Good Day to Ride!

New Zealand 2016
7500km on BMW R1200GS
by Dirk Geiger

© dxp
www.doingXpedition.com
The Trip

The Trip

Hibiscus B&B – Bay of Islands – Cape Reinga
Cape Reinga – Kaitaia – Lake Taharoa
Lake Taharoa – Coromandel – Papaarokhi
Papaarokhi – Opotiki
Opotiki – East Cape – Tolaga Bay
Tolaga Bay – Lake Taupo – Turangi
Turangi – Tongariro NP – Mt Taranaki – Levin
Levin – Wellington Ferry

Picton Ferry – French Pass
French Pass – Ahaura
Ahaura – Pancake Rocks – Buller Gorge – Ahaura
Ahaura – Amberley Beach (Christchurch)
Amberley Beach – Lake Tekapo – Lake Pukaki Mt Cook
Tekapo Lake – Black Forest Road – Danseys Pass – Naseby
Naseby – Old Dunston Road – Kaka Point
Kaka Point – The Catlins – Te Anau
Te Anau – Milford Sound – Lake Gunn
Lake Gunn – Milford Sound – Queenstown
Queenstown – Skipper Canyon – Haast Pass
Haast Pass – Jackson Bay – Fox Glacier – Franz Josef Glacier
Franz Josef Glacier – Springfield

NZ Springfield – Leithfield Kiwi Motorcycle Rentals

www.doingXpedition.com

© dxp
Spending two years in China, Shanghai, was a great experience. The big city provided a lot on entertainment, food and culture. However, the access to nature was limited. There is a desire to touch, feel, breathe and see “green”. New Zealand seems a good place to visit, before moving back to Germany, Munich.

The timeline was fixed for Mid September to Mid October, just at the end of the New Zealand Winter. Traveling by my own pace, with the freedom of visiting destinations as they come - by motorcycle. Traveling by motorcycle and tent, the engagement with nature is quite intense.

Weather conditions were uncertain, so I packed for very cold to warm all required. Arriving in Auckland on 17th of September, the temperature was around 10°C. Comfortable, I was told. With T-Shirt and Flip-Flops, the locals certainly had a different understanding of comfortable then me.

I spend some days in and around Auckland to accommodate, before picking up my ride at Kiwi Motorcycle Rentals. A nice BMW R 1200 GS LC, with already 65k km on the clock, very well maintained and in good shape.

After re-packing and fitting the navigation, I drove up north to Cape Reinga. A long but easy ride with lots to see along the road. A wonderful day, with the sun shining and the engine providing a lively background noise.

As unpredictable the weather, the next eight days it was, more or less, raining continuously. Challenge of the day : find a route that is avoiding rainfall, chasing the sun. Setting up camp in rain is terrible. Soaking wet from the day’s ride, hands are cold and clumsy.

Due to the rain and clouds, unfortunately I probably missed a lot of interesting sights on the North Island. Cape Reinga, Coromandel, Bay of Plenty, Lake Taupo and Hell’s Gate were great places to visit.

Taking the Ferry from Wellington to Picton brought me to the South Island. Along the Queen Charlotte Drive the winding road took me to French Pass. The gravel road was muddy and slippery, adventurous. As so often, I was the only one at the camp and all the village was still closed down.

Further south, the weather was still wet, and getting colder. The east coast should be more dry for the coming days. Via the Lewis Pass I crossed the island towards Christchurch. Following some of the off road tours from Twisting Throttle, the 32-Random Spur was a real challenge.

Staying on the east side of the Southern Alps, the tour went to Lake Pukaki and the Mr Cook. Some heavy weather catch up with me. Like a surreal scene, the smaragd green lake shining in front of a deep dark background and a rainbow all over.

A big highlight was the Black Forest Road and the Old Dunstan Road. The first one private owned, takes the bike on a 35km gravel road through some harsh mountain environment. The Old Dunstan Road is a official road, however it is closed during winter and only suitable for all terrain vehicles. From mountains to desert like flats, the road is a real adventure.

The Catlins provide fine roads along the coast, passing Slope Point and than turning north to the famous Milford Sound, where I took a boat cruise. A big Fergeburger brings back the energy.

Queenstown is a hype. All adrenalin kickin activities are centered around this town. The Jet Boat tour is screaming. The Skippers Canyon a thrill.

Over the Haast Pass to the wild West Coast. Jackson Bay with a fantastic view to the mountain range. Fox Glacier and Franz-Josef Glacier, the last two big sights on the way back to Christchruch.

7520km. Rain, snow, sunshine, montains, deserts, lakes and coastlines. Three weeks of soul finding and adventure. doingX, that is!
North Island, Helena Bay
Blue to Grey, and some light spots
North Island, Okjato
Finding a dry place on the small Ferry crossing the Waikare Inlet

Later at camp, drying the gear by applying microwaves
North Island, Cape Reinga

Cape Reinga/Te Rerenga Wairua, is the northwesternmost tip of the Aupouri Peninsula, at the northern end of the North Island of New Zealand.
Inferno Pools

The water in these pools - (Sodom and Gomorrah Pools, Infants Pools, Spraying Pools) exceeds the boiling point of 100°C due to naturally occurring minerals.

North Island, Hell's Gate

© dxp
Hells Gate geothermal attraction features boiling hot pools and erupting waters with temperatures in excess of 100 degrees Celsius; steaming fumaroles; hot water lakes; sulphur crystals and deposits; New Zealand’s largest active mud volcano; Southern Hemisphere’s largest hot water fall and even examples of land coral.
North Island, Tolaga Bay
The region around the bay is rugged and remote, and for many years the only access to the town was by boat.
North Island, Tolaga Bay
Drift wood on the shallow beach

© dxp
North Island
Muddy and wet!
North Island
Daily breakfast, Coffee and Cake.
North Island
A bucket of gold where the rainbow ends

© dxp
North Island, near Lake Taupo
Camping in a remote rain forest. A plastic canvas as shelter.
North Island, near Lake Taupo
Cooking a meal and having a wine to warm up.
It is getting dark and cold.
And the possum likes a share of the meal as well,
waking me up in the middle of the night.
South Island, French Pass Marlborough Sounds
Gravel road towards the French Pass
South Island, French Pass Marlborough Sounds
Who’s that? Not too many visitors at this time of the year.
Te Aumiti / French Pass is a narrow and treacherous stretch of water that separates D’Urville Island, at the north end of the South Island of New Zealand, from the mainland coast.
Lake Brunner is the largest lake in the northwestern South Island of New Zealand. The Māori name for the lake, Kotuku Moana, means "Sea of herons".
South Island, Camp near Lake Tekapo
Sunrise wakes me up in the morning. Looks like a “Good day to ride!”
South Island, Lake Tekapo
Sunset with great view of the Southern Alps
South Island, Black Forest Road Ride is on a private access road so permission of the owners is required and because of the altitude reached there is often snow and the road is then closed. Access is requested by phoning the station where they will advise if the road is currently open and if so they will give you a security code for the locked gate at the southern end.
South Island, Black Forest Road
Not so much of a forest?!
South Island, Black Forest Road
A fantastic adventure ride and a spectacular view.
Not so much of a forest?!
South Island, near Lake Pukaki
Rain, storm, snow.
This gravel road ride was some.
South Island, Lake Pukaki
Driving to Mt. Cook
Amazing view, isn’t it?!
South Island, Tasman Lake
Freezing cold and windy. Not spending much time here.
The Tasman Glacier arrives here.
Fragments of ice braking off, floating in the lake
South Island Sheep. Yes, there are a lot on New Zealand.
Old Dunstan Road, also known as The Dunstan Trail, is a off-road track located in the Otago Region. The road ranges from a sealed road to a graveled track. It’s 46 km long. Closed for about four months each winter. This trail passes through remote areas, so you need to be prepared.
South Island, Slope Point
New Zealand's most southerly point.
South Island, Always drive left
Most accidents happen with tourists driving on the “wrong” side of the road.
South Island, Milford Sound Hwy, Fiordland National Park.

Being late, on the way to Milford Sound. There isn’t much space for camping, and no place for a tent at all. So, had to ride back to the nearest campsite off the national park.
Milford Sound / Piopiotahi is a fiord in the south west of New Zealand’s South Island, within Fiordland National Park, Piopiotahi (Milford Sound) Marine Reserve, and the Te Wahipounamu World Heritage site.
South Island, Milford Sound Hwy, Fiordland National Park
For a change, getting on a boat ride through this famous sound.
South Island, Milford Sound Hwy, Fiordland National Park. For a change, getting on a boat ride through this famous sound.
South Island, Be aware of the Kea
Kea are a protected species. They are the world’s only alpine parrot, and one of the most intelligent birds. To survive in the harsh alpine environment kea have become inquisitive and nomadic social birds - characteristics which help them to find and utilize new food sources.
South Island
Gravel roads and river crossings are part of the game.
The town is built around an inlet called Queenstown Bay on Lake Wakatipu, a long thin Z-shaped lake formed by glacial processes, and has spectacular views of nearby mountains.
The Fergburger is a must!

South Island, Queenstown (Māori: Tāhuna)

© dxp
South Island, Skippers Canyon
The Skippers Canyon Road is today one of New Zealand’s better known scenic roads and unbelievably scary. This gravel road, with a length of 16.5 miles, carved by hand by miners over 140 years ago is made from a very narrow cut in the middle of a sheer cliff face. It’s a road so dangerous that your rental car insurance won’t be honored if you drive on it.
South Island, Jet Boat
A ride on the wild side

© dxp
South Island, Camping near Haast Pass

© dxp
South Island, Camping near Haast Pass
Beautiful morning.
South Island, West Coast
Crossing the Haast Pass, arriving on the wild side of New Zealand, the West Coast.
South Island, Jackson Bay

South of Haast, the coastline turns westward along a 24 kilometre, gently curving bay to Jackson Head. This headland provides shelter from the prevailing wind direction, and here a fishing harbour has survived since the early pioneer days of seal hunting.
South Island, Fox Glacier / Te Moeka o Tuawe

The Glacier is a 13-kilometre-long (8.1 mi) temperate maritime glacier located in Westland Tai Poutini National Park on the West Coast of New Zealand.
South Island, Franz Josef Glacier/Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere Descends from the tops of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana into rainforest close to sea level.

© dxp
South Island, Springfield
The last night was really freezing!
Model: R 1200 GS

Engine:
- Four-valve per cylinder, double overhead camshaft, wet sump lubrication
- 1,170 cc
- 101 mm
- 73 mm

Compression Ratio: 12.5:1

Alternator: Three-phase 510 W generator

Battery: 12 V / 11 Ah, maintenance-free

Frame: Continuously welded steel bridge-type frame

Suspensions:
- BMW Telelever, 37 mm, central spring strut
- Card aluminum single-sided swing arm with BMW EVO Paralax, 4WD strut (travel related damping), spring pre-load hydraulically adjustable (continuously variable) via handwheel, rebound damping adjustable via handwheel

Suspension Travel:
- Front: 7.5 inches
- Rear: 7.9 inches

Wheelbase: 59.3 inches

Steering head angle: 64.5 degrees

Clutch: Multi-plate wet clutch, hydraulically operated

Transmission: Constant mesh 5-speed gearbox with helical cut gears

Final Drive: Shaft drive 2.91:1

Dimensions:
- Weight (incl. fuel): 375.0 inches
- Weight (incl. mirrors): 55.9 inches
- Seat height: 33.5 inches / 34.3 inches
- Unladen: 73.5 inches / 75.2 inches
- Inner leg curve: 125+ mph
- Fuel Tank Capacity: 5.3 Gallons
- Fuel Reserve: Approx. 1 Gallon
- Fuel Economy: 57 mpg at a constant 55 mph
- Recommended Fuel: Premium Unleaded
- Curb Weight: 525 Pounds
- Permitted Total Weight: 990 Pounds
- Pay_load (with standard equipment): 467 Pounds

Brake, Front: Dual floating 305 mm disc brakes
- Four-piston fixed calipers

Brake, Rear: Single 276 mm disc brake, dual-piston floating caliper

BMW Motorrad Integral ABS (part integral, can be switched off)
Good Day to Ride!
Random Pictures
Look for trains.