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# Hosts with the Most!

by Joe Mann

There's something about motorcycling that draws us to each other—a sense of camaraderie based on friendships and freedom. On the road, that sense becomes magnified—a shared philosophic approach to life that's sometimes difficult to put a finger on but one we know is there.

Organizations like *Couch Surfing*, *AirBnB*, *Uber*, and *Freecycle.org* take advantage of the “sharing economy,” in which participants share or re-use their excess capacity of goods and services. *MotoStays* is a new travel and home-sharing community specifically for motorcyclists. Just about everyone has space to share, whether it's a guest room, a couch, an RV, or tent space out back. And, *MotoStays* has taken the sharing economy to a new level by formally organizing it around the world.

Founders Tad Haas and Gaila Gutierrez launched *MotoStays* in June 2014. On the road, through sometimes random meetings and connections, they had often found themselves with complete strangers.

Taking in the views of Acapulco Bay that inspired *MotoStays* as Tad and Gaila traveled through Mexico on their 14 month journey of North and Central America.

The result was lasting friendships and cultural experiences they would not have otherwise had.

Motorcyclists sharing homes with one another isn't new. It occurs naturally between riders, randomly and through word of mouth. *MotoStays'* site provides predictability and, as the network grows, riders will eventually be able to plan entire trips around the network.

*MotoStays* provides an alternative to campsites, hostels and hotels. Membership is based on the “pay it forward” model, in which stays between members are free. Whether traveler or host, there's no money exchanged. But as a host, there's no obligation unless it's convenient and comfortable. Tad and Gaila have also been compiling a “guest etiquette” they recommend. For example: When someone is hosting, it's proper to show appreciation by bringing a bottle of wine or contributing in some way, whether it's helping with cooking or cleaning up after a meal, or giving a small gift from your region. The idea is you're one and the same; sometimes the host, sometimes the traveler. The goal is to create an experience you'd like to have.

The cool thing about this community is that every dining table becomes the concierge's desk with locals able to provide regional knowledge and insights. These are the people who know the area best—the preferred roads, sights, restaurants and local repair shops or possibly even help with repairs right in their garages.

So exactly who is *MotoStays* designed for and how does it work? Tad and Gaila encourage every type of motorcyclist to become part of the community. Whether you ride an adventure bike, cruiser, sport tourer, sidecar, *CanAm* or scooter, it doesn't matter as long as it's around motorcycling.



# MotoStays™

**“As travelers, motorcyclists around the globe share a lot in common. There’s camaraderie in sharing stories and staying with others that adds a whole new dimension to travel. We aren’t strangers, we’re friends who just haven’t met yet.”**

**—Tad and Gaila**

“We believe one of the core benefits of the *MotoStays* platform is that we’re very targeted. We’re not trying to be a forum, a riding club or general interest site. Rather, *MotoStays* is intended to be the go-to resource for motorcycle home sharing. While other sites may have provisions for sharing, ours is focused. It’s our hope that someday other riding sites/clubs will work with us to create an integrated engine for home sharing. In doing so, we can reduce the workload and get the word out in a coordinated manner. Ultimately it’s scale that matters because being good at all things is really difficult. Most of all, it’s about the experience, the economics of collaborative consumption and the new friends we meet on the road or at home around our collective passion for riding.”—Tad and Gaila

## How it Works

It’s simple, just sign up for a membership and build a profile. *MotoStays* is not a social media site, but in a similar way its profiles provide short introductions as well as information on the spaces being shared, amenities (laundry, Wi-Fi, parking, pets, etc.) and other pertinent info. Your profile appears as a pin on a world map of the *MotoStays* website. Profiles are important as they establish expectations, minimizing the element of surprise. In addition to making connections with others, there is no cost, as stays between members are free, making *MotoStays* a great way to stretch the budget while making new friends.

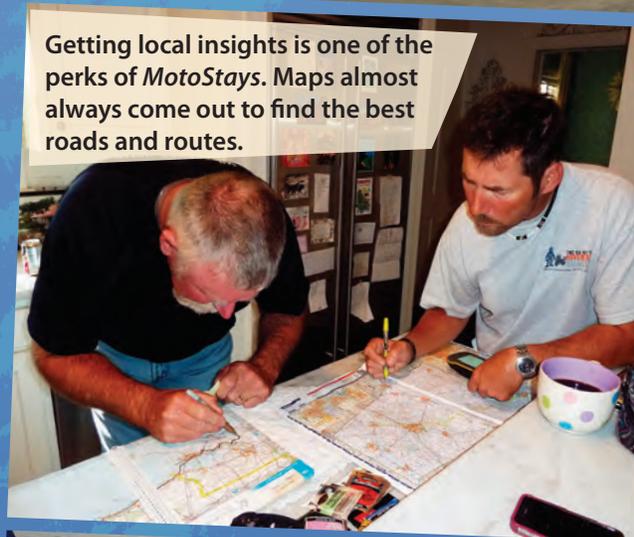
When crossing borders, where language barriers can be intimidating, members can also create “safe ports.” Knowing there’s a connection in the next country can give reassurance that there’s someone locally who is expecting you, speaks the language, knows the culture and laws, and can help if you find yourself in need. But it’s not just about foreign lands, there are plenty of opportunities in North America.

Since its launch, *MotoStays* has done a fantastic job creating a community that extends hospitality while enhancing the travel experience. Whether just for a weekend or a global excursion, *MotoStays* can help find places to stay with other members who understand the needs of motorcyclists.

The website and mobile-friendly services provide an exceptional user experience with an excellent visual database and connection details. In addition, there’s a built-in rating system where travelers and hosts can share their experiences. Members can use this information to help make



Sharing the *MotoStays* story at the *Horizons Unlimited* meeting at Mariposa, CA last September.



Getting local insights is one of the perks of *MotoStays*. Maps almost always come out to find the best roads and routes.



Tad and Gaila in their garage just outside Seattle, WA, which has been shared many times with travelers from around the world.

informed decisions when accepting guests or finding places to stay.

*MotoStays* currently has hundreds of members in 28 countries and is growing fast. Their goal is to gather like-minded travelers into a large-scale community, creating more opportunities worldwide. Based on the interest generated so far, it looks they’re off to a great start. You can learn more about *MotoStays* and how it works at **Motostays.com** or listen to a recent interview with Tad and Gaila on **lizjansen.com/travel-network/MotoStays.com** **ADV**