(MTRA) Motorcycle Touring Riders of Albuquerque

Motorcycle touring offers riders the opportunity to enjoy the sights and sounds of the open road as part of a shared, social experience. It's a great way to connect with others and have fun. At (MTRA) Motorcycle Touring Riders of Albuquerque, we provide the atmosphere for an unforgettable ride, while our members bring the excitement. For those new to group riding, it may feel a bit restrictive at first. The desire for speed, freedom of lane movement, and making your own rules must be set aside to ensure the safety of everyone in the group. In short, come prepared—with patience, a well-maintained motorcycle, and appropriate riding gear—to make the most of this enjoyable experience.

Who We Welcome

At MTRA, we're looking for riders who share our passion for the open road and our commitment to safety and camaraderie. We welcome those who truly love to ride, who are dedicated to safe and responsible riding practices, and who enjoy the touring experience. Our ideal members appreciate the benefits of group riding, respect the law, and strive to make a positive impact in their communities. We value riders who want to help enhance the image of motorcycling and who are eager to explore historic sites and points of interest.

In 2026, we've expanded our horizons by incorporating several ADV (Adventure) rides into our schedule. Our experience shows that ADV riders share many of the same principles we hold dear—safety, respect, and a love for exploration. Whether you prefer the smooth pavement of touring routes or the rugged terrain of adventure riding, MTRA offers opportunities to connect, ride, and discover together.

Our Expectations

To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone, we ask that members ride sober and free from the influence of alcohol or drugs, maintain a steady and safe pace rather than racing from place to place, and use respectful language to foster a positive atmosphere. We also expect members to support the group's mission rather than seeking personal gain.

Five Types of Rides

1. **Breakfast Rides**
   We meet in the morning for breakfast, followed by a short ride to a local destination. These rides are typically less than 100 miles and take place on the first Saturday of each month.

2. **Day Rides**
   Day rides involve traveling to a specific destination, such as a museum, state park, landmark, or historic site. We usually enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, though sometimes we opt for a picnic. After exploring, we return to Albuquerque, stopping approximately every 100 miles. Scenic roads are preferred, but we will use freeways when necessary. These rides occur on the third Saturday of each month.

3. **Weekend Rides**
   Weekend rides take us to destinations that cannot be reached in a single day. These are typically three-day trips: we travel on Friday, spend Saturday sightseeing, and return on Sunday.

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4. **Extended Rides**
   Extended Rides Last five days or more. We generally spend two days traveling to our destination, two days exploring, and one day returning home.

5. **Adventure (ADV) Rides**
   In 2026, we've added Adventure rides to our schedule. This includes one Adventure weekend over Memorial Day and several ADV day rides on the third Saturday of the month.

During the off-season in February and March, MTRA offers two valuable opportunities for riders who want to improve their knowledge and skills.

- **February 7, 2026 – Group Riding Course**
  This course focuses on the principles and best practices of riding safely in a group, ensuring every rider feels confident and prepared.

- **March 7, 2026 – Road Captain Course**
  Are you a natural leader? Do you prefer to be out front or take charge of planning rides? Becoming a Road Captain offers many benefits, including the responsibility of guiding the group from the front or providing support from the back—two of the most respected positions in any ride.

MTRA not only provides Road Captain training but also offers ongoing support to help you succeed in this role. Certified Road Captains play a vital part in maintaining safety, organization, and enjoyment for all riders. If you're ready to lead and make a difference, consider taking the MTRA Road Captain Certification Course and join a community that values leadership and teamwork. Contact Mark if interested.

Ride Safety and Etiquette

1. **Why do we offer training classes?** Think of it this way, holding a door for someone is second nature, but riding etiquette isn't always as obvious. Safety and etiquette go hand in hand, and riding in a group is not inherently safer than riding alone unless everyone understands and follows the same guidelines.
   Our classes help riders know what to expect and what is expected of them. They also provide an opportunity for open discussion, ensuring everyone is on the same page. At MTRA, we are dedicated to creating an environment where everyone—road captains, sweeps, and riders alike—can have fun, enjoy the sights, and ride safely.
   When everyone understands the code of politeness, it fosters a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere for all. These are not rigid rules, but simple guidelines designed to make group riding safe and pleasant for everyone.

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1. **3Why Do We Recommend CB Radios?** Not required. Good communication makes every ride safer and more enjoyable. CB radios are a reliable choice because they don't require pairing with other riders and are based on proven technology used daily by millions of truckers. Just turn it on, and it works. Unlike open-mic systems, CB radios provide clear, controlled communication without constant background chatter. While it's possible to manage a ride without CB radios, having them makes everything easier—and a lot more fun. Rider headsets like Cardo or Sena can be used in certain situations, but they come with challenges. These systems often require time-consuming pairing, can disconnect unexpectedly, and because they're open-mic, one rider's mic issue can disrupt the entire group, cause frustration and spoil the experience. CB radios eliminate these headaches, keeping communication simple and dependable.

2. **Why do we plan our rides out a year ahead of time?** Planning rides well in advance is essential for creating a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone. Many of us need to request time off from work ahead of schedule, and having a clear calendar makes that process easier. It also allows members to coordinate their riding plans without interfering with family commitments, a critical part of maintaining a healthy, balanced life. By organizing our rides early, we give everyone the opportunity to prepare, prioritize, and look forward to the adventures ahead. Advanced planning ensures that our rides are not only well-attended but also stress-free and enjoyable for all.

    2. **Why Do We Line Up Before a Ride?** Lining up before a ride serves an important purpose. It gives the Road Captain an opportunity to ensure that all motorcycles are started and ready to go. This quick check also allows the Road Captain to assess the makeup of the group and identify any potential issues before the ride begins. A proper lineup helps maintain organization, safety, and a smooth start for everyone.

    3. **Why Do We Inspect Our Motorcycles Before a Ride?** A quick inspection before every ride is essential for safety. Something as simple as a flat tire can lead to an accident—and if it happens in the middle of a group, it could put everyone at risk. Checking your motorcycle's condition ensures that issues are caught early, preventing breakdowns and keeping the ride safe and enjoyable for all participants.
    4. **Why Do We Ask Riders to Wear Helmets?** Helmets save lives. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), helmets were responsible for saving the lives of 1,859 Americans in 2016. At MTRA, we strongly encourage riders to follow the principle of ATGATT—All the Gear, All the Time.
    5. **Why Do We Ride Staggered?** Riding in a staggered formation—alternating between the left and right tracks within a lane—creates a safety cushion for every rider. This formation provides additional space and reaction time if something unexpected happens ahead. By maintaining this pattern, we reduce the risk of collisions and ensure a smoother, safer ride for the entire group.
    6. **Why Maintain 2 Seconds Minimum and 4 Seconds Maximum?** Keeping a safe following distance is critical for group riding. A minimum of two seconds between bikes helps riders

stay alert and provides enough time to react to sudden changes. At the same time, we avoid spreading out too far—more than four seconds—because it creates gaps that allow cars and trucks to infiltrate the group, which can lead to dangerous situations. Maintaining this balance keeps the group tight, organized, and safe.

7. **Why Do We Ride the Speed Limit?** The speed limit is the maximum set by law, and riding at or near it keeps the group safe and avoids complaints about going too fast or too slow. Occasionally, safety requires slight adjustments—such as passing a truck or RV or preventing risky behavior from faster traffic behind us. In these cases, speeds may fluctuate between 5 mph below and 10 mph above the limit. Our goal is always safety, consistency, and respect for the law.
8. **Why Don't We Leave Anyone Behind?** Because we care about our fellow riders and are committed to their safety. That's the very purpose of riding in a group—to look out for one another, ensure everyone reaches the destination safely, and enjoy the journey together.
9. **Why Do We Ask Riders Not to Drink Alcohol or Use Drugs When Riding with Us?** Safety is our top priority—for every individual and the entire group. Riding under the influence of alcohol or drugs greatly increases the risk of an accident, which can endanger not only the rider but everyone around them. Staying sober ensures a safe, enjoyable experience for all and reflects the responsibility and respect we value at MTRA.