

THE 2012 CVO

Road Glide Custom



Story: Gary Koz Mraz Photos: Ron Sinoy

Each year Harley-Davidson builds special limited edition bikes at its top secret (CVO) Custom Vehicle Operations compound. A select team is charged with creating the brand's most elite motorcycles. The distinctive Shark Nosed twin-headlight is unique to Road Glide as is the fixed fairing which is mounted to the frame instead of the forks. The frame takes the load off the fairing, not the suspension resulting in a nimbler, more aggressive riding motorcycle. My Maple Metallic with Vivid Black & Real Smoke Graphics looks ominously dark in daylight and black as night and the cool Willie G brushed nickel skull medallion peers into oncoming adventures.

The Road Glide is supremely suited for long distance cruises. Its 110 Twin-Cam V-twin motor generates a tire shredding 122 lb-ft of torque, twist the throttle and this beast hits triple-digit speeds in a heartbeat. 15 percent more torque than even their TC-103 engine. The black powdercoating, Screamin' Eagle logo and Heavy Breather conical air intake are unique to this CVO. Showa adjustable rear shocks replace of the standard air shock so you can adjust the suspension for your weight. Road Glide Customs new CVO fairing windscreen not only looks cool offers amazing wind protection. She purrs along politely until you twist the throttle producing serious thrust and an angry growl through the big 4-inch exhausts.

I rode her through Azusa Canyon road, through the San Gabriel's and out to Palm Springs, a beautiful 200-mile ride. Harley ditched the trunk on this Road Glide Custom CVO in favor for a streamlined look. The saddlebags have ample space for weekend trips but for distance touring do offer a color matched optional Tour-Pak trunk. The stitched seat is acceptable but the passenger pillion leaves a little to be desired for 200-mile treks (so girlfriend says).



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The Road Glide wears minimal chrome. Instead, this CVO has many parts sprayed black for a meaner look and even the clutch and brake lines are braided-black stainless steel. Sporting exclusive 19-inch front and 18-inch rear "Agitator" wheels that you can't get on any other bike. Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) and cruise control are standard equipment. CVO gave the Road Glide Custom a powerful 200-watt Harmon-Kardon stereo system with six speakers. Very audible at 85mph and every one of these bikes comes loaded with its own 8 GB iPod that plugs into a holder located in one of the saddlebags.

So is the 2012 CVO Road Glide Custom a dream come true? Unequivocally yes, with a few criticisms. The Heavy Breather cramped this 6'1" rider's right leg and the stylish stitched seats suffer from the typical fashion vs. function dilemma for serious 300-milers. My biggest bitch is the gimmicky gas gauge. I get the esthetic, trying to match the totally cool recessed gas cap, but it misses the mark on function. Not only is the LED semicircle difficult to see in the reflection of the daylight sun.

That said the 2012 CVO Roadglide hits the mark squarely with exceptional looks and style. A thunderous power plant that hits the road running and all the bells and whistles Harley has to offer, right out of the starting gate. Production of this Harley's factory custom bagger is limited to 2000 units, each with an MSRP of \$30,699. It's available in Maple Metallic/ Vivid Black with Real Smoke Graphics (as tested) Candy Cobalt/Twilight Blue with Real Smoke Graphics and White Gold Pearl/ Starfire black with Real Smoke Graphics. An optional color-matched Tour Pak is available.



THE STUFF OF DREAMS



Story: Gary Koz Mraz **Photos:** Ron Sinoy

The CVO moniker is the pinnacle of all things Harley-Davidson. Custom Vehicle Operations pulls out all the stops once a year and a select few models get the star treatment. It's the stuff dreams are made of. I rolled out to Huntington Beach to shoot this beauty with photographer extraordinaire Ron Sinoy. He's photographed dreams that have graced the pages of QT over the last 6 years. On a leisurely Sunday ride my lady and I hit Main Street and parked in front of Coaches Deli for a few photos.

"Nice 2013 Road Glide CVO custom" barked a rugged sandy haired man lunching with his girlfriend outside. "Yes, that it is, it's Harley's most expensive motorcycle, over 30K" I reply. "Actually, he confidently retorts, its 32,999.00 and that's before tax, license, freight and California emissions, oh yeah and the tour pack is an optional accessory". Who the hell is this guy? "Harley only makes 2000 of these a year" I say nonchalantly, testing his resolve. "Actually, 1485 and it could be years before Harley offers a CVO Road Glide again". This man has my attention.

Enter Thomas Corey. Turns out I was sitting on his motorcycle, not literally but figuratively. This was the motorcycle Thomas had been gloating over, poring over each and every detail on HarleyDavidson.com. He even had the HD CVO catalog open to the very image of this bike in his living room at home and read and re-read it again and again. He knew every minor detail; he knew

more about this motorcycle than me and this very one was his color, Roman Gold and Burnt Emerald with Edge Graphics.

"I've never seen it in real life" Tom purrs as he prowls around the beast, examining every detail. "I saw one at Cooks Corner a few months ago but it was Diamond Dust and Obsidian with Palladium Graphics, this one is the color I'm getting" Somehow I believe Thomas. He seems like a regular guy, real friendly, no airs. I envision owners of Harley's most expensive prize draped in 2 thousand dollars worth of brand new Harley leathers, smoking cigars while sipping brandy at the Ritz Carleton Laguna Nigel.

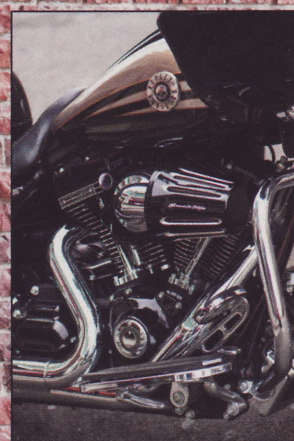
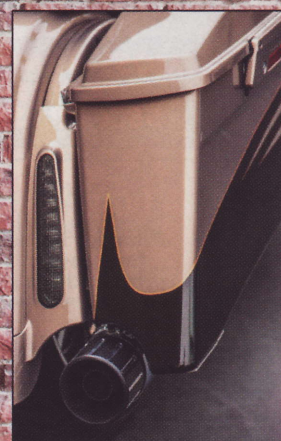
"I've wasted a whole lot more money than 33K ." Tom states, and he has a point. "I own three bikes right now, if I sold them all I could pay cash." He has another good point. He waltzes me over to a stunning 2001 blue and white Road King that looks brand new; this man takes care of his motorcycles. He also has a 2001 Heritage Softail and a custom Chopper, all purchased from Junior at Lifestyle Cycles in Anaheim Ca. A retired heavy equipment operator, Thomas Corey is making a damn good case for regular guys actually owning such an extraordinary motorcycle. There are a few left around the country and he knows exactly where they are; he just needs to pull the trigger. I offer to sell him this one for 20 grand cold cash. Unfortunately filing off the VIN on a bike this unique just won't cut it.

The heart and soul of the CVO Road Glide

Custom is the Twin Cam 110 V-Twin and the Screamin' Eagle Heavy Breather intake. It's got a healthy 4-inch bore teamed to a 4.38-inch stroke generating 122 lb-ft of torque within the granite-colored heads. The cooling fin tips have been machined and contrast well with the gloss black rocker covers and Harley has overall maintained an attractive balance between black and chrome in the engine department. The tank console has a light-up Harley medallion located in the top-center portion. The gas cap sits flush to the tank and deploys with a simple push down on the cap. The two-tone paint scheme started in the front fairing is carried over on the tank and is also teamed with the Willie G Harley skull emblem, designed by the venerable Willie G. The diamond-patterned leather seat is wide in the middle before tapering off to the passenger pillion which pops off easily for solo action. As Thomas said, the rear seat Tour Pac and passenger back rest are optional accessories, but what Mama wants, Mama gets.



S: 2013 CVO ROAD GLIDE CUSTOM



"You finance it man, Thomas proclaims, just like your motor home or backyard family pool, if it's your dream, live it, you only get to ride the big blue ball once."
Dude, I'm sold, where do I sign?

The CVO Road Glide Custom upgrades to a Showa adjustable rear shock in place of the standard air shock. An air valve located between the left saddlebag and rear fender is hand-

adjustable for preload but requires removal of the saddlebag. The front is anchored by a 41.3mm fork that does a splendid job of keeping the tire on the road. With a fairly low center of gravity thanks to a 26.6-inch seat height and a 64-inch spread between wheels and you've got a bike with surprisingly good handling for a bagger. Thanks to rider floorboards that are placed up and out of the way there 30 degrees of lean angle.

With a dry weight of 817 pounds the Brembo 300mm dual floating rotors on the front are squeezed by four-piston fixed calipers. At the lever you can feel the pads biting into the discs with a modest pull and ample stopping power is applied. The fixed 300mm rear also has a 32mm fixed four-piston caliper and again grips tight. Grab a handful and you'll activate the standard ABS which still delivers a strong pulse to the rider's foot.

On the list of new features on the 2013 CVO Road Glide Custom is a hydraulic nine-plate wet clutch with a high performance assist and slip design. The new "Assist & Slip Clutch Pack" makes for light action at the clutch lever and it's designed for longer wear. The clutch engages early in the release of the lever and helps keep the heavy motorcycle manageable at lower speeds. I have been known to bitch about the twitchy nature of the CVO 110 and tranny but this bike felt silky smooth. Somewhere along the line, they've tweaked it for the better.

Another feature of the CVO Glide is its Engine Idle Temperature Management System (EITMS).

This helps cut down the inner thigh-roasting heat coming off Harley's V-Twin by cutting fuel and fire to the rear cylinder when idling. It can be turned off and on by the rider at a full stop. All that's required of the rider is to rotate the throttle in a clockwise position all the way to a stop and as it bumps the cruise switch, it essentially stops the burn in the cylinder and reduces heat transfer to the rider. EITMS will activate once the engine temperature exceeds 284-degrees Fahrenheit.

The CVO Road Glide Custom LED headlamp is awesome, called the Daymaker. It blows away conventional headlights as you knew them. *"WARNING Shameless self promotion"* I am the Midnight Rider, I just released a book about motorcycling at night (See *Midnight Rider on a Graveyard Run*, on Amazon) These headlights are a night riding game changer. According to the numbers Harley provided, the Daymaker distance is boosted 30 feet over halogen lamps, increasing from 315 feet to 345. Spread gets even better gains in the form of a 55-foot wider spread pattern, jumping up to 120 feet over the standard 65-foot measurement. Harley achieved this while reducing power consumption by a claimed 50%. After riding at night on this bike I will now proclaim loud and clear that Daymaker headlights should be on every touring Harley.

Thomas calls some friends to come down and see "His Motorcycle" and his buddies get to sit on his bike. We talk bikes and riding as Ron shoots away. We listen to 110 decibels of Van Halen and the 110 c.i. V-Twin roar and purr of the custom



This CVO is in motion just standing still

A FAREWELL LAP: HARLEY DAVIDSON ROAD GLIDE 1998-2009

DISCLAIMER: This information in no way represents a public release by Harley Davidson, its strictly speculation and opinion of the author.

I don't mind goodbyes, probably because I say a lot of them. When you travel, meeting and leaving new found friends is a way of life and inevitably..... you'll see them again. So when the dealer memo hit about the demise of the Road Glide in 2010, I wasn't that surprised... but if you've ever wanted one ...there's no time like the present.



The last lap or the first?

Introduced in 1998 the Road Glide is H-D's only shark nosed, frame-mounted faring to make land, arguably one of the most unique touring motorcycles Harley has ever produced. Bred of the FLT/C Tour Glide lineage (1980 to 1996), the Road Glide has legions of devout owners who swear by it. The fixed faring means less mass to muscle around creating a more nimble motorcycle. Also wind buffeting isn't directly transmitted to the handle bars making those long distance tours more comfortable. The Road Glide is *potentially*, the best touring motorcycle Harley Davidson ever made. Why pull the Road Glide from the line? We all feel the current economic bite and the York plant (home of the Road Glide) has seen some layoffs.

Or, hypothetically (and this is pure conjecture), Harley is developing a new, technologically advanced touring motorcycle to compete in the 21st century. A modern, completely redesigned, world class touring cruiser to rival Victory Visions, Goldwings and Beemers

What could a NEW incarnation Road Glide be, hypothetically? In this rider's opinion, it would be Revolution based; yes, the 121 horsepower, 60 degree smooth running, water cooled engine. Secondly, complete redesigns of the frame mounted faring to include fixed mirrors, electric windshield and superior aerodynamic design. Thirdly, a removable Tour-Pak trunk with snap-off electrical wiring. Finally, include all the appropriate technology available on planet earth. Bluetooth communications, Onstar security, standard ABS brakes, adjustable hydraulics and GPS with screen, would make this machine esthetically a work of art. The most awesome touring set of wheels on planet earth.... am I asking too much?

Go CVO! Custom Vehicle Operations

I guess only time will tell about the possible potential of the Road Glides future but the present 2009 FLTRSE (Screaming' Eagle) CVO Road Glide is one bad ass mean mo' fo'. Housing the largest engine Harley makes, a Screamin' Eagle twin cam 110 with Electronic Sequential Port Fuel Injection (ESPFI) claiming 115 ft lbs of torque at 4000 rpm. Finished in granite powdercoat with chrome covers, it's a CVO exclusive. The Road Glide's sophisticated cosmetics conceal an all-new frame and swingarm, shared by all 2009 H-D Touring models. The new chassis is designed for enhanced maneuverability and incorporates a new motor-mount system that minimizes engine shake at idle.

With a hydraulic action high performance clutch, lowered rear suspension, 18 inch blade chromed forged aluminum wheels and 24 top of the line chrome parts you're just getting started. Features like air adjustable rear suspension, Brembo four piston caliper ABS brakes and a Harmon Kardon AM/FM/CD/MP3/WB with a security system are all standard. At a \$31,195 sticker price this Glide is crowned with a CVO indoor cover and a gold Harley-Davidson ignition key with display box. If you're one of the lucky 3000 owners, you can certainly be proud.

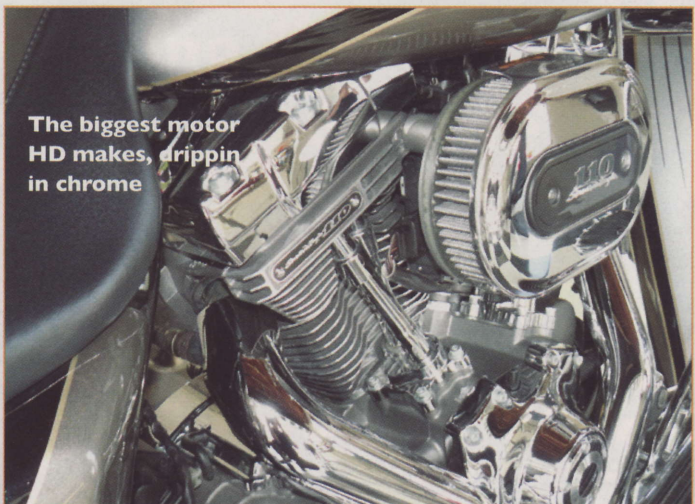
Visually stunning from every angle



Visually stunning

Custom Vehicle Operations must be a great place to work. Every year they get to create customized production motorcycles for limited quantity release and this CVO Road Glide is a thing of beauty. The Stardust Silver and Titanium Dust paint is elegant yet understated; with a subtle eagle and ghosted flames hidden in the charcoal stripe you know this is not your average RG. The rear profile of this bike looks like a one-off custom. The tail lights and trim around the lowered bags and pipes is spectacular. The tiny black wind shield looks great but is virtually useless on the freeway. In fact the Shark Nose fixed faring windscreen has always been an issue of hot debate regarding its aerodynamics in the wind. Because of the extended distance from the rider (as opposed to the batwing faring) the wind cuts back into the riding cockpit. I've heard tell of a pack of cigarettes being sucked right out of a top shirt pockets. And since this baby has a cigarette lighter, smok'em if ya got em'. Another gripe are the acoustics created by the fairing position - our fearless Editor CD says that was a big turnoff to him on a stock RG a few years back - you hear engine noise like cam chains, and not the sweet note of exhaust.

The biggest motor HD makes, drippin in chrome



Nevertheless, legions of Road Glide owners will ride nothing else. The cockpit is elegant and functional, the aluminum dials and the silver paint on this CVO certainly dazzle the eyes in the sun. In fact, with all the extra chrome and the Screamin' Eagle Twin Cam 110 engine this bike explodes in the sun and on the freeway. You will be noticed.

Screamin' Eagle



Ghosted flames hidden in the slate



I have always liked the look of Road Glide. Custom Baggers all the rage and this monster CVO Road Glide is right on target. I have a feeling the farewell lap of the honorable Road Glide is really just the beginning of whole new race.

Whatever ya do Mr. Davidson, keep the lighter (photo by Ron Sinoy)



Author/smoker/photographer/rider - Gary Koz Mraz

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