

## Biker Buddies

Last week I was at the ITV station with a long standing client, a Harley-Davidson fanatic who often goes out with other Harley riders making a lot of beautiful noise

I mentioned that I had just read an article about a Vespa scooter club that had recently had a quieter excursion on their chosen machines. The hairy biker set off on his usual reminiscences about we nancy boy “mods” and how we couldn’t hold a candle to his tribe the “rockers”. Oh gawd, this was all a lifetime away but at least now we can banter not batter each other about it. It’s bad enough at home as my better half was rocker when she was younger and swears that we went to Brighton not for the traditional punch up with her mob but because when we were mincing around with our handbags we wouldn’t be noticed in England’s gay capital

To be fair to the big boy he did say that he and a mate were recently overtaken by a scooter rally on the A7, but said that if I mentioned it, he would rip me apart. He fits the stereotypical Harley rider being in his 50’s, a retired policeman and above average size which is why he is incognito in this article!

There is something about being on the road with like minded people, feeling the vibration, hearing the roar of the engines, the smell of exhausts and just enjoying the smooth uncongested roads here in Spain. I guess the same applies to the classic car owners

### Customisation

I was reminded of the challenges faced in re-registering his and many other Harleys as all owners want to customise them. It is rare to see a bike with the original exhaust, handlebars, lights etc and in many circumstances (but not all) unless a vehicle is in its original condition it may not be accepted for re-registration. A favourite alternative Harley exhaust is the “Screaming Eagle” a name that can only have come from a marketing guy fresh out of some gung-ho military outfit, but these are normally OK for the ITV

Back to scooters and it is inconceivable that those that we rode in the 60’s would have been allowed anywhere near an ITV station. No dear, the extra mirrors were not so that we could admire ourselves or check our lipstick. The lights were great at night and the crash bars were just that as we wouldn’t want to scratch a panel now would we? Anyway coming from a tribe that used engine oil as hair conditioner and wouldn’t be seen dead with clean finger nails, the insults are a bit rich

### Homologised?

Customisation of vehicles is the norm for many people whether it is a different exhaust on a bike or spoilers on a car. These cause no issue in the UK, but in Spain the regulation are much stricter and anything outside the original has to be approved. Sometimes there is logic to this such as ensuring that a towbar is up to acceptable standards, but not allowing extra brake lights or running boards is taking the rules too far. The guide is the homologation or type approval that all European vehicles have,

so if your customised part is not on the homologation either forget it or pay the cost of allowing it to be accepted by the authorities. Nothing is quite black and white so if unsure if your new part is OK, ask the ITV station beforehand

### Check out the clubs

Here on the costas there are many clubs and associations for road users whether you are a two or four wheel fan, a petrol head who can't wait to discuss the finer points of the internal combustion engine or just relish the camaraderie of being among people who understand your passion so why not give them a spin?

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