a sweet song to many an admirer. But for all those who love Guzzi's, very few can build a custom from a Lake Como creation like Filippo Barbacane of Officine Rossopuro in Abruzzo. This, his latest masterpiece, is known simply as the Ritmo Veloce 850.

While everything sounds better in Italian, Ritmo Veloce essentially means fast pace and generally is associated with music. So at first glance it may seem strange that a bike destined to be a racing steed started life as a bulky '70s Moto Guzzi California T3. More a

highway machine than twisty track terror, Filippo however saw in it two ingredients that make for speed.

The genius Tonti frame that was far superior to almost anything of the time, stiff in construction and generous in feedback. Matched up beautifully to 850cc of V-Twin torque that'll pull like a freight train in any gear. For Filippo the name became the design philosophy "The name Ritmo Veloce commemorates its nature, a bike built to go fast, with a precise Tonti frame, with more modern and better suspension and tires."

But with a wet weight of 263kg there would be nothing fast paced about this ride until the old girl was put on a serious diet. You can bet the enormous windshield and panniers were the first to go as both weigh a ton and look horrific. But the rest of the weight would have to be shed carefully; there would be no hacking up of the Tonti frame as many do.

From the start Filippo was determined to create a truly custom motorcycle, radically repurposed but without preventing him from returning it to factory spec should he ever wish to do so. Given the historical importance



of the T3 to the Guzzi lineage it makes perfect sense, while also causing some headaches along the way.

However remain stock, the tank does not. As a self-confessed lover of Guzzi's of this era if one thing let them down for me it was the fuel tank design. But Filippo has taken a design fail and turned it into one of the most impressive pieces of metal reworking you are ever likely to see. From the incredible flowing lines of the knee dents, to the increased aggressive profile of the tanks shoulders. Every change he has made is nothing short of perfect. Even constructing a recess for the gauge takes nothing away from the tanks design while further cleaning up the front end.

While moving rearward the decision not to cut the frame might have provided some restrictions it did nothing to reduce the symmetry of the tail section. Simple and seamless, the low height hump allows the centre of the bike to bear the bulk of the mass. The seat itself takes many of its design cues from the original model right down to the way it's stitched, but is anything but standard in fit and finish. The rear hump holds an integrated tail light and when matched with the smooth front headlight housing keeps the lines ultra-clean.

If you look at the spec sheet of the California T3 and conclude the engine is a heavy lump that makes not a lot of power you've missed the point. A Guzzi has to be ridden to be understood, it's all about torque and not interested in racing show ponies of the HP kind. Even in stock trim packing all that weight the stock engine would pull it to an effortless 200km/h. But more impressively with 100,000km on the clock when most engines have called it a day the Guzzi is just bedding in. For Filippo this is one of the key attractions of the brand, "I do not like motorcycles that are only beautiful to look at but then cannot be used to travel many kilometers."

So to ensure the fast paced 850 could keep going for years to come without a hiccup or a hitch he pulled the motor down and gave it a thorough rebuild. With the engine out the bulletproof drive train, consisting of the transmission and shaft drive assembly was also refreshed. Before the whole lot was cleaned, buffed and polished to show off its broad-shouldered magnificence. Cylinder head guards protect against a fall and the carbs have been re-jetted for the major change to come. In conjunction with Mass Moto a stunning exhaust system was built specifically for the bike, with internal baffles ensuring the pipes are left to stand out on their







own and soak in the generous applause they deserve.

Making the bike handle and stop was a key part to the design criteria, as fast pace is all well and good until you get to a corner and can't slow down. But it's here that Filippo received some assistance from the original designers as the later T3 model indicates the fitment of 3 disc brakes, two front and one rear. But a good thing can always be improved, lighter discs and alloy support for the rear caliper further improve stopping power. While the lacklustre factory rear shocks that always let down the terrific Tonti frame have been swapped out for fully adjustable Marzocchi units.

With the hard graft taken care of the final aspects of beautifying the T3 took place with a constant eye on staying true to the theme. The colour choice is not only a period selection, but perfectly shows off the skilful metal work it coats. The handlebars were custom-made to suit the lines of the bike, low and close to the body, there is no line that appears out-of-place. Finally the wheels were re-laced to 17in rims that allow for the fitment of modern tubeless tyres and the 160 section on the rear makes a statement all of its own. In creating a sharp handling hauler Officine Rossopuro have more

than lived up to the Ritmo Veloce 850 name, but the fact it looks fantastico just standing still shows when it comes to Guzzi's, Filippo has all bases well and truly covered. Bravo!









# CYCLE GARDEN



# MOTO GUZZI

## *Benvenuti to Cycle Garden Moto Guzzi*

*We specialize in servicing and restoring Pre-1975 Italian Moto Guzzis - namely the Ambassador, Eldorado, V700 and V7Sport models. For over two decades, Cycle Garden has set itself apart as the premiere Moto Guzzi service center in North America. We repair, rebuild and restore more vintage Moto Guzzis than anyone else in the world. Our restored machines are 'simply the best' and make a sound investment.*

*When starting work on a motorcycle, we have two goals in mind. The first is of course to build dependable daily runners - safe, mechanically sound bikes tough enough for you to ride the hell out of em'. The second is to complement that utility through the cosmetic aspects of restorations: lead-filled body work, colored sanded urethane paint and triple plate chrome.*

*While still retaining their original specifications and authenticity, our restored Guzzis are widely considered 'better than new'. So whether you're seeking an engine rebuild, frame and gas tank painting or a total restoration, we'll help keep your bike road worthy as well as in show room condition.*

*For those more elusive elements to your vintage Moto Guzzi, we have immediate access to the world's largest selection of used and NOS (new old stock) parts. We ship both parts and complete bikes worldwide.*

*If you are considering the purchase of a classic Moto Guzzi motorcycle or contemplating a restoration project, please contact Moe here at [Moe@CycleGarden.com](mailto:Moe@CycleGarden.com), or Skype under the user name moeguzzi.*





DAM  
© 2013 Dean Macadam Artwork

## ARTWORK OF THE GUZZI LADOLA GRAN TURISMO BY DEAN MACADAM

The artwork measures about 40"x 40" and retails for US\$1750.00 (delivered worldwide).

All Dean's paintings are delivered as a rolled canvas, hand signed, numbered and with a certificate of authenticity.

You can also commissioned him for a painting of your own bike.

Contact info is:

**[www.DAMgallery.com](http://www.DAMgallery.com)**

(619) 228-9895 Studio

(619) 665-2345 Cell.









**FROM AMSTERDAM TO TOKYO  
ON A 1975 MOTO GUZZI V7  
PAUL VAN HOOFF'S VOYAGE**





“I have a hangover that goes from here to Tokyo”.

A colourful expression that expresses the remoteness and incalculable distance that lies between Japan and Holland, where it seems that this saying is fairly popular.

It certainly is for Paul Van Hoof who, unlike everyone else, took it literally and really did go all the way to Tokyo, departing from the centre of Amsterdam on a 1975 model Moto Guzzi V7.

Let's make it clear, first of all, that Paul did indeed make it all the way to Tokyo and arrived there on Aug. 28th 2017. This was about one month after we spoke to him on Skype, which is what gave rise to this article, and almost 10 months after his departure from the land of windmills in November 2016, slap bang in the middle of winter, just to make things easier of course!

Born in 1964, with a background as a news reporter and motorcycle magazine journalist in Holland, Paul has a great passion for Moto Guzzis and dreamed of making a living by travelling around.

For Paul, this ambition became a reality back in May 2005 when, with 12,000 Euro in his pocket and his faithful 1975 model Moto Guzzi V7 nicknamed Guus, he left on a three-year pan-American trip from Alaska all the way down to Argentina. Since that trip, Paul has set up family in Bolivia and has done a whole series of

crazy trips that have become the topic of a book published in 2015 entitled “*Man in the Saddle*” and subtitled “60 thousand kilometres of freedom”, which will be available soon in English.

For this latest trip to the Land of the Rising Sun, Paul has relied on a crowd funding campaign, which will enable him to turn this adventure into another book, which he tells us could well be entitled “*From here to Tokyo*”.

“*It will be a crazy book*” Paul continues, “*I have almost died twice already and I'm not even in Japan yet*”.

When we contacted Paul, in fact, he was in a hostel in Ulan-Udè, a small Russian village not far from the Mongolian border. He had already crossed through 12 Countries: Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy (with stopovers at Mandello del Lario and Tavullia), Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia and Iran. Before him lay another 4000 km to Vladivostok, where he and his faithful Guus would board a ferry bound for Japan.

We asked him how many kilometres he had covered since leaving Amsterdam and how many kilometres his V7 had on the clock, but he just laughed: it's difficult to judge because Guus' speedometer had been broken for





years, like a number of other more or less important parts. This is how they travel and they do so in magnificent style. In any case, the speedometer reading is somewhere around 175,000 but all that really matters is that Guus is totally unstoppable.

Paul almost got a tear in his eye when we asked him to tell us about his bike: *«I have owned and ridden many bikes what with my job and all, but this is the best bike in the world. She's been with me for 17 years. She's a good friend. She's a part of my body»*. *«I landed up in the middle of a blizzard in Serbia and I was stuck there in a restaurant for two weeks with the temperature sitting at -30°C and Guus was standing outside in the snow, but all it took was a few seconds to get her engine roaring again »*.

Paul told us that after that first trip he had received offers from various other bike manufacturers to use their bikes, but he didn't even stop to think about it. *«My V7 is old and simple to fix and has a large engine that is not particularly powerful but never breaks down. More importantly though is that when you're riding this bike you look like you're a good guy and you're friendly so people stop you and invite you back to their home to have something to eat and spend the night with them»*.

The secret, and part of Paul Van Hooff's philosophy, is never to behave like a tourist but rather like a traveller and to *“always say yes to whatever the trip may*

*offer you”*. A natural mindset and physical predisposition to expect the unexpected, which rewards you with unique and unexpected experiences as events and the kilometres mount up and undoubtedly sometimes leaves you somewhat exposed.

*“From Armenia through to Iran I rode for days, indeed weeks with temperatures around -25° and without using the drum brakes for fear that the frozen metal would give way. Also in Armenia, a pack of wolves circled around my tent while I slept”*.

In Russia, the newspapers hailed Paul as a hero for having saved the life of a young man who had been involved in a terrible road accident. A terrible story, which – he told us – taught him a lot about the sometimes shocking behaviour and habits of the Russian people.

*“Another time I was asking for directions at a petrol station in Volgograd, Russia. The guy turned out to be the owners and he told me: you're not going anywhere, you will stay here and drink with me. The last thing I remembered was that I had been drinking vodka, or so I thought, at 3 in the morning in a garage full of people and sports cars. I only realised much later that it wasn't vodka I was drinking but 75% proof alcohol, and the people there were all members of the Russian Mafia. I woke up in hospital two days later, in intensive care with a body temperature of 34°C and pretty close to death. I was in*



*hospital, but I had neither papers nor money on me, yet I was treated like royalty. The police and nursing staff helped me without letting me pay for the medical care I had received and they even gave me money for fuel. That's why I continue to say yes to anything, except vodka that is".*

Paul reckons that the people you meet never cease to surprise you. Sometimes they're temporary travel companions with whom you share stories and emotions and other times they're local inhabitants who welcome you to their homes and introduce you to their families as if you had always been one of them. Graziano Rossi's signature on Guus' fairing as a remainder of an unplanned stopover in Tavullia is proof of this: Valentino wasn't there but his father, Graziano, spent a long time chatting to Paul about his story and his trip.

*"You mustn't be scared because if you treat people with respect, they in turn will treat you like a king".*

*"Many people think that a trip like this one is too difficult, but that's just an excuse not to do it and not to leave your own comfort zone. When I left on my first trip, I had a lot of work, but I had reached the point where I couldn't stand the constant deadlines and the daily routine. Anyone can do it and it's very easy indeed, all you need to do is to get going".*

We closed our chat with Paul by asking him if he had a message for the members of The Clan since we all share his passion for Moto Guzzi bikes, for travelling and for adventure:

*"Anyone who chooses to ride a Moto Guzzi is someone who chooses to follow his own dreams, starting with the one that is embodied in the history of The Eagle of Mandello. My dream was to earn a living by writing and travelling, and I'm now living that dream..."*

At this point we have a question for you all: *«are you living your dream right now?»*.

While we're waiting for the book that tells the story of this epic voyage to be released sometime in 2018, why not go and find out more about Paul and Guus' adventures at:

<http://guzzigalore.nl/>

or on the video channel

<https://vimeo.com/user60129016>

However, the quickest way to keep up to date on what Paul is getting up to is to follow his Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/paul.v.hooff>









# JOURNEY IN ITALY ON A 750-S3

## THE GUZZI OF A LIFETIME

Text by Luigi Marsili, with Tracy's useful help with the English translation  
Photos by Jürgen Ulbrich







What does it mean to ride a Moto Guzzi? It means embracing a history that has been almost one hundred years in the making, but above all it means writing new stories every time you climb on the bike and start up the engine.

Many of these stories we keep for ourselves, but many others instead deserve to be told to those who, like all Proud Owners, share that same profound passion for the “Eagle”, and Jürgen’s experience is a prime example.

A voyage that has been ongoing for thirty years, proof of an individual’s love of Moto Guzzi and of Italy, written up for us by Luigi, a member of the community who was one of the first to remain truly amazed by the serene beauty of this genuine Guzzi story.

Thanks a lot to Jürgen and Luigi, enjoy the read!

## **Köln 1982.**

### **The dream that came true.**

The best thing about this story is that we are able to narrate it from the start. The story begins in Cologne back in 1982. On an unspecified day of that year, Jürgen went down to a bike workshop. A dear friend had told him that an

elderly lady had dropped off her son’s motorcycle at the workshop with the intention of selling it. Left standing and never started up since the owner died tragically, the bike just lay there, virtually abandoned. This said, this story bears all the hallmarks of the most classic stories that every fan, not only of motorcycles, has heard numerous times in their lives. Stories that sound surreal, but that is not the case here. Yes, because on that day, Jürgen had actually gone down to that workshop to take a look at that very bike, without knowing either the make or model. Once inside, he saw the bike almost entirely hidden under a heavy blanket, the only trace of care and loving kindness that she had been shown over many years of indifference.

When Jürgen reached the bike, he lifted a corner of the dusty blanket and saw the left side of the bike. Still visibly excited to this day, he tells me that, at the sight of the “750-S3” badge, he did not have the slightest hesitation and all he said to the mechanic was, “Alright, I’ll take it!”

Muscular, clear-eyed and with facial features that reveal his Eastern European origins, these days Jürgen is a well-established journalist,

husband and father of five children, two of whom have given him three splendid grandchildren. At the time, however, he was a penniless student like so many others, who had only previously owned a few 50cc and 125cc bikes; the kind of bikes that people buy based on affordability, not desirability. Jürgen, however, had clear ideas and a dream that he felt was unattainable. Every day he saw and heard an S3 going by, one that belonged to his neighbor who, to be honest, was not even a very nice guy. Jürgen says that every time the neighbor’s S3 passed by, he asked himself a question to which there was no easy answer and which thus remained unanswered: “How can any motorcycle be so beautiful?” These days, when talking about those years he adds that, “It seemed enormous, long, but at the same time very agile and powerful. To me it was the most beautiful bike in the world”. A few days after that fateful workshop visit, Jürgen bought the S3 and thus fulfilled his dream. Having brought it home, our neo-Guzzi owner began to give the bike the kind of care and attention that she deserved and did some work on her since she had not even been started up for a very long time. Jürgen certainly did not even begin to imagine what fate had in store for him from then on: just think how he would have felt if he had known that the 750-S3 would be responsible for a meeting that would literally change his life. Years passed, five years to be precise, and the time had come for his Italienische Reise.

## **Summer 1987.**

### **The first journey in Italy.**

It was 1987 and Jürgen decided to take a trip to Italy, obviously not in a carriage or on the back of a



donkey as did his fellow countryman Goethe and many other scholars and aristocrats of the old Europe, but riding that twin that he was becoming increasingly proud of as time passed. The trip lasted six weeks. Jürgen and his S3 crossed the whole of Italy, from Trentino all the way down to the deep South, passing through Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, Campania and on to Basilicata. It was a trip unlike any other he had ever done. What Jürgen took back to his Cologne were not just the flavours, smells and landscapes of Italy, but also the heart of a woman that he had met by chance in the Lucania region. Rossana was the name of the girl who would become his wife some time later and Bernalda was the town in which their fateful meeting took place.

The memory of that six-week trip is still very much alive in the mind of our friend, as is his amazement, mixed with a little healthy anger at how critical the Italians were of that S3. In fact, still today, Jürgen

cannot understand why, even in those days, Italians considered Guzzis to be has-been bikes that were basically old-fashioned and not very attractive. Of all people, Italians should be proud of themselves and proud of these bikes, just as proud as Jürgen already was at the time.

### **1987-2017: the Journey in Italy thirty years after.**

Sturdy and built to last, like every other Guzzi, the S3 had always been there at our friend's side. The years, however, moved on fast, as did the lightened flywheel and the increasing number of valves! Thirty years passed, to be precise. This was a nice round number and important enough to drive Jürgen to celebrate that glorious journey and that faithful motorcycle. Thus was born the idea to undertake another trip to Italy with that same S3. As he had done the first time around, our friend traversed the entire Peninsula, from the Alps to the Sicilian seashore, from

“pizzoccheri” to “arancini”, via Spluga, Mandello del Lario and most of northern Italy, Garda, Milan, Friuli, Florence, the Val d’Orcia, Rome, the Amalfi Coast and Bernalda, where Jürgen stopped off to greet his wife, children and grandchildren who were there on holiday at the time. From Bernalda, his trip proceeded towards Calabria across the lunar landscape of Mount Etna until he reached Palermo. On the way back, while passing through Puglia, the Marche and Emilia, Jürgen decided to make the last stop of his second trip to Italy in Mandello del Lario in time to celebrate the 96th anniversary of Moto Guzzi (September 8-10).

In all, his trip took about forty days and he covered around eight thousand kilometres. However, this time around Jürgen found a warmth and welcome that moved him, he says. With the help of social media, he told his story and above all, was able to share his passion in a totally natural way. For



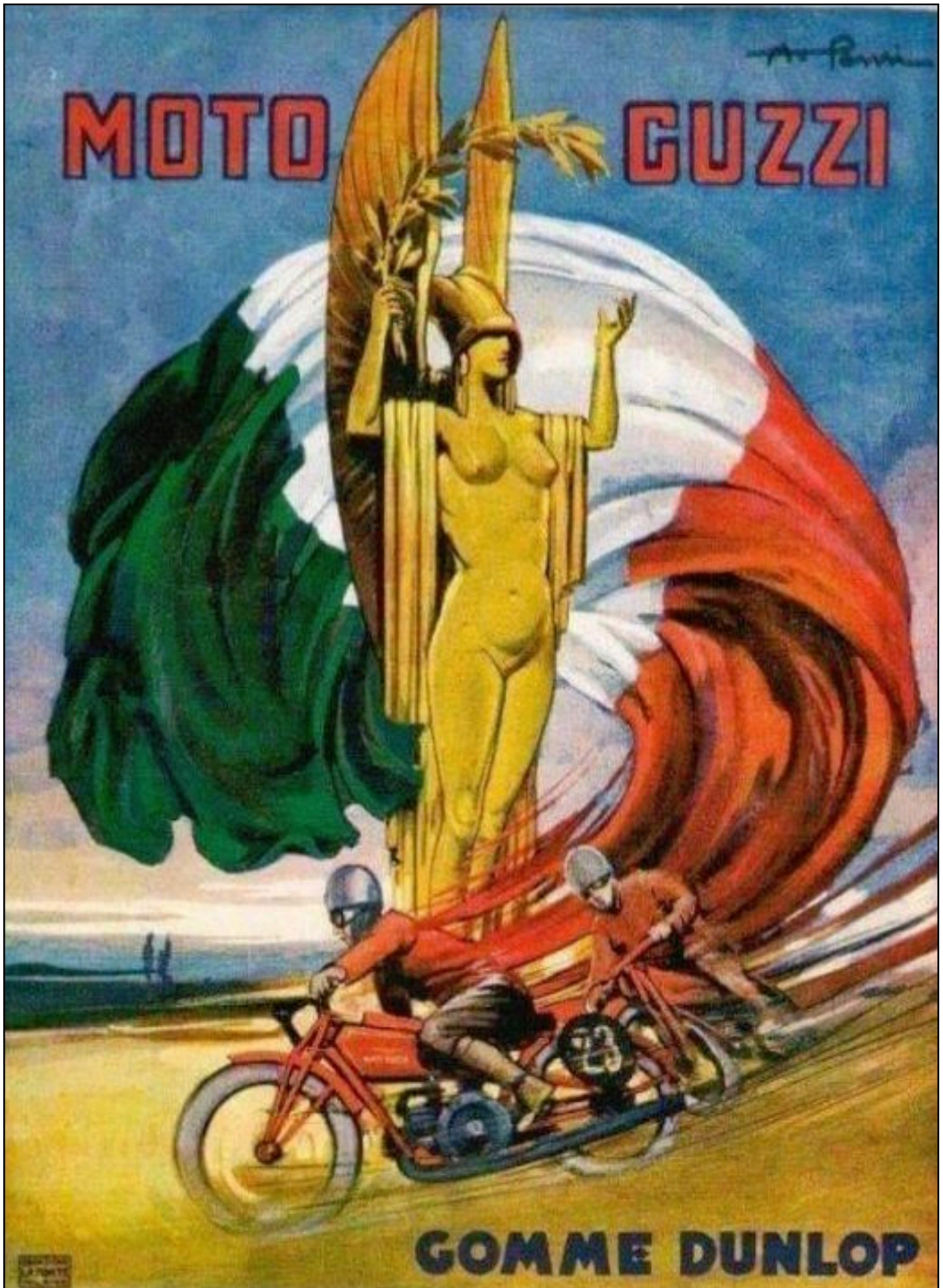


this reason he found many people happy to welcome him back like an old friend. In fact, at our first meeting, I felt like I was meeting up again with a long-lost friend that I had known forever, after a long absence. Jürgen says that this warmth and empathy are typical of us Italians but we believe, or at least we like to believe that, as we have repeated time and again, the reasons are very different. Certainly there is a rediscovered passion for the brand, so big and deep that it was perceived by everyone right away. These days, in addition to the legendary bike he purchased back in 1982, Jürgen also owns another S3, a Le Mans II and a V35, but we certainly do not intend to measure his love purely by the number of bikes he owns! Stating that Guzzis have a soul is not something you say merely for effect, a cliché or a personal opinion, but is something that is clearly demonstrated by this trip and this story that bears the unmistakable trademark of the “Eagle of Lario”. Two timeless loves and a bike that is part of life, these are the elements that make this a truly Guzzi-style story.

We cannot explain why this is, but Jürgen’s love for his S3 has remained unchanged for thirty-seven years. It is no coincidence that in Mandello, on a rainy Sunday afternoon, his last before returning to Cologne, looking at his bike he confessed to us that “Io zono ancora innamorato della mia S3, come il primo giorno” (I’m still in love with my S3 like the first day). This sentence is so typical of Jürgen, not so much for his Italian spoken with a strong German accent, but for his unwavering and profound passion, which makes him a true Guzzi lover and his story as unique as only a genuine Guzzi story could ever be.









## ENRICO LORENZETTI, THE CHAMPION THAT MADE THE MOTO GUZZIS FLY

There was a time when bike races were all about the taste of dust and the thrill of elitist foolhardiness. A time in which men and machines were put to the test in the same way, merged into a single unit made up of muscle and metal. Those were the days of triumph for Moto Guzzi and for Enrico Lorenzetti.

Born in Rome on 4/01/1911 and nicknamed Filaper (the Lombard dialect word for “lint”, because he was tall and thin), Lorenzetti was a rider of unimpeachable honesty and talent, unbeatable in the wet and on the most challenging of racetracks, an exceptionally intuitive racer and a modest and very humane person.

He won 106 of the 291 races in which he competed, 244 of which were with Moto Guzzi. The relationship with the Mandello manufacturer, that began in the 1948 season and was founded on mutual passion and determination, intertwined their respective sporting destinies into a series of successes and futuristic technological advances. The end of his career in 1957 coincided with Moto Guzzi’s anguished decision to retire from competitive racing.

Enrico Lorenzetti’s sporting history began in 1936 when he used the money he earned as a radio technician to purchase his first real motorcycle, a 500cc Simplex. That same year, riding a 250cc Triumph, he won the gruelling Milan-Naples race, an off road race run mainly on dirt roads. The newspaper headlines earned him the attention of the major bike manufacturers and served as the launch pad for his racing career.

After his initial experiences on various bikes (Benelli, Sertum, Miller, Taurus), in 1939 he joined Moto Guzzi, with which he unsuccessfully took on the Milan-Taranto on the 250cc Albatros and then followed up with an epic victory at Lausanne on the 500cc Condor.

In 1940, with the Second World War raging, Filaper won the second-class Italian championship but was soon called up for military service and he only returned to bike racing in 1948 as main rider for the Moto Guzzi team.

These were the years of the great successes with Lorenzetti literally making the “eagles of Mandello” fly. He won the 500cc European Championship thanks to his victory in the Ulster GP and then proceeded to win



no less than five further Italian Championships (one in the 500cc class and four in the 250cc class), as well as the 250cc World Championship in 1952. In total he went on to win eight World Championships in the 250cc, 350cc and 500cc classes, after competing in a total of 28 GPs, winning 7 of them and earning 21 podium finishes.

But that was not all. Enrico was also a painstaking and smart test rider. During his racing career with Moto Guzzi he successfully raced and contributed to the development of a number of the bikes that have established the illustrious history of the brand, such as the 500cc Bicilindrica, the Albatros, the Condor, the 500cc Gambalunga, through to the 500cc 4 Cilindri and including the 250cc Gambalunghino, of which he could truly be dubbed the “co-creator”.

The bizarre story of the birth of this multi-coloured rainbow motorcycle is inextricably linked to a road accident in which Lorenzetti’s Albatros was damaged and which he repaired using parts from a 500cc Gambalunga, much to the amazement of Engineer Carcano. With this Gambalunghino, Moto Guzzi went on to win no less than three 250cc World Championships in 1949, 1951 and 1952, the latter thanks to none other than Lorenzetti.

He died in Milan in 1989, leaving behind a legacy that is unknown to many but that an attentive and passionate fan of the brand can see in every model that carries the “eagle of Mandello del Lario” emblem.



## OMOBONO TENNI AND STANLEY WOODS, GUZZI'S FIRST HEROES



It was in the Twenties that Moto Guzzi decided to advertise its vehicles via a very powerful medium: races. The first was the Milan-Naples in which two Guzzi vehicles took part.

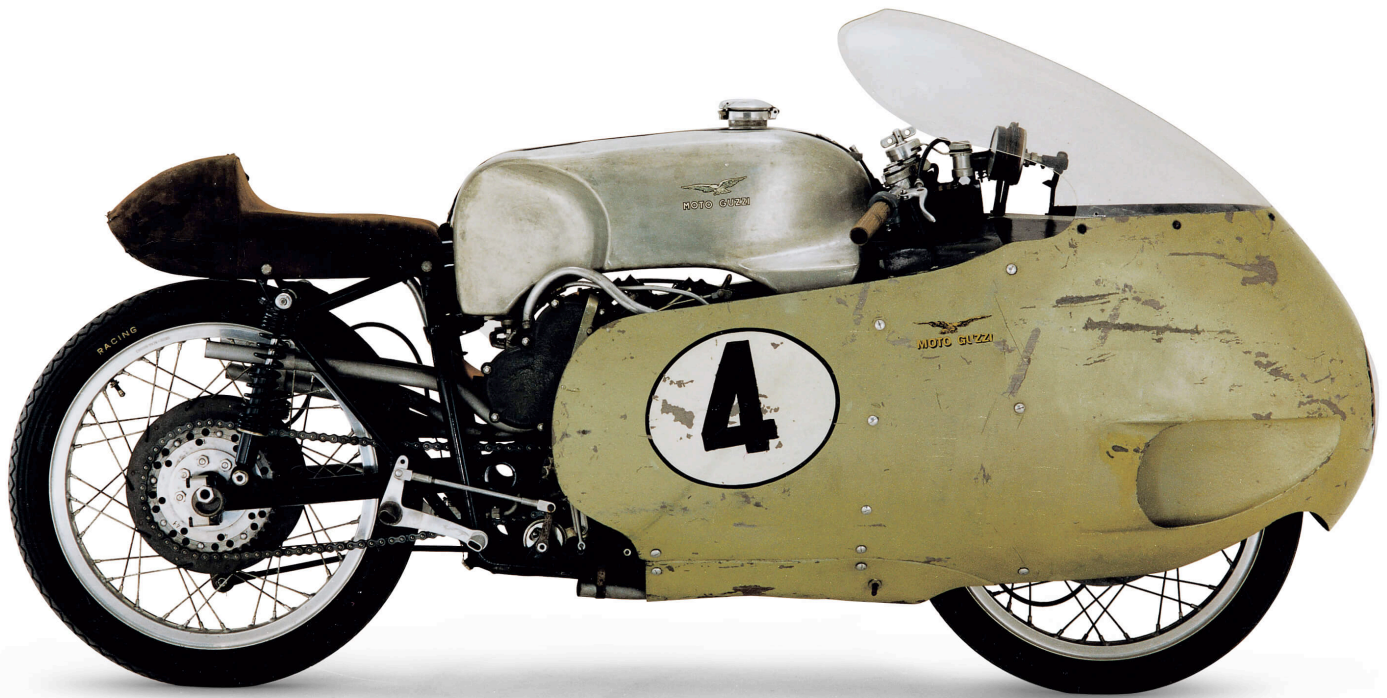
The riders were Mario Cavedini in 21st place, and Aldo Finzi in 22nd. A good result for a first race held on an 800 km track. By the following month Guzzi had its first victory with Gino Finzi at the Targa Florio and from then on it continued to chalk them up until it had no fewer than 3,329 wins in the speed competitions alone until 1957, the year in which it withdrew from racing. The credit for the many trophies won by the Eagle brand between the Twenties and Forties goes to two riders: Tomaso Omobono Tenni and Stanley Woods. Let's look at their stories.

His name was Tommaso Omobono Tenni and everybody knew him by reputation or by his nickname "The Black Devil". He was a great Moto Guzzi champion during the '30s and '40s and his career spanned no fewer than 24 years. In 1933 he began racing for the Mandello company with the Biciclintrica 500 on the Littorio circuit at the Rome "Trofeo della Velocità" (Speed Trophy). For two years running, 1934 and 1935, he won the Italian championship in the 500cc class; but his most famous victory was on a Moto Guzzi 250 at the Isle of Man Tourist Trophy in 1937. In fact he was the first non-British rider to win what was considered at that time to be the most important race in the world. It was a particularly lucky year for him, because he also won the title of European

Champion in the 250cc class. After a serious accident in 1939 and a halt during the War, he returned to racing in 1945 and again demonstrated that he had what it takes to be a great champion by winning the Italian championship in the 500cc class and gaining second place in the European championship in 1947. Everybody loved him because of his crazy acrobatics and courage. During practice for the Bern Grand Prix in 1948 he died after crashing at the Eymatt corner. Moto Guzzi dedicated a monument to him, which can still be seen at the Mandello del Lario Museum, and a special version of the "V11 Le Mans".

Another story was that of Stanley Woods. Irish and the son of a confectionary salesman, he always preferred motorcycles to studying. A very famous rider (he had already won six Tourist Trophies), he began racing for Moto Guzzi in 1934, a year after Omobono Tenni. He immediately won the 250cc and 500cc classes in the Spanish Grand Prix at Barcelona on the Biciclintrica that he described as "a monster of interesting driveability". His most important race with Guzzi was the T.T. in 1935, when he won both the 250cc and 500cc titles. After the war he re-established relations with the Eagle brand and organized participations in various races. In the saddle of a Dondolino he also took part in the "parade of champions" in 1972 combined with the Imola 200 Miles; in 1989 he took part in Legendary Motorcycles at the Grand Prix. He returned to Ireland where he enjoyed retirement until his death in 1993.





## RACING LEGENDS: THE STORY OF BILL LOMAS



When you talk about old-school bike races, there's an aura of irresistible charm that descends over and shrouds those fearless post-war riders that used to race on the razor's edge, hunched over the metal spine of magnificent, brutal bikes, however, few if any of them could compete with

Englishman Bill Lomas' captivating smile, wild cowlick and sharp sense of humour.

Good-looking, scrawny, with a mocking sneer under his leather helmet and always ready with a parting shot, he always managed to get the other riders all riled up. Time and again he was wont to say *"The victory must be built up before the race begins"* just after taking a parting shot at his fellow-racers, as if to demonstrate his superiority just a few minutes before the start of the race.

Undoubtedly cocky, yes, but he never failed to back up his claims with action: two-time winner of the Isle of Man TT, two-time World Champion on a Moto Guzzi and, of all the "Eagle" riders, he is the one whose name is indelibly linked to the amazing Otto Cilindri 500, the brainchild of Giulio Cesare Carcano.

He had the temperament of a champion and the charm of a movie star, so much so, in fact, that he appeared in

the 1957 film called "Engaged to Death", directed by Romolo Marcellini: a recently restored piece of motorcycle movie history with live racing scenes shot on the Monza circuit, on the legendary Milan – Taranto and even some within the Moto Guzzi factory in Mandello del Lario, complete with tests filmed in the legendary wind tunnel.

But let's start at the very beginning. Bill Lomas was born on the 8th March 1928 in Milford, Derbyshire, son of a Rolls Royce factory worker and a lady butcher. In 1949, at just 19 years of age, his great passion for two-wheelers led him to debut in his earliest races on a Royal Enfield, where he immediately showed his potential, riding aggressively and successfully notwithstanding the fact that the bike was not particularly competitive. At the 1952 TT he did very well on a Velocette 250, immediately drawing the attention of the bike manufacturers attending the race, also thanks to his reputation as a good test-rider.

And thus he made his way through AJS, NSU and Benelli, but the chance that would change his destiny came along at the 1955 TT. After having been engaged by MV Agusta to race in the 125cc and 250cc classes, Fergus Anderson, the then sporting manager of the Moto Guzzi Racing Department offered him the chance to race a 350 and a 500, replacing Dick Dale, who was incapacitated after a bad fall. This is part of



what makes the racing at that time particularly interesting and so Lomas found himself racing for two different Italian bike manufacturers that were also bitter rivals, and he managed to win both the 250cc class for MV and the 350cc class for Moto Guzzi, setting a record breaking average-speed in the latter.



Cilindri, suggesting major improvements and, in 1957, riding it to set a new world record over 10Km from a standing start.

Just a few months later he broke his left collarbone during the Coppa d'Oro race in Imola. He had just recovered from his injury and returned to racing at a race in Assen when his rear wheel of his much-loved V8 locked up and sent him flying, in a fall that left the bike

in a million pieces and him with a broken left shoulder.

Thus ended his season and, thanks to having become a father in the meantime and Moto Guzzi's retirement from racing, his professional racing career as well. He went back to England with his family and opened a bike shop and workshop; his passion for two-wheelers would never abandon him.

He was to remain a lifelong fan of the Eagle of Mandello and an tireless supporter of historic bike races, at which he could be seen riding the Otto Cilindri he adored, such as on the lap of honour at the 1996 T.T. But more often he could be found wandering around in the pits, talking about his exploits as a rider and readily unleashing that smile that never ever left him.

He passed away in Mansfield on 14th August 2007. Eleven years after his death and sixty one years after Moto Guzzi's retirement from racing, the legend lives on, even in the splendid Moto Guzzi custom MGR 1200 built by the German guys of Radical Guzzi, named in memory of Bill Lomas and raced in the drag races at the "Essence" competition at Glemseck 101 2017.

He ended up signing a full-season contract with the Mandello manufacturer and a marrying his girlfriend Kathe: he reportedly told her that *"I'll marry you just as soon as I've won my first TT"*.

That same season saw a string of wins on a Moto Guzzi, at the German, Belgian and Ulster GPs, while in Holland he managed to make a historic fight-back from last to first position. By the end of that year he brought home his competitive 350 single to win the World Championship.

Less than a year after he was engaged, having refused offers from other bike manufacturers and madly in love with Italy, Lomas moved to Mandello del Lario with his family, where he learned to speak Italian and dedicating himself totally to the home of the "Eagle".

Behind the scenes at the German GP at the Nürburgring, he came face to face with the Otto Cilindri for the first time and tried it out a few months later at Monza, where he immediately fell in love with it, to the extent that many years later he described it as «the best machine ever built».

In 1956, whenever he wasn't busy winning the 350cc class world championship title once again, he put his heart and soul into the development of the Otto





# Legendary motorcycle Designer, Umberto Todero

By Mike Hanlon



*Umberto Todero*

Umberto Todero, one of the best known and most respected designers on the world motorcycling scene passed away at the age of 82. Todero spent 66 years in the employment of Moto Guzzi, originally as a race mechanic on the World Championship winning single cylinder Grand Prix bikes of the fifties, and from there onwards, he worked with the likes of Carlo Guzzi, Cesare Carcano, Enrico Cantoni, Lino Tonti, and Dr. John Wittner and played a hand in the design of every Moto Guzzi from the legendary 500cc V8 racer of the fifties through to the transverse V-twin engines that have become the marque's unmistakable signature.

As a race mechanic, Todero turned the spanners for the MotoGuzzi Grand Prix machines ridden by Fergus Anderson, Enrico Lorenzetti, Bill Lomas, Dicky Dale, and Keith Campbell.

From extracting the final few horsepower from the legendary DOHC Moto Guzzi singles, Todero went on to play a significant role in two of the most famous motorcycles of all time.

His work with Carcano in designing

and building the legendary V8 500cc Grand Prix bike of the fifties was unfortunately curtailed when all of the Italian manufacturers decided to pull out of Grand Prix racing en masse. The bike remains today as one of the greatest engineering feats in history (in that it was far ahead of its time).

His influence continued through the design of the V7 Guzzi, the first of the v-twins that are now synonymous with the marque and continued onwards through the Moto Guzzi Le Mans 850.

The V8 stunned the GP world of the fifties where single cylinder motorcycles with 52 horses were the norm. To put the feat in perspective, by comparison, the Moto Guzzi V8 produced 78 bhp at a stunning 12,500 rpm, and was timed at 178 mph in 1957.

In later years Umberto could be persuaded start the V8 machine he had lovingly restored and ride it around the grounds of the Mandello del Lario factory on the banks of Lake Como - an aural treat for lovers of fine machinery.

*Cesare Carcano, Enrico Cantoni and Umberto Todero*







Carlo Guzzi

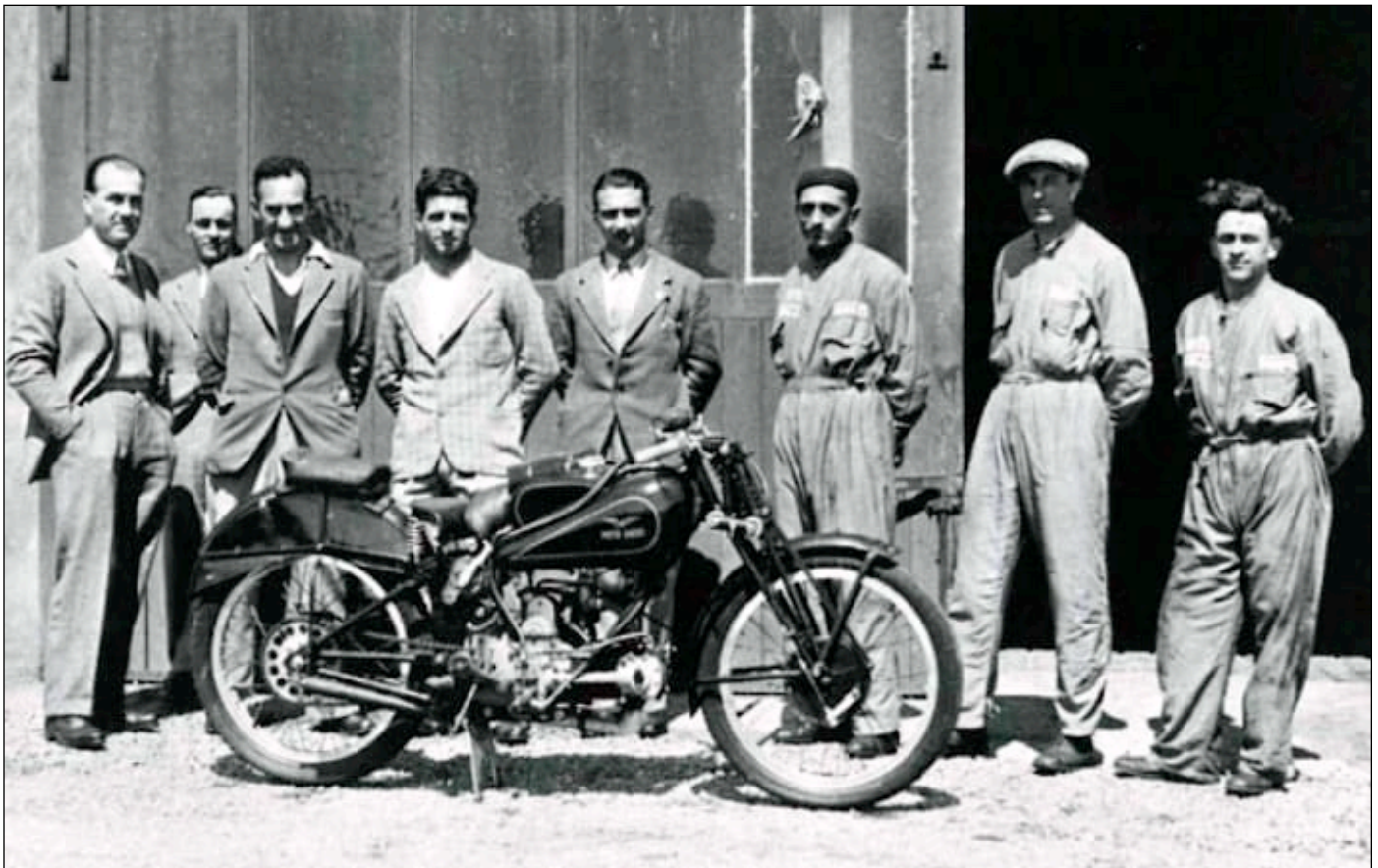
Giorgio Parodi

Emanuele Parodi



## **THE FOUNDERS OF MOTO GUZZI THE FLIGHT ENGINEER, THE AVIATOR, THE SHIPOWNER AND... THE SPREAD-WINGED EAGLE**

“Worry about the interests of our country rather than your own interests... Be indulgent with others and severe with yourselves”. (From Giorgio Parodi’s letter to his children in his will).



A significant friendship developed during the First World War between flight engineer Carlo Guzzi (1889-1964), whose father was an engineer, and pluri-decorated aviator Giorgio Parodi (1897-1955), the son of a Genoese shipowner.

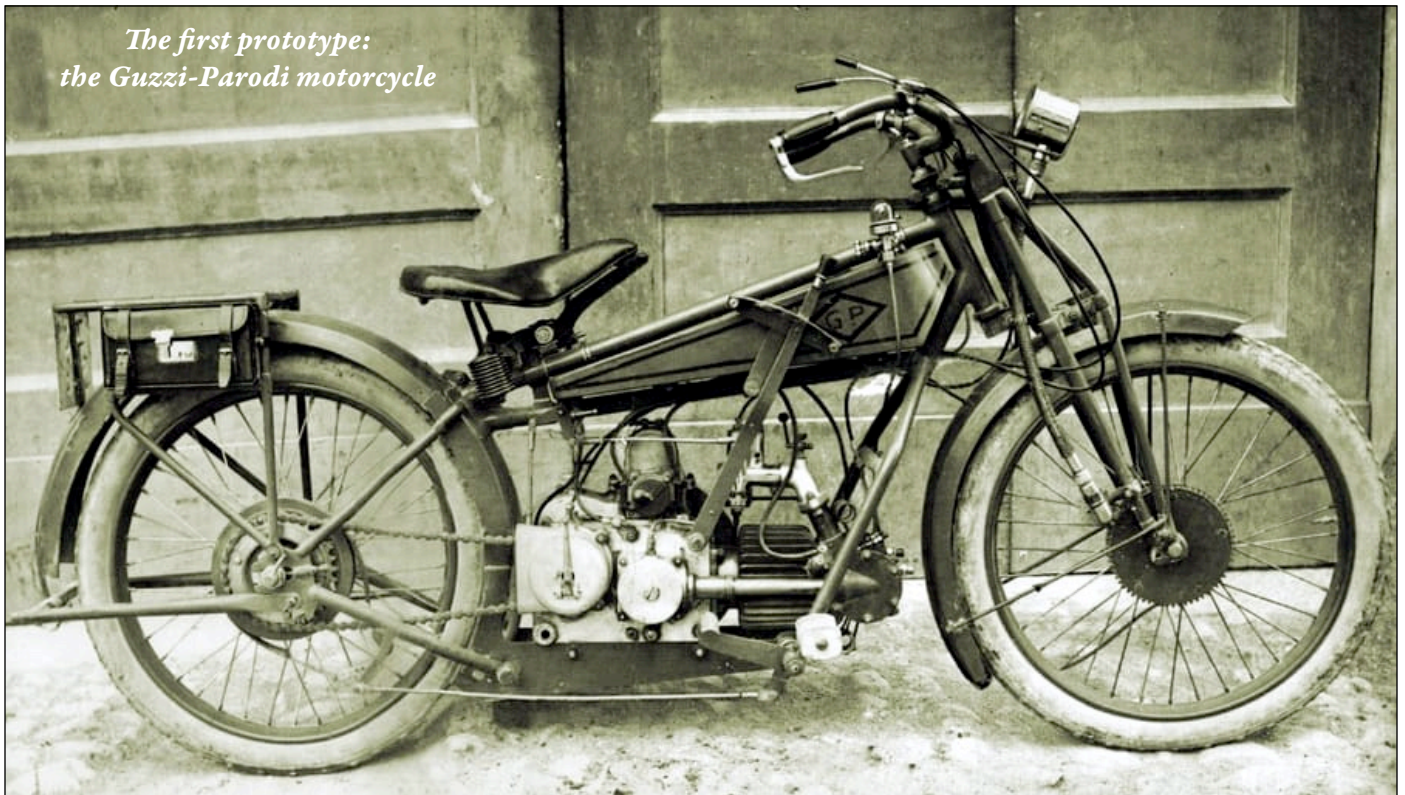
With their friend, Giovanni Ravelli, an experienced pilot, all three were fascinated by engines and motorcycle racing.

The story goes that Carlo Guzzi proposed to Giorgio and Giovanni, who enthusiastically agreed, that they should design a new concept in motorcycles once the war was over.

After demobilisation, the three young men created an extraordinary business adventure, whose success continues today, 95 years later.



*The first prototype:  
the Guzzi-Parodi motorcycle*



The first motorcycle they developed was the G.P. (from the initials Guzzi-Parodi) in 1919: the model remained a prototype due to the high production costs of a project employing a series of aeronautical solutions, such as dual ignition. It was built with the help of Giorgio Ripamonti, who had employed Carlo Guzzi as a mechanic in his workshop before the war. A commemorative plaque can be seen in Mandello del Lario (see photo below).



Nevertheless, the design quality of the prototype was convincing, and on 15 March 1921 the “Società Anonima Moto Guzzi” company was established, for “The manufacture and sale of motorcycles and any other activity relating to or associated with the metalworking industry”. The company founders were Emanuele Vittorio Parodi, a well-known Genoese

shipowner, his aviator son Giorgio and their flight engineer friend Carlo Guzzi.

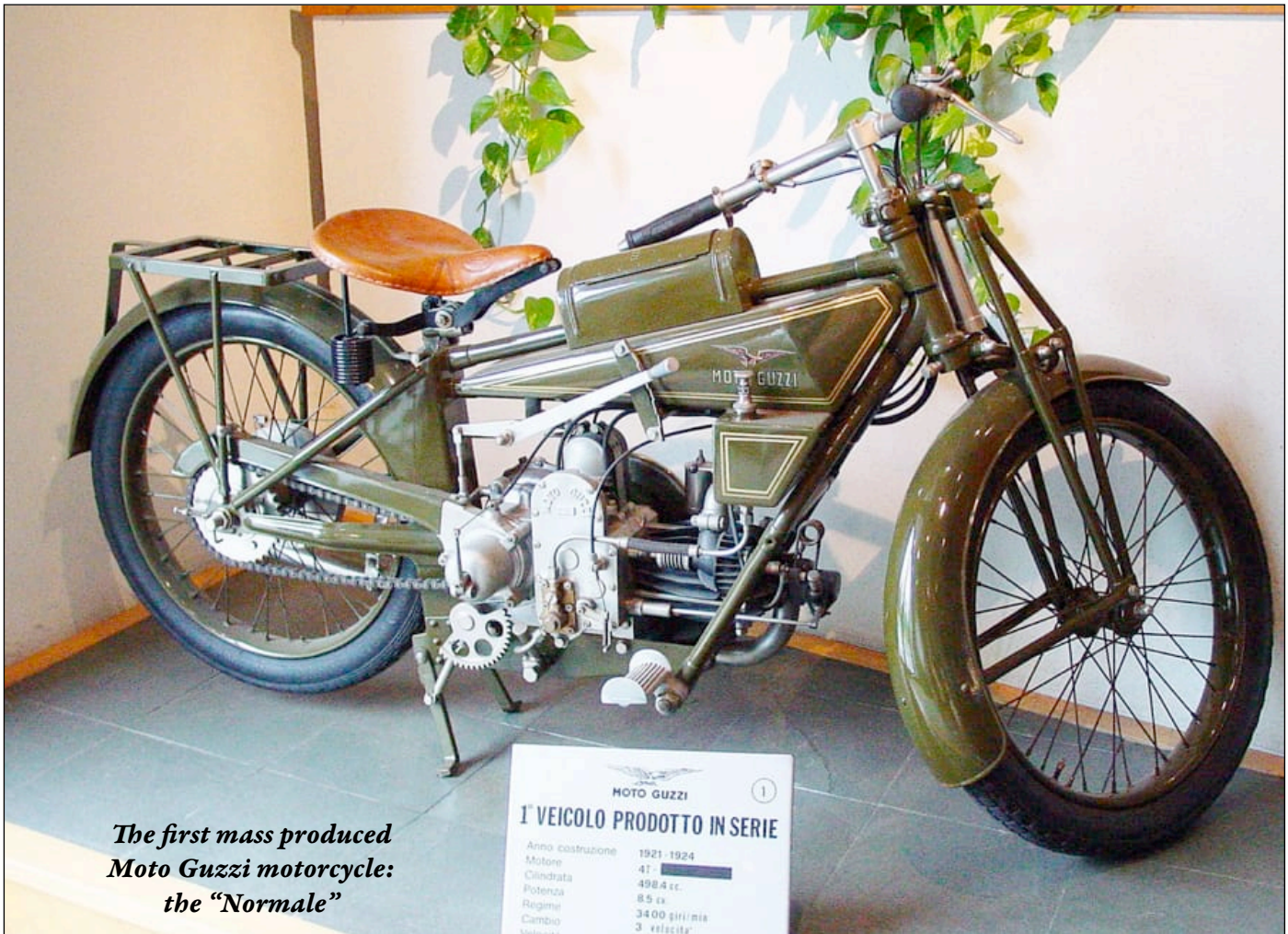
Giovanni Ravelli had died in an aircraft accident. It was in his memory that the Moto Guzzi logo featured the spread-winged eagle, the symbol of the Italian Royal Navy’s Naval Aviation arm at the time.

The initial share capital of the company, established immediately in Mandello del Lario (where the Guzzi family had moved), on the banks of Lake Como in the province of Lecco, was approximately two thousand liras (about as nowadays 2,000 euros). From the start, Carlo Guzzi involved his older brother (known as “Naco”), an engineer and passionate motorcyclist, in the adventure.

A simplified version of the first prototype, known as the “Normale”, with 8 Hp and three-speed gearbox, was put on sale and 17 were produced in the first year. This was the first motorcycle, produced from 1921 to 1924, with the Eagle logo on the fuel tank and the name Moto Guzzi (a decision made as a token of respect for the designer Carlo Guzzi by Giorgio Parodi, who wanted to avoid the name G.P. being confused with his own initials).

Under the technical lead of Carlo Guzzi, Moto Guzzi enjoyed unstoppable growth, producing dozens of highly successful models. Carlo Guzzi was an innovator who developed motorbikes of all types and explored





advanced engine configurations; he was the first to build a wind tunnel, in 1950, to test motorcycle aerodynamics.

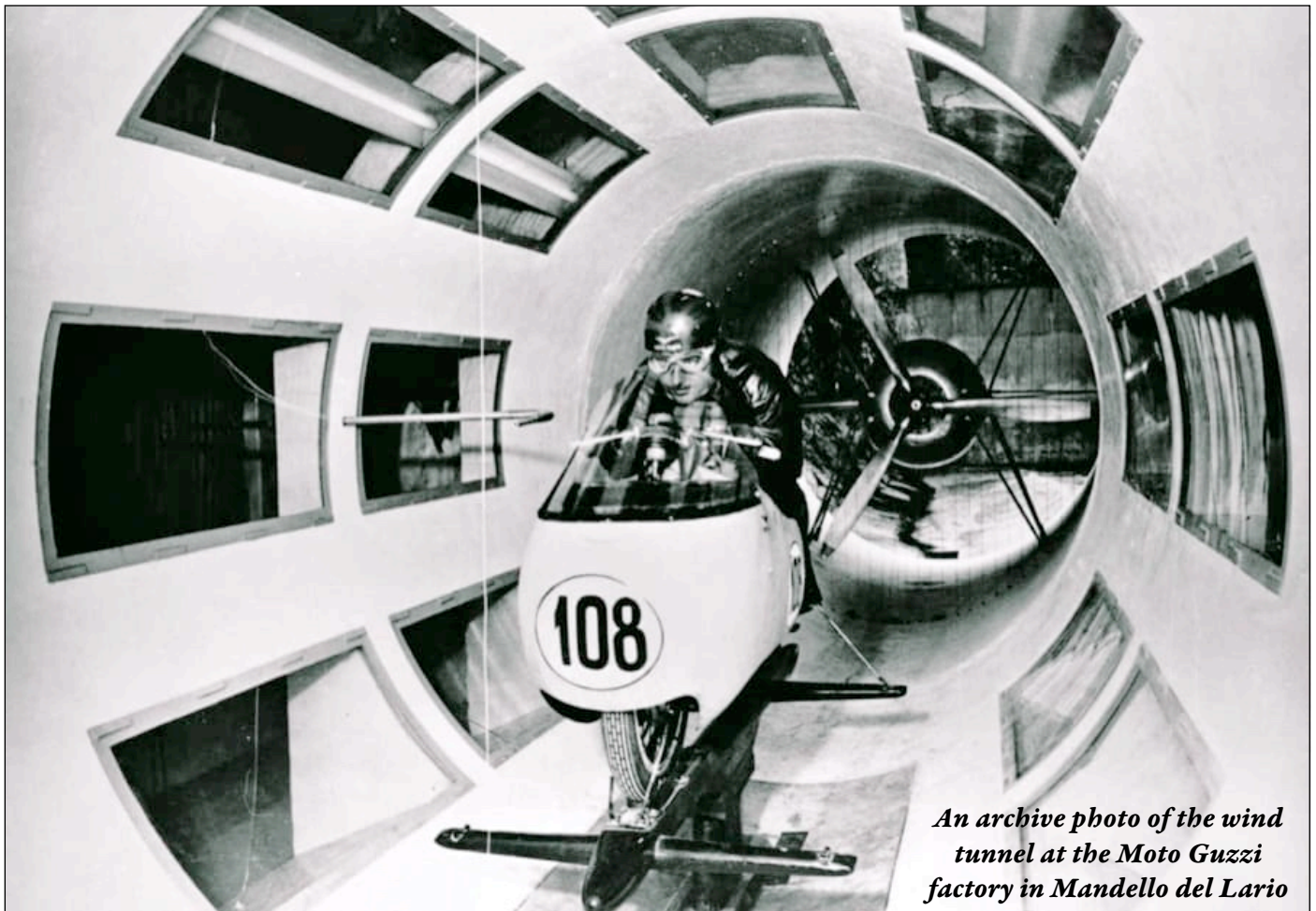
The Moto Guzzi name is a milestone in world motorcycling history, also thanks to its many racing triumphs: the company boasts an impressive 3,332 wins

in official competitions, the first in the prestigious Targa Florio in 1921, which was the precursor of an outstanding series of victories: when Moto Guzzi retired from racing in 1957, its track record included 14 world speed titles and 11 Tourist Trophy titles.

**Left: Giorgio Parodi shakes the hand of the winner of the Tourist Trophy 250 (Isle of Man, 1935), Stanley Woods on a Moto Guzzi racing bike. In the photo on the right, Carlo Guzzi can also be seen.**







*An archive photo of the wind tunnel at the Moto Guzzi factory in Mandello del Lario*

Giorgio Parodi was a devotee of motor-racing: he would appear at the race tracks under a pseudonym, as many riders from aristocratic or well-known families did at the time to keep their anonymity.

Giorgio chose “Lattuga” [lettuce] as his name, because it was unremarkable and underscored the principle of essentiality that was a distinguishing feature of his entire life.

In motorcycling, it was Parodi who represented the racing soul of Moto Guzzi, whereas his partner Carlo Guzzi would have preferred to devote his technical expertise exclusively to improving the reliability, performance and comfort of the company’s mass production.

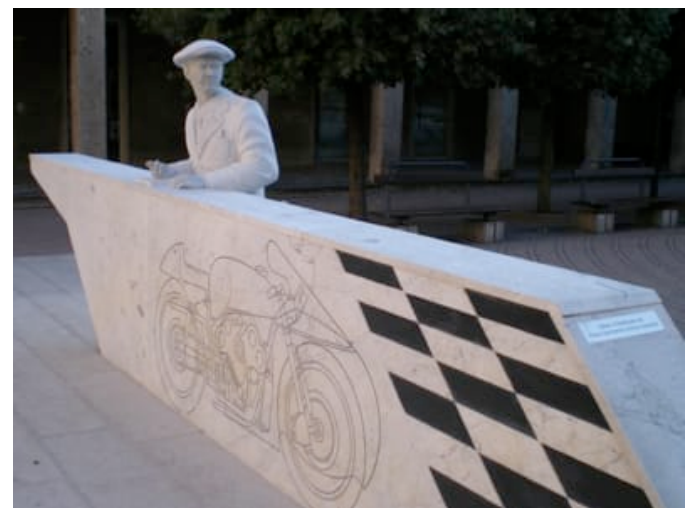
Under Parodi, Moto Guzzi’s motor-racing activities were guided by a healthy competitive spirit: when his team won, he would have the rider accompanied to the podium by just one company representative, chosen in turn from among the most deserving members of his staff.

When an opponent won, the entire Guzzi team of riders and engineers would stand around the podium to applaud the winner.

The story of Moto Guzzi continues, today as yesterday, in the historic factory in Mandello del Lario, which is also home to the company museum, offering thousands and thousands of visitors from all over the world an unforgettable parade of motorised “beauties” with the spread-winged eagle logo.

*Source: The Piaggio Group archives*

*The monument to Carlo Guzzi, in the centre of Mandello.*







## The Mighty Falcone V.O.C.









MOTO GUZZI  
3-WHEEL  
MOTORCYCLE  
THE AUTOVEICOLO  
DA MONTAGNA







There is something about a custom ride that will always stop us in our tracks. Well today we get a look at a rather unique example of such, the Moto Guzzi 3-Wheel Motorcycle.

The unique design boasts a chain-driven system which powers the front wheel and rear caterpillars that could be adjusted to the terrain. The unique design is definitely eye-catching and certainly makes for something unique for any collection of rides.

The most badass 3 wheel motorcycle is not a Can-Am Spyder or Polaris Slingshot. It's this incredible go-anywhere Moto Guzzi built in the early 1960s. Designed for the Italian army, it's sporting full-time 3WD, a six-speed transmission and a reverse gear.

It's called the Autoveicolo Da Montagna ('mountain car') and it's one of the most sophisticated military vehicles ever made. The design brief was simple: build a vehicle that could replace the mules used by Alpini troops for traversing steep mountain roads.

This example lives in a Russian museum called 'The Motorworld by V. Sheyanov.' Based near Samara in the southeastern part of European Russia, the museum is rammed with immaculately restored military motorcycles. But we'd take the Guzzi over anything else.

The restoration was carried out in Italy, though. It's the work of maestro Costantino Frontalini, who runs his own museum for sidecars.













A little history: this Guzzi wasn't the first 3 wheel motorcycle used by the Italian army. They used trikes during the Interwar years, usually hybrids—the front part of a production motorcycle, and a custom rear part, with a cargo body on two wheels. But this 'mechanical mule' was the first truly ground-up design.

Technically, it's a tour de force. The front wheel is chain-driven and there's a switchable differential between the front and rear drives. The rear caterpillars could be adjusted according to terrain, and cargo capacity was a hefty 500 kilos (1,100 pounds).

The client was General Ferruccio Garbari, who became fed up of the traditional mules used by his mountain troops. Moto Guzzi gave the project to one of its most talented engineers, Giulio Carcano, and in March 1960 a prototype of the 3 wheel motorcycle was ready.

After a year of tests and modifications, the contract was signed. The 500cc single-cylinder engine originally earmarked (and used in the 3x2 Motocarro Militare) was ditched, replaced by a new V-Twin 750cc engine dubbed the 'Carcano V7' in honor of its creator.

The trike was capable of tackling 31-degree inclines. But that capability became its biggest weakness as well as its strength. Several riders were killed in rollovers, and the Italian army cancelled production in 1963.

The complexity of maintenance didn't help either: the Guzzi was harshly nicknamed *Orgia di ingranaggi*, or 'orgy of gears.'

Motorworld rep Peter Moskovskikh details the history of this particular machine. *"We bought it from a collector in Rimini. It wasn't in bad condition, but it needed a full restoration. The work took about six months—the main problem was finding all the accessories."*

Those include a Beretta 38/49 light submachine gun, the ubiquitous Italian weapon of World War II, and caterpillar tracks to fit over the rear wheels. On the right side is the emblem of the Torino Alpini, one of the last remaining active mountain infantries in the world.

If you want a go-anywhere machine but modern-day adventure bikes don't tickle your fancy, maybe a military 3 wheel motorcycle is the way to go. Just don't expect to find one on your local Craigslist.





## Moto Guzzi Superalce

The Moto Guzzi Superalce, born under fire from the Russian steppes to the African desert!

I have always wanted to learn more about the golden age of Moto Guzzi. The time before the v-twin. The time when Moto Guzzi was known as a builder of quality, solid, reliable production motorcycles and synonymous with racing success on the track.



The days when Moto Guzzi built single cylinder motorcycles for as long as it has been producing its famous v-twin engined bikes. Single cylinder thumpers that "delivered its power stroke every other lamppost" in the words of Mike Walker.

These bikes are so solid there are a great many still around, but I hadn't managed to convince an owner to write a feature...until Ziorido joined Squadra Guzzista, that is.

He owns the impressive looking Superalce in the picture and is also the proud owner of a Galetto, one of the most successful Moto Guzzi motorcycles of all time. He agreed to write his feature but I had to wait until he returned from holiday...the suspense was gripping...

"Italy and the war. It is true, the Superalce is a military motorcycle. The last and most powerful real war machines available to the Italian Army at that point in time.

It did not participate directly in Second World War military operations as it was, in fact, produced from 1946 but the project was born from the toughest experiences and most testing conditions for any vehicle's design, that of military armed conflict.

The machine was forged in campaigns, terrain, and varying conditions stretching from Russia, through Europe, and as

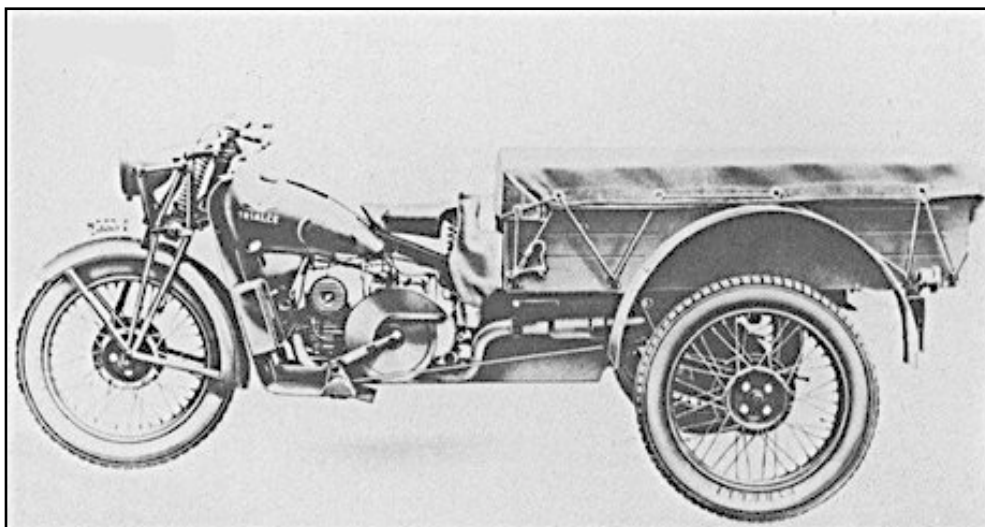
far as Africa.

The Superalce was born from the battlefields where the "Duce" threw Italy into the "Great Fascist War" as he called it.

Even though the Superalce did not see action in World War II, Italy's troops had been on a war footing since the mid 1930s following the invasion of Abyssinia in 1935.

The bike's predecessor, the Alce (Elk) had been developed as the prime motorcycle for the army from the earlier GT20.

This bike had been an improvement over the original army bike, the GT17 of 1936, but had improved ground clearance (a necessity for a military motorcycle) although it retained the 13.2bhp overhead exhaust and side valve motor.





The Alce had the addition of an oil pump automatic valve, an improved frame, and changes to the exhaust system to enable it to operate in a variety of conditions. It continued in production until 1958 even though it had been supplanted operationally in 1946 by the Superalce. Interestingly, the Alce was also available in the form of a small truck under the name Trialce.

Initially, the Alce's role was primarily that of mount for the army's dispatch riders but its reliable, rugged design was recognized and adapted for use as a reconnaissance vehicle and could be seen as a mount for light machine guns such as the Breda 30 or even light artillery pieces for rapid incursion and infantry support functions.

It gained legendary status in the army and, from the shifting sands of the African Sahara to the extreme frosts of the Don river front in Russia bore the remnants of the Italian armies on their homeward journey, not just metaphorically but in many cases physically.

When the Superalce arrived as successor to the mighty Alce it was immediately welcomed and universally loved by troops, gaining a reputation as a vehicle that did what it was asked and could be relied upon to perform without fuss or complaint...military qualities indeed!

The Superalce was not a radical departure for Moto Guzzi. The main change was in the engine layout as opposed to principal design. It no longer had side valves as had been the Mandello tradition since the earliest days but now carried a overhead valve arrangement.

It was a simple and gradual development (a common and still current Guzzi trait) using the successful frame design from the series V motorcycles and Alce, and mating this with the newer overhead valve configured motor. It did not seem possible, but in this format the bike became even more robust, reliable, and powerful than its predecessor...a Superalce by name and nature!

The rest of the configuration was more traditional; horizontal cylinder layout, "Badminton" type external gears with four speed box, and the same drum brakes, forks and swingarm that had proved so effective in the Alce.

One overtly obvious change had been the removal of the oil tank from its old exposed position. It was now incorporated into the design of the petrol tank assembly to enable the engine to be mounted higher in the frame.



This was the solution by which improved ground clearance was achieved and, with it, much greater performance over rugged terrain. The overall result was one of a longer, more Spartan motorcycle in appearance although not entirely unappealing, and a superior performer over the older model.

Riding this bike is a thrilling experience. It is hard to imagine this motorcycle is now more than 60 years old. It is possible to glide effortlessly up hills without the slightest vibration being evident. This is remarkable for a single cylinder motorcycle without any apparent method of damping.

It is actually in mountainous or hilly terrain where the Superalce excels. It is a tireless hill climber pulling strongly from low down in the rev range in a way that doesn't seem possible on a modern motorcycle.

It was designed with off road use in mind but is just as adept on tarmac, it's only flaw being the braking which is not as strong as you would like.

The Superalce has been mostly overlooked by enthusiasts and collectors. The brutal-looking military



based functional design with graceful 1940s touches has a kind of post-punk aesthetic appeal and is now gathering a devoted following thanks in no small part

to its efficient and reliable mechanicals as well as its, undoubtedly Spartan, yet irresistible charm."

**Pics by Ziorido. Words by Ziorido and Guzzista.**

**More photos of Andrea's Superalce**



**MGX-21**  
FLYING FORTRESS



**AT DEALERS NOW**



# Moto Guzzi Superalce

The Moto Guzzi Superalce, born under fire from the Russian steppes to the African desert!

I have always wanted to learn more about the golden age of Moto Guzzi. The time before the v-twin. The time when Moto Guzzi was known as a builder of quality, solid, reliable production motorcycles and synonymous with racing success on the track.

The days when Moto Guzzi built single cylinder motorcycles for as long as it has been producing its famous v-twin engined bikes. Single cylinder thumpers that "delivered its power stroke every other lamppost" in the words of Mike Walker.

These bikes are so solid there are a great many still around, but I hadn't managed to convince an owner to write a feature...until Ziorido joined Squadra Guzzista, that is.

He owns the impressive looking Superalce in the picture and is also the proud owner of a Galetto, one of the most successful Moto Guzzi motorcycles of all time. He agreed to write his feature but I had to wait until he returned from holiday...the suspense was gripping...

"Italy and the war. It is true, the Superalce is a military motorcycle. The last and most powerful real war machines available to the Italian Army at that point in time.

It did not participate directly in Second World War military operations as it was, in fact, produced from 1946 but the project was born from the toughest experiences and most testing conditions for any vehicle's design, that of military armed conflict.

The machine was forged in campaigns, terrain, and varying conditions stretching from Russia, through Europe, and as



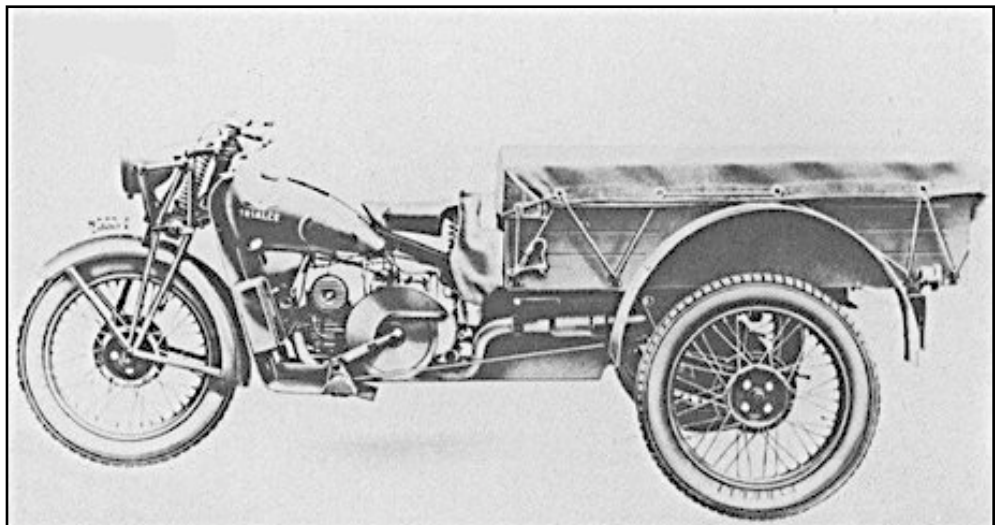
far as Africa.

The Superalce was born from the battlefields where the "Duce" threw Italy into the "Great Fascist War" as he called it.

Even though the Superalce did not see action in World War II, Italy's troops had been on a war footing since the mid 1930s following the invasion of Abyssinia in 1935.

The bike's predecessor, the Alce (Elk) had been developed as the prime motorcycle for the army from the earlier GT20.

This bike had been an improvement over the original army bike, the GT17 of 1936, but had improved ground clearance (a necessity for a military motorcycle) although it retained the 13.2bhp overhead exhaust and side valve motor.





The Alce had the addition of an oil pump automatic valve, an improved frame, and changes to the exhaust system to enable it to operate in a variety of conditions. It continued in production until 1958 even though it had been supplanted operationally in 1946 by the Superalce. Interestingly, the Alce was also available in the form of a small truck under the name Trialce.

Initially, the Alce's role was primarily that of mount for the army's dispatch riders but its reliable, rugged design was recognized and adapted for use as a reconnaissance vehicle and could be seen as a mount for light machine guns such as the Breda 30 or even light artillery pieces for rapid incursion and infantry support functions.

It gained legendary status in the army and, from the shifting sands of the African Sahara to the extreme frosts of the Don river front in Russia bore the remnants of the Italian armies on their homeward journey, not just metaphorically but in many cases physically.

When the Superalce arrived as successor to the mighty Alce it was immediately welcomed and universally loved by troops, gaining a reputation as a vehicle that did what it was asked and could be relied upon to perform without fuss or complaint...military qualities indeed!

The Superalce was not a radical departure for Moto Guzzi. The main change was in the engine layout as opposed to principal design. It no longer had side valves as had been the Mandello tradition since the earliest days but now carried a overhead valve arrangement.

It was a simple and gradual development (a common and still current Guzzi trait) using the successful frame design from the series V motorcycles and Alce, and mating this with the newer overhead valve configured motor. It did not seem possible, but in this format the bike became even more robust, reliable, and powerful than its predecessor...a Superalce by name and nature!

The rest of the configuration was more traditional; horizontal cylinder layout, "Badminton" type external gears with four speed box, and the same drum brakes, forks and swingarm that had proved so effective in the Alce.

One overtly obvious change had been the removal of the oil tank from its old exposed position. It was now incorporated into the design of the petrol tank assembly to enable the engine to be mounted higher in the frame.



This was the solution by which improved ground clearance was achieved and, with it, much greater performance over rugged terrain. The overall result was one of a longer, more Spartan motorcycle in appearance although not entirely unappealing, and a superior performer over the older model.

Riding this bike is a thrilling experience. It is hard to imagine this motorcycle is now more than 60 years old. It is possible to glide effortlessly up hills without the slightest vibration being evident. This is remarkable for a single cylinder motorcycle without any apparent method of damping.

It is actually in mountainous or hilly terrain where the Superalce excels. It is a tireless hill climber pulling strongly from low down in the rev range in a way that doesn't seem possible on a modern motorcycle.

It was designed with off road use in mind but is just as adept on tarmac, it's only flaw being the braking which is not as strong as you would like.

The Superalce has been mostly overlooked by enthusiasts and collectors. The brutal-looking military



based functional design with graceful 1940s touches has a kind of post-punk aesthetic appeal and is now gathering a devoted following thanks in no small part

to its efficient and reliable mechanicals as well as its, undoubtedly Spartan, yet irresistible charm."

**Pics by Ziorido. Words by Ziorido and Guzzista.**

### More photos of Andrea's Superalce



**5pcs wheel tire valve  
caps stem covers  
Italian flag**

**Universal fit**

**Available at:  
Amazon  
\$15.00**





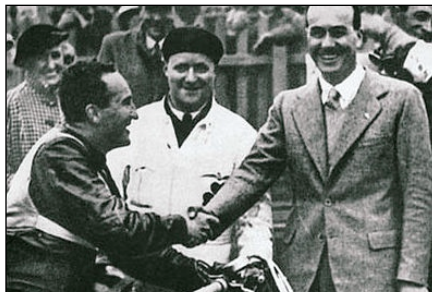
## 18 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MOTO GUZZI

by Aaron Miller

Moto Guzzi was founded on March 15, 1921, and has been making sweet motorcycles ever since, which officially makes them the longest continually-running European bike manufacturer.

You probably know they've made some incredible cafe racers over the years, but they've also made a sweet V8 race bike and powered a couple of cars to land speed records.

We did our homework and found 18 things you probably didn't know about Moto Guzzi.



**1. Moto Guzzi was started by two WWI pilots and their mechanic who spent their time on the ground daydreaming about motorcycles.**

Soldiers stereotypically talk about what they'll do "after the war," and in this case it was two pilots and a mechanic daydreaming of starting their own motorcycle company, wherein one would design the bikes, one would race them, and one would pay for everything.

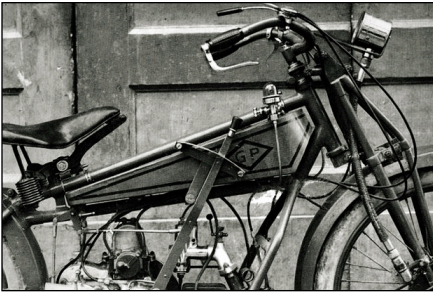


**2. The eagle on the logo represents one of the founding trio.**

Giovanni Ravelli was the racer of the trio, and he died in a plane crash just after the war before they could form their company.

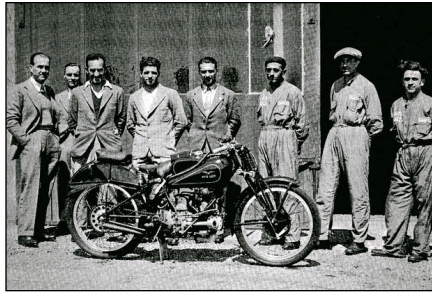
Carlo Guzzi and Giorgio Parodi then paid tribute to their fallen friend, making the logo from the Italian Air Corp's eagle in his memory.





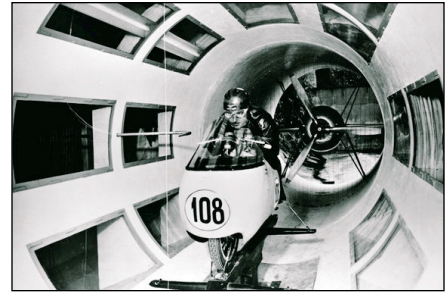
**3. It wasn't originally called Moto Guzzi.**

The original name was GP, for Guzzi-Parodi, but the Parodi family had a very big (and very public) financial stake in the shipping industry, and wanted to distance themselves just in case.



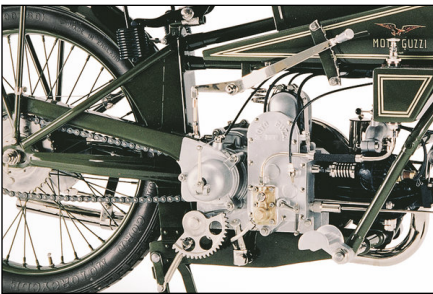
**6. The Isle of Man Time Trial is one of the most grueling, legendary, and prestigious races in the world. They won both classes they entered in 1935.**

Moto Guzzi won both the Senior Class and the Lightweight Class with Stanley Woods riding.



**9. They built the world's first motorcycle-specific wind tunnel in 1950.**

Since it was a full-scale tunnel, riders could go inside and optimize their high-speed riding positions. It was a revolutionary step in motorcycle racing.



**4. They used the first engine they ever developed for 45 years.**

It was a single cylinder unit, and they used it, albeit with various modifications, for nearly five decades.

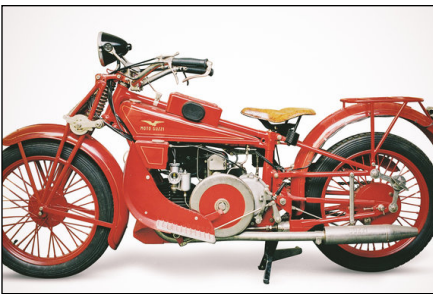
**7. That senior class race almost led to the original "Dewey Defeats Truman" moment.**

Woods was 26 seconds away from the lead heading into the final lap, and breezed past the pit area even though his team was waiting for him. He somehow not only finished, but set a new lap record and won by four seconds. By the time he crossed the line, photos of the other guy (prewar legend Jimmie Guthrie) were already en route to London to hit the newspapers.



**10. Oh, and that wind tunnel? It was a modified version of a design by Gustave Eiffel. That Eiffel.**

It also had an instrument called an alcohol-filled micromanometer, which apparently was not for detecting when Wee Man from Jackass was nearby.



**5. Carlo Guzzi's brother rode a bike to the Arctic Circle, proving that their new chassis was worthy.**

In 1928, he rode from the factory in Italy to the top of Norway in four weeks, solidifying the success of their new "elastic" frame setup.



**8. Moto Guzzi was basically the Ferrari of motorcycle racing.**

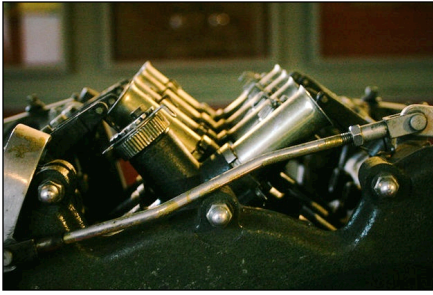
Making bikes that were so much lighter and more agile than the competition, no one else could keep up in the twisty bits and they wound up with eight World Championship riders, six constructor's championships, and eleven wins at the Isle of Man.



**11. They made a blindingly fast V8 racing bike in the mid 1950s that was decades ahead of its time.**

The Otto Cilindri was fast enough to top 171 mph on road courses in testing. That number wasn't seen again until the 1970s. Unfortunately, it did not have too much success in racing; it was too fast for its own good, and even the best riders in the world were afraid of it, lest they crash.





**12. And that V8 was the most beautiful V8 ever made for a bike.**

Like most Italian performance engines, there's no denying it's raw sex appeal. It's gorgeous, but the



**15. They built a Moto Truck.**

You've probably seen the Ercole before. It's basically a bike with a truck bed, for agricultural purposes.



**18. It was once owned by the same company that made the iconic DeTomaso Pantera.**

In 1973, DeTomaso purchased the parent company of Moto Guzzi and continued to own the group for the next 27 years.



**13. They built the Batmobile before Batman was even a thing.**

This is the Nibbio 2. It was built for the sole purpose of setting speed records around Italy's legendary Monza race track. It succeeded, and led to something even wilder.



**16. The Italian motorcycle and scooter industries were extremely sensitive to turf wars, as Moto Guzzi found out.**

The Italian motorcycle and scooter industry was somewhat political, and Guzzi was all set to produce their own traditional small-wheeled scooter, until one of the scooter companies threatened to make a motorcycle to rival Guzzi. Both companies agreed to back down, and neither went through with their plans.




**14. Guzzi also powered this car to land speed records.**

It's called a Stanguellini Colibri. It had 29 hp but only weighed just over 600 pounds, and was so aerodynamically slick it topped 200 kph and set all sorts of European land speed records.

**17. Moto Guzzi did, however, make a large wheeled scooter as a workaround.**

Basically, the traditional scooter makers didn't think it was a threat, and the larger wheels meant it was easier to ride over potholes and cobblestones.

**The Gear Ring**



I am not into biker jewelry, but still admire what Ben Hopson & Glen Liberman have created. This stainless ring features six micro-precision gears that turn in unison when the outer rims are spun. Very fast forward thinking. A good piece of conversation wherever you go. Available for purchase in four standard US ring sizes: 9, 10, 11, and 12. Lifetime warranty. \$165.00, (watch the video on their web site)

**Kinect Design**  
**184 S. Livingston Avenue**  
**Suite 9-239**  
**Livingston, NJ 07039**

**hello@kinectdesign.com**  
**www.kinectdesign.com**



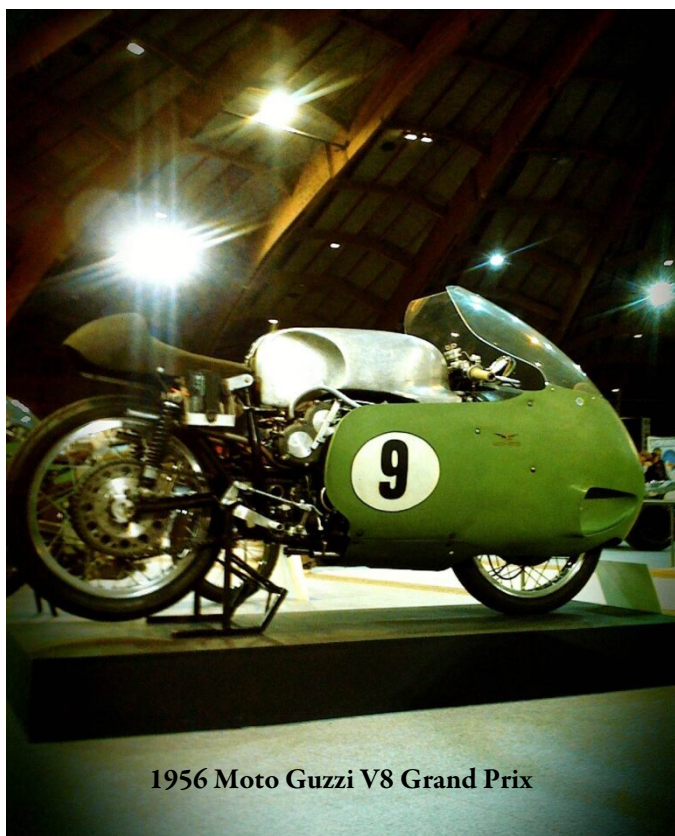
# ADVENTURES IN GUZZILAND

ARTICLE AND PHOTO BY PAUL D'ORLÉANS

The **Avignon Motor Festival** celebrates all powered vehicles, and is an understated, still-growing event, run over 3 days, with around 50,000 visitors. Tanks, cars, boats, planes, trucks, tractors, farm equipment, and motorcycles; this year (Ed- this was 2011) with a beyond-killer display of Moto Guzzis, including precious factory Grand Prix machines from the Moto Guzzi Museum. Also included were production bikes from all years: a mouth-watering display of exotica from the 1920s-1950s. Enjoy these 'vintage' iPhone2 photos!

The stunning 1956 Moto Guzzi V8 Grand Prix racer of 1957, designed by Giuliano Carcano, with hand-hammered aluminum bodywork and a magnesium fairing. It was the first DOHC V8 motorcycle, although not the first V8 motorcycle – the first was also Italian, but was a two-stroke V8, the 1938 Galbusera. The 500cc motor was watercooled with all magnesium castings, and weighed only 99lbs (by contrast, a Honda CB750 motor weighs 176lbs), while the whole motorcycle weighed only 326lbs. The motor produced 78hp @12k rpm, with an amazing top speed of 171mph – a speed not equalled in GP racing for another 20 years! Of course, tire technology, as well as suspension and brake technology, were not up to the task in 1955, and using the full potential of the Otto Cilindri was dangerous business. It was a fearsome machine, and Moto Guzzi employed the best racers in the world to ride it, but by 1957, all refused to ride it again until the defects were sorted out!

Did you know Moto Guzzi built an inline four racer in 1953? The Quattro Cilindri had a longitudinal DOHC four-cylinder, with the crankcase and cylinder barrels cast in one lump from magnesium. Two valves/cylinder, mechanical fuel injection and shaft final drive. Big magnesium brakes, and a hand-hammered aluminum fairing with a 'beak', as was the fashion in the early 1950s. While fast, the rotational forces of the crankshaft and gearbox/final drive made the handling unpleasant, and the Quattro Cilindri won only 3 races in 1953, so it was shelved in favor of the Otto Cilindri V8. The front forks of the 1953 Quattro Cilindri used a short leading-link as first employed on the Bicilindrica racer. There was hardly a frame as such, but tubes ran over the engine to the swingarm, with the engine acting as a stressed member. Ignition was by magneto, with 54hp @9000rpm, and a top speed of 140mph.



1956 Moto Guzzi V8 Grand Prix



1953 Quattro Cilindri



Below, a late model (c.1952) Moto Guzzi Bicilindrica: the amazing 120deg. V-twin OHC racer built from 1933-1951. The Bicilindrica was one of Moto Guzzi's most successful models, and belied the adage that twin-cylinder racers don't last as well as single-cylinders for fours. The Bicilindrica won just about every type of race during its production run: the 1935 Isle of Man TT, the Italian Championship six (out of nine) times between 1934-49, and many many other races around the world. The engine was remarkable, with a staggered crankpin that gave even firing and eliminated secondary vibration (there was no primary vibration), with OHC two-valve cylinder heads: the early version used aluminum crankcases with iron cylinder barrels and head, and later the cases were magnesium and the barrels/heads aluminum. Early versions produced 44hp with a 110mph top speed, the '35 TT model had 50hp and 125mph, while the post-war versions like this machine hit 130mph.

An extraordinary design, basically a doubled-up version of the factory's 250cc racer, with 68x68mm bore/stroke, single OHC with shaft-and-bevel drive. The OHC V-twin is among the rarest motorcycle engine configurations, as before WW2, only Moto Guzzi, Cyclone, and Koehler-Escoffier built them, and Moto Guzzi never sold them to the public. Even in the modern era, the first mass-production OHC V-twin was the Yamaha Virago of 1981!

What most competitors saw of the Bilindrica. The hand-beaten alloy tank is ergonomically designed for a crouched rider, as is the seat with integral bump stop faired into the fender.

Going back a little further in time, the Moto Guzzi 250 Compressore is a fascinating machine, and the only Moto Guzzi that employed supercharging. Why they didn't add a blower to other machines is a mystery, as this 250 was wildly successful, as Nello Pagani won 11 races at Monza alone in 1938-40. This was basically an OHC shaft-and-bevel single, their Monoalbero, with a Cozette supercharger, that produced 48hp for a 112mph top speed. Simply fantastic for the era, and far beyond.

The 250 Compressore of 1938 was also used post-war for a spree of record-breaking, and was good for 137mph. It was campaigned by the factory until 1959.

Love the 'backwards' Jaeger tachometer: the redline for this 1946 Gambalunga was 5800rpm, when it was producing 35hp, for a top speed of 110mph. The Gambalunga was a racer for factory-supported riders, and an improved version of the Condor and Dondolino production racers with pushrod motors.

I could, and have, stare at this for hours.



Paul d'Orléans is the founder of TheVintagent.com. He is an author, photographer, filmmaker, museum curator, event organizer, and public speaker. Check out his Author Page, Instagram, and Facebook.



1952 Moto Guzzi Bicilindrica



Moto Guzzi 250 Compressore



# THE SECRET STORY OF THE MOTO GUZZI ENGINE FOR THE FIAT 500

by Matteo Licata

Saying that the Moto Guzzi's v-twin engine and the Fiat 500 are two Italian motoring icons recognized worldwide is perhaps stating the obvious. But what if I told you that, in the early 1960s, a weird crossover between the two nearly happened?

Buckle up, as you're about to learn about the secret story of the Moto Guzzi engine designed for the Fiat 500.

## BOOM AND BUST

Our story begins sometime in the late 1950s. Italy was going through a period of explosive economic growth, during which more and more people each year could afford to buy Fiat's new small cars, the 600 and the 500.

But, although the country as a whole was doing very well for itself, the same couldn't be said about the Italian motorcycle industry, which had to all but reinvent itself.

Up to that point, Moto Guzzi and the rest of the Italian motorbike industry's "bread and butter" had been small-displacement 'bikes bought by those who could not afford an automobile: a market that, following the average Italian's increased living standards, was quickly drying up.

## WORKING FOR THE FUTURE

Moto Guzzi's technical department, headed by the engineer Giulio Cesare Carcano, got busy exploring new products and ventures for the company's future, one of which was a 90° v-twin designed in 1958 and meant to be tested on a Fiat 500 owned by engineer Carcano himself.

The idea was to somehow lure Fiat into offering a special, sporty version of the 500 equipped with engines supplied by Moto Guzzi.

Designed to mount straight onto the Fiat's standard flywheel and gearbox, the initial version of the 500cc Guzzi v-twin had a single chain-driven central camshaft and roof-type combustion chambers with parallel valves. Cooling air was provided by an axial fan on the crankshaft and a sheet metal cowling that directed the flow onto the cylinders and heads.

Following a successful trial period using Carcano's Fiat 500, the project picked up momentum around 1960, when the engine was redesigned with hemispherical combustion chambers, and its displacement was increased to 550cc first, then 600cc in 1961.

Fitted with a 34 mm double-choke Weber carburetor, the Moto Guzzi engine produced 27HP at a heady 6000Rpm: it may not sound like much, but it was a substantial increase over the regular Fiat 500D engine, rated at 17HP at 4400 Rpm.

## HIGH HOPES

At this point, Moto Guzzi's project had caught the eye of the motoring press, with the company openly discussing the idea of supplying between 10 to 40 engines a day to Fiat for a mooted high-performance derivative of the 500 capable of over 135 Km/h.

By 1963, a new and improved version of Guzzi's v-twin was running at the factory's bench, producing up to 32HP at 6000Rpm and performing so well once fitted to a Fiat 500D to convince Moto Guzzi's patron Enrico Parodi to finally get in touch with Fiat's boffins.

## THANKS, BUT NO THANKS

Fiat tested the prototype for three months, after which it was returned to Moto Guzzi with a positive note about the car's performance, but...

...nothing else.

With Karl Abarth already covering the market for go-faster Fiat derivatives with great success, it's fair to assume that Fiat's management had zero interest in dealing with Moto Guzzi, whose engine project was then consigned to the dustbin of history.



# FOR SALE

**2016 MOTO GUZZI GRISO 8V SE**  
1151 CC, 90-DEGREE TRANSVERSE AIR-COOLED V-TWIN,  
SHAFT DRIVE

**11,894 KMs (about 7,400 Miles)**

**CDN \$9500.00 (negotiable)**

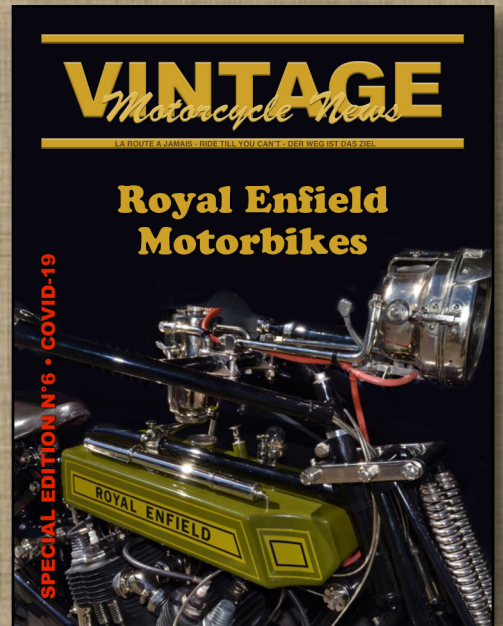
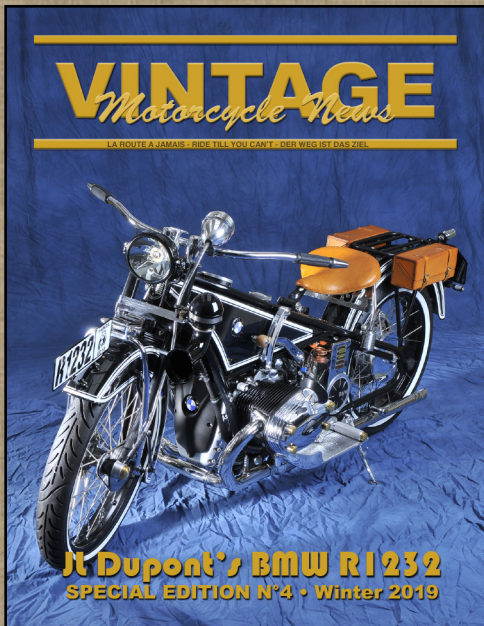
Extras included: Dart fairing, hand guards, handle bar riser for more comfortable riding position and C-Bow carrier.

Selling Hepco Becker hard bags separately.

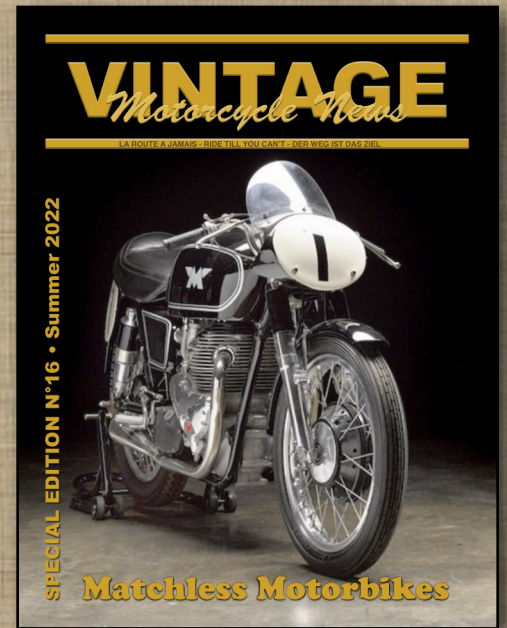
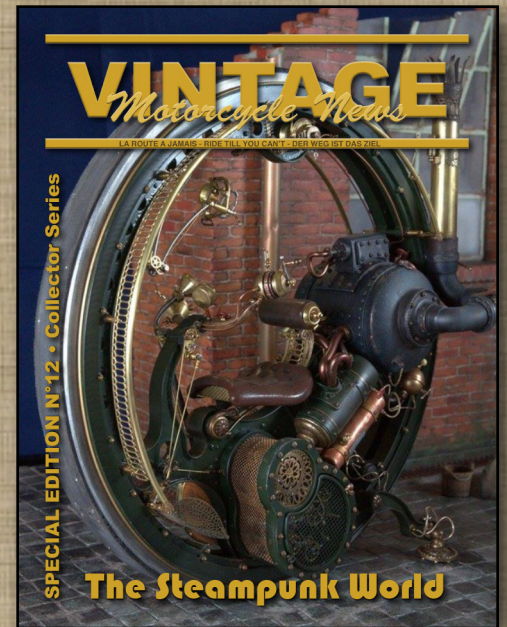
Contact: Eli at  
roadrunnerjoy@gmail.com











---

MISSING AN ISSUE?  
YOU CAN STILL GET IT AT  
[VMN.CANADA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:VMN.CANADA@GMAIL.COM)

---

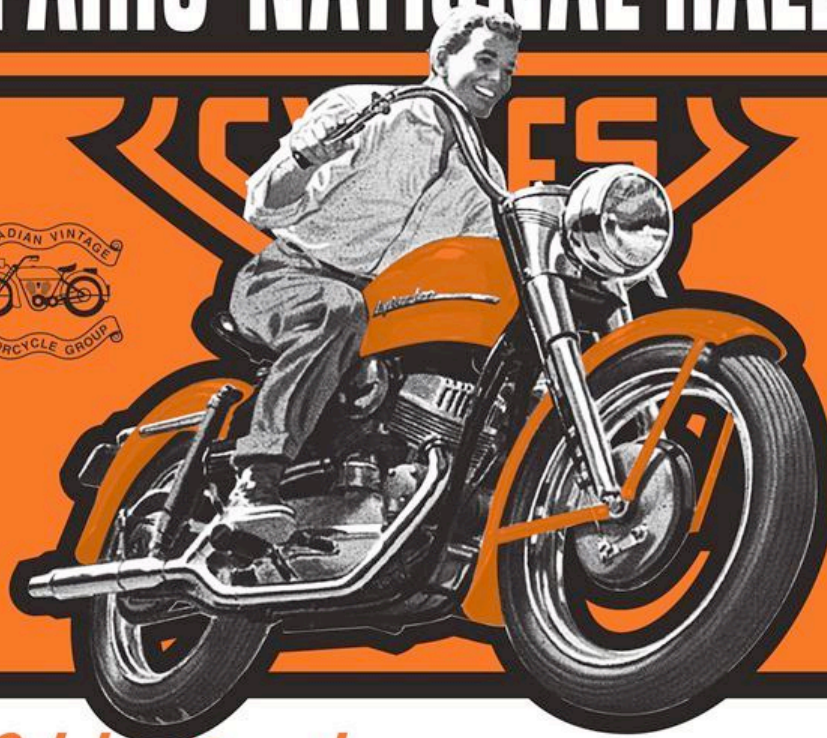


49<sup>th</sup>

ANNUAL

CVMG

PARIS-NATIONAL-RALLY



*Celebrating the*

**Harley-Davidson**

**1952 Model-K**

**June 16-18, 2023 - PARIS FAIRGROUNDS**

JOIN US! Day Admission 12-5 Friday, 9-5 Saturday\* CAMPING Friday 12pm - Sunday 12pm  
Pre-Register for early event entry 9am Friday - Sign up to volunteer just 2 hours of your time.

[CVMG.CA/PARISRALLY](http://CVMG.CA/PARISRALLY)



**CVMG PARIS NATIONAL RALLY**



# WANTED



LOOKING FOR PANTHER OWNER'S STORY  
OR ANECDOTE FOR A VERY SPECIAL  
PANTHER MOTORBIKE EDITION.

BE PART OF A VERY UNIQUE PUBLICATION  
THAT WILL BE SHARED WITH VINTAGE  
CLUBS AROUND THE WORLD.

PLS, SHARE THIS POSTER WITH ANYONE  
RIDING A PANTHER MOTORBIKE.

CONTACT  
[VMN.CANADA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:VMN.CANADA@GMAIL.COM)



# GALLERIA FO





# FOTOGRAFICA





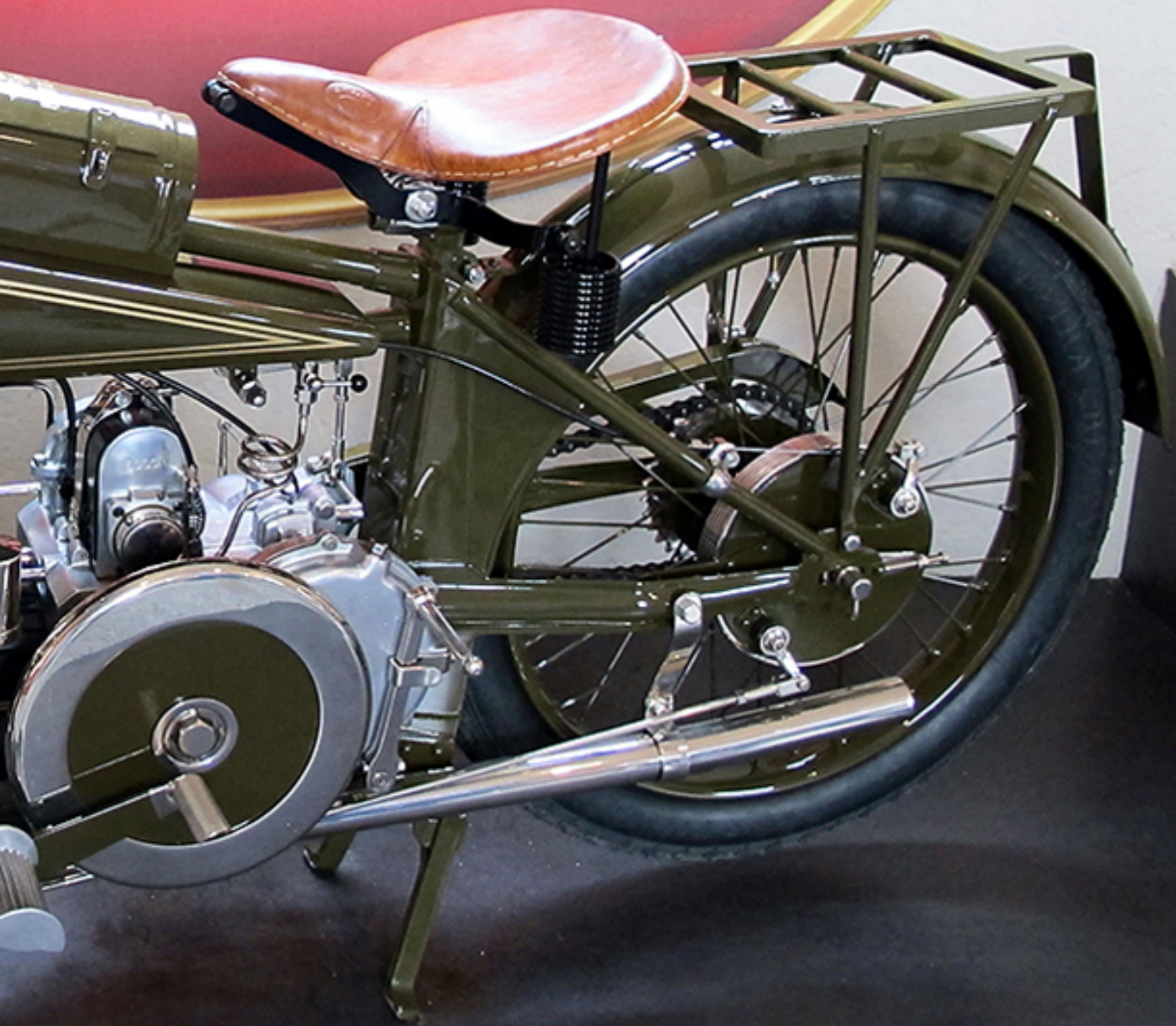


MOTO

MOTO GUZZI

GUZZI





















R NO  
DE  
12.00  
BIMEI  
5.00

MOTO SIDE





















MOTO GUZZI

MOTO GUZZI

MOTO GUZZI

V 74557









MOTO GUZZI





MOTO GUZZI

MOTO GUZZI  
V 700









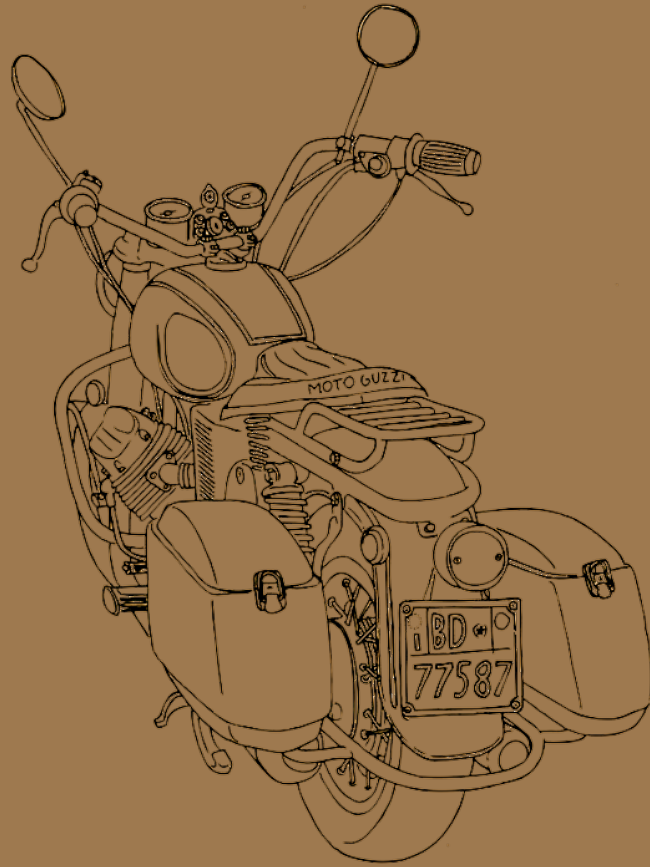












MMXXIII