

# STILL KING OF THE ROAD

STORY: GARY KOZ MRAZ PHOTOS: RON SINOY



Below: The "ham can" air cleaner cover was introduced in 1967. Electric starter and related equipment brought the weight of the big twin close to 800 pounds (363kg).

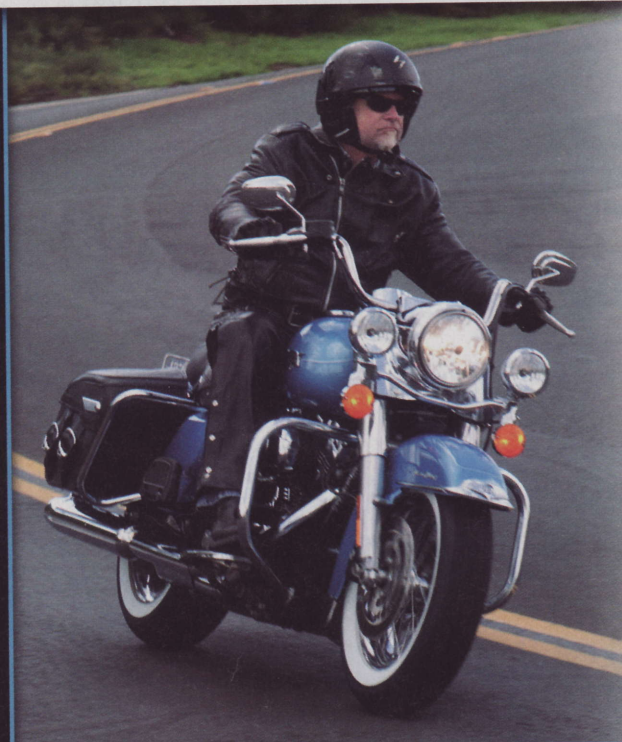
1968 FLH

Owner - Mike Lady  
Arroyo Grande, California  
Restored by Two Wheels

The truth is John Q. Public probably can't really tell the difference between a 1968 Electra Glide and 2011 Road King as it rumbles by. It's an American classic, like hamburgers and fries, short skirts and roller-skates. American as apple pie, the King is ablaze with chrome. With its huge headlamp nacelle, dual running lamps and whitewall tires the Road King is big, bad and as iconic as a '57 Cadillac. The Electra Glide Sport reincarnated into the Road King in 1994 and never looked back. Baggers are biggest selling motorcycle segment and the king of baggers...the Road King. Its classic styling defines what riding a Harley-Davidson all is about. So what can possibly be that different about such an iconic motorcycle?

Really everything is different because this year Harley-Davidson tosses in the whole enchilada called the Power Pack as standard. A beefy 103 ci. twin cam 1,690 cc engine is standard equipment. This engine completely changes the bike; it's far more appropriate for an 800 lb. motorcycle. Also now, ABS is standard and it improves braking and stopping confidence. In fact cruise control and security are also standard features. The six-speed transmission offers relaxed highway rpm and 50 mpg. The 130/90/16 front whitewall balances nicely with the 180/65/16 rear. I have always been a big fan of the leather belt buckle saddlebags. Adding to the overall vintage styling the hidden quick release snaps they are easily accessed. Harley also touts a lower, more comfortable redesigned seat.

I decided the perfect test ride would be a run along the California coast, visit a few piers along the way and a stop Hilltop Park in Signal Hill. Navigating the tiny side streets, maze of surf rats and bikini's will provide ample opportunity check out John Q. Public's reaction. I roll by Belmont Veterans Memorial Pier then head down ocean Blvd to Second Street through the quaint little beach town of Belmont Shore. Over the bridge to PCH and head south to Seal Beach. Main Street takes you straight down to the Seal Beach Pier. Built in 1906 the pier became heart of the "Jewel City" amusements resort. A roller coaster was shipped down from San Francisco and 50 giant lamps flashed changing colored rainbows on the water for night swimming. At that time women beachgoers were required to wear stockings above the knee, but the girls at Seal Beach were just painting their legs. Called the "Plague Spot" by outraged local clergy, Seal Beach is Bikini heaven today. The second largest Pier in California, it was ripped apart by a storm in 1983 and local residents helped fund its repair. Ruby's restaurant at the end of the pier is a great place to watch a sunset or a raging storm. There always parking for bikes and Main Street is full of bars, restaurants and buzzing with activity on weekends.





Back to Hilltop Park I gaze over the largest city in Los Angeles County and the second largest port in the world and reflect on Road King's Legacy. With the six-gallon tank and fly-by-wire throttle introduced in 2008, coupled with a completely new frame design implemented in 2009 and the Power Pack as standard, all these improvements combine for a thoroughly modern 2011 Road King Classic.

I got a chance to hit the open freeways and settle into the redesigned seat. It is lower and actually very comfortable. The cruise control works fine but does operate differently with the fly-by-wire throttle. Grabbing the throttle and turning it down or off does nothing when in cruise control. You have to either tap a brake or turn the cruise off with your left thumb. Also, the cruise control does not work over 90 and under 30 mph. Finally getting home that evening I hit Frisco's for a bite and a cold one. Sure, to the average man on the street my ride could be circa 1968 and that's the beauty of the new 2011 Road King - and that's the very reason why this Classic is still King of the Road.

*Special thanks to Mgr. Juan Herrera  
@ Frisco's Carhops 4750 Los Coyote  
Diagonal, Long Beach*

## Harley-Davidson FLHRC Road King Classic Model Highlights

NEW PowerPak setup with large, 1690 cc, Twin Cam 103™ engine, Anti-lock Braking System (ABS), and Harley-Davidson® Smart Security System with hands-free fob

NEW Sculpted seat for added comfort and easier straddling

NEW Tank medallion styling

NEW Paint color options

NEW Black powder-coated powertrain with chrome covers

- Chrome 2-1-2 dual exhaust with slash-up end caps
- Chrome, Laced Steel wheels with wide-whitewall tires
- Chrome, nostalgic fuel tank console with electronic speedometer
- Deep FL front fender with trim
- Clean rear fender with deluxe trim
- Stainless steel, ergonomic handlebar
- One-piece, two-up Road King® seat with tooled leather trim and chrome accents
- Clear, large Lexan® quick-release detachable windshield
- Tooled, leather-wrapped hard saddlebags; 1.85 cu. ft. volume
- Large Hiawatha headlight and chrome nacelle
- Auxiliary passing lights • Electronic cruise control

