

HARDCORE ACTRESS & EASY RIDING BIKER: Katee Sackoff

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We generally typecast ourselves for the role we want to play in life. If not, society is happy to do that for us. All cops have mustaches, all bikers beards and Hollywood actresses are Prima Donnas. Although it does seem that bikers do have facial hair I can attest that Katee Sackoff is no prima donna (TV series' *24*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman*). In fact, she is without a doubt one of the most considerate, socially conscious people I've met, oh yeah, and she's a biker chick. Much like the roles she plays Katee is fearless, adventurous and like so many other women riders, not content as a passenger. Straddling her ultimate roll, a blacked out 2009 Fatboy the glint in her eye and a wry smile reveals her passion for riding. We bomb around L.A. and then head to Venice Beach for lunch.

I originally met Katee and her friend Tricia Helfer (*Battlestar Galactica*, *Burn Notice*, *Dark Blue*) while taking a spin on the beautiful new Indian Chiefs at the Grand opening of California Indian Motorcycles in Harbor City. Katee, a tomboy from Portland, Oregon and Tricia, a Canadian raised on a farm are both avid riders who love to get in the wind. We exchanged road stories but what really struck a chord for me was their desire to retrace the historic Easy Rider and Van Buren multi-thousand mile motorcycle road trips...these women are definitely on a roll.

Katee takes on life's twists and turns without hesitation. With no formal training her acting career began at 17, she was in the right place at the right time and for the past 13 years embraced each new role with fervor. Katee befriended actress Tricia Helfer on the set of acclaimed TV series *Battlestar Galactica* but it was motorcycling that fueled a friendship. Katee described her first day at MSF (Motorcycle Safety Foundation riding course); she laid down the bike and crashed while practicing high-speed controlled stops on day one. Battered and bruised she attended an Emmy party that evening but thanks to makeup and wardrobe prevailed. Nobody at MSF expected her to return. She did, she finished and immediately bought a Honda Shadow then a Harley Fat Boy. Engaged and atten-



tive locally and globally we discuss the motorcycle officer downed on the 405 and her greenish/golden eyes reflect a genuine empathy but suddenly shimmer with fire as we discuss the current status in the gulf. Born and raised on the ocean she is furious about the disaster and its long-term ramifications and she feels it's a global wake up call for the inhabitants of planet earth. Purchasing an electric vehicle and riding motorcycles is miniscule in the grand scale but feels personal responsibility must be taken. Her Tattoo roughly translates in Latin to *Public Property* and as an actress in the public eye Katee feels a social responsibility to make intelligent, informed decisions.

Still In the planning stages, Katee and Tricia goal is to spearhead the Easy Rider Charity ride from L.A to Louisiana retracing the route taken by Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper in the seminal 1969 movie. Tricia worked with Dennis on an Independent film a couple years ago called *Memory* (or *Mem(o)re* as it was actually spelled). It also starred Billy Zane and Ann Margaret . The independent film she was suppose to work with Dennis in last fall is called "The Beginner's Guide to Endings". Harvey Keitel took over for Dennis when he had to back out at the last minute due to his illness. Dennis Hopper was very active in Oceana, the largest international organization focused solely on ocean conservation. <http://na.oceana.org>. They know that Dennis, who never failed to defy authority or take a public stand would be out front on this issue. They plan to raise money for those impacted by the Gulf coast disaster in Louisiana. The tentative dates for the Charity ride are to leave Los Angeles October 22nd and arrive in Mew Orleans on the 28th for a party to kick off the Voodoo Music Festival, www.voodooomusicfest.com. Tricia's husband and Katee s boyfriend, both long time riders, will accompany them and anyone who wants to ride the entire trip or just jump in along the way is invited. The ultimate goal is for participants to make a donation to the Acting Outlaws Foundation www.actinguoutlaws.org. Both actresses are adamant about this and will make time in their busy schedules because something must be done. If it requires riding 1500 miles on a motorcycle...all the better.

Next year Katee and Tricia plan on retracing the epic ride of the Van Buren sisters. In 1916 Augusta and Adeline Van Buren were the first women to ride motorcycles coast-to-coast across America. Living in a society where women didn't even have the right to vote they completed the long arduous ride from New York to San Francisco in 67 days, and then they rode to Mexico. Today those dirt roads are paved but Katee & Tricia will trace a route that will take them through the back roads of America, visiting small towns, exploring renewable energy and raising money for homeless children and battered women.

95 years after the Van Buren arduous trek women vote, serve in the armed forces, run some of the world's largest corporation's and even run for president. Now these two female riders are on a mission to celebrate the strides woman have made and raise money for important causes. Yeah you've come along way baby but even today some still lift a wary eyebrow at two lone bikers. Society's mores and folkways about women's roles are still challenged to this day. Katee and Tricia have both taken on their role as human beings, concerned about our earth and *all* its inhabitants.

