

CLASSIC DRIVER

Five Bikes to Kick-Start the Motorcycle Season

Lead

The seemingly never-ending wait is over, and spring has finally sprung. Warmer weather and cloudless skies mean the motorcycle season is here too, so we now present five bikes on which to chase the sun...

Spanish School: Ossa Enduro 250





For those wanting to take their spring fever off the beaten track, the 250cc Ossa Pioneer might prove the ideal steed. The Spanish manufacturer has recently been reincarnated (after collapsing in 1982), but its glory days in the late 60s and early 70s saw the company excel in dirt trials and motocross. One such triumph was Mick Andrews' win at the 1972 European Trials Championship on a Pioneer 250 – you can now replicate his efforts (or plough the back garden) on your very own, newly restored Pioneer.

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Spring Forward: Vincent Rapide Series B



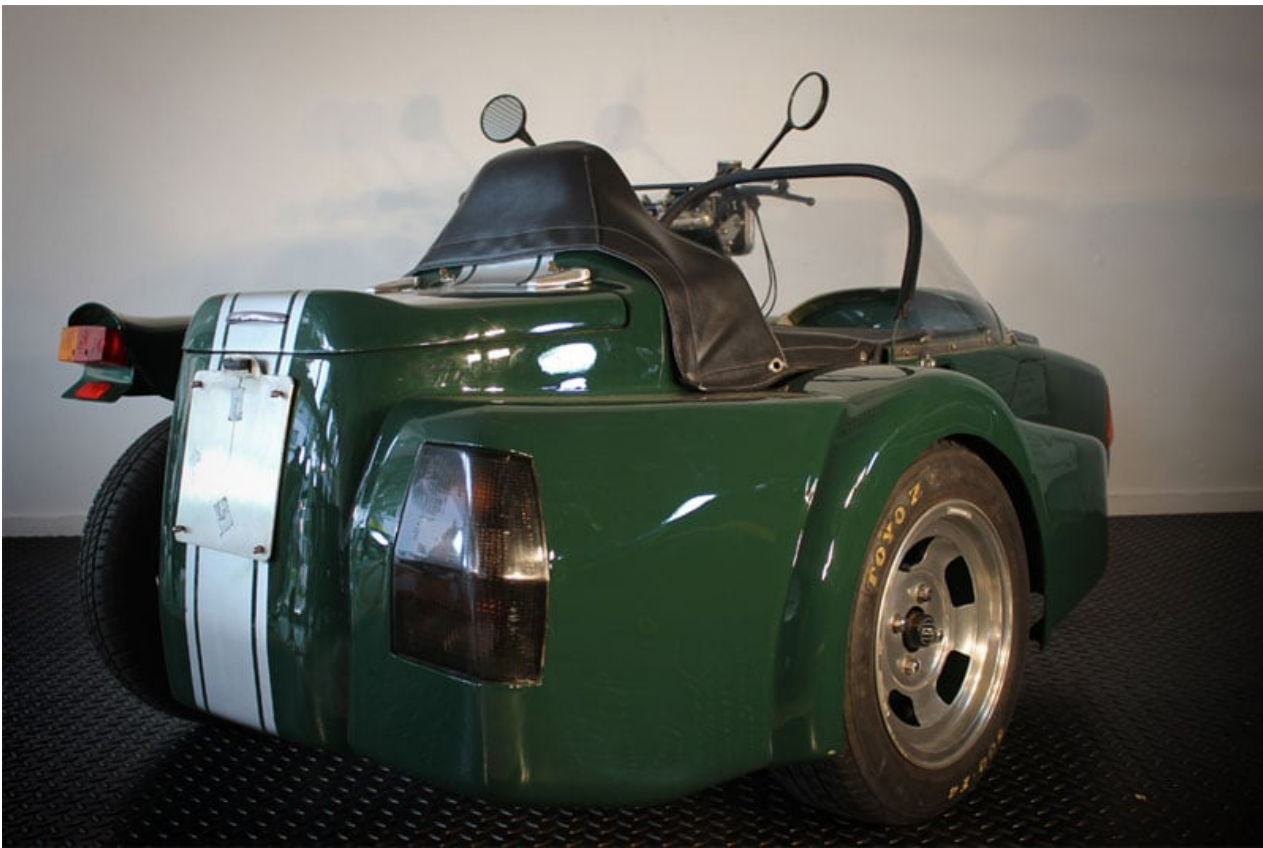


Vincent was known for making some of the fastest and most advanced motorcycles of its time. The post-War Rapide – true to its name – was genuinely capable of cruising at 100mph, and boasted features that wouldn't become common on motorcycles for another several decades. Take, for example, the engine's role as a stressed member of the frame, or the rear suspension which pivoted through the crankcase to allow for such a short wheelbase. Particularly appropriate for some spring cruising is the infinitely customisable seating position, and the foot-operated gearchange – a welcome alternative to the so-called 'suicide clutch' arrangement used by other bikes of the same era.

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Primavera per Due: Moto Guzzi 1000 SP





Many will agree that the most enjoyable moments in life are the ones you share. Therefore, the pleasant experience of a wind-in-the-hair sprint towards the sun would become substantially more so on this Moto Guzzi 1000 SP of 1983 vintage. You'd have a near-70bhp two-cylinder four-stroke between your legs; she'd have your ear, and a windscreen to protect her preened locks – what more could a couple want?

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Feelin' Groovy: Lambretta LD 125 in Gulf colours





If the opening lyrics 'slow down, you move too fast' bring a smile to your face, there's a good chance this little Lambretta will too. Of the same generation (1975, to be exact) as the Simon and Garfunkel hit, it's recently been restored and given the legendary Gulf paint scheme. If ever there was a perfect song/scooter combination, surely this would be it?

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Royalty on the Road: Harley Davidson Road King





Roger Miller's 1965 single 'King of the Road' might have had different connotations, but its Texan disposition still makes it an apt theme tune for the Harley Road King. Sit astride the saddle – more of a vibrating throne in nature – and you'll enjoy the same freedom as the song's protagonist. This 1996 model has been customised to such an extent that apparently "virtually no components from the original bike remain" – apart from the colossal 1.3-litre engine, we're guessing.

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Photos: Classic Driver dealers

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