

“Time for a New Ride Calendar: Ultimate Rides for Year 2008”

By Arliss Pearson

Why make a ride calendar? Well, there are a number of reasons to make a ride calendar, but for me, I choose to make one mainly for the adventure of it. Just the act of sitting down, firing up the old computer and taking the time to search the Internet and look over the myriad of events that are spread out all over our great nation, and in some other places of the world, sets my thoughts toward the adventures the coming riding season presents. While I do like to be spontaneous on occasion and jump on my bike just to ride to no place in particular for a day, to better plan my time, money and resources, I found that preparation is the key to maximum long-term enjoyment. Here are the basics for making your ride calendar for the year.

First, and foremost, before you make your calendar, decide on how much of a budget you are willing commit to your planned adventures. That will certainly tailor your choices as to which events to target for your trips. Obviously, the further away an event is from home ground, the more time and money you will need to commit to get there and back. Which brings in the next, and perhaps the most important deciding factor – how much time off from work can you spare for your trips? If you are like me and have to feed and house your family, not much; hence, my riding calendar is geared for maximum effect.

Next choose the type of events you would like to attend. Some events are just for show and tell, some are designed to raise money for charity or to commemorate an historical event, some are for swapping your stuff with other people’s stuff, and others are for major partying and generally letting your hair down. Also, it helps to know if you plan to go solo, or if you will be riding to an event with friends. While riding with friends maximizes the fun and groups resources, there are some trips that beg for the solitude and pure freedom of the road. Also, if an event is more than a day’s ride away, it helps to have an idea of how you plan to sleep and under what conditions while you are on the road - hotel it, rough it, or somewhere in between in an RV.

If you know you are going to an event that will last more than several days, and you plan to stay at one of the sponsored hotels or camp grounds, check with the hotel or camp grounds where you intend to stay to get an idea of how far in advance you will need to reserve a room (or rooms), or your camp site. Some events, like Sturgis, may require several years in advance to reserve a room, or even a camping spot for your RV or tent. Be aware of the circumstances for making and canceling your reservations. Some hotels or camp sites require that a non-refundable deposit be charged to your credit card when you make your reservation.

When making my riding calendar, I choose to make an “A” list, and a “B” list of events that are of interest to me, and that may also be of interest to my fellowship of riders. The “A” list represents the major motorcycle events that occur annually in the same place, and usually around the same time of year. These events have the potential for major fun and will most likely take up the lion’s share of your budgeted funds and time resources to attend. But if you attend one of these major events, it will most likely be a memorable event for years to come. My “B” list is composed mostly of local, one or two-day events that present the opportunity to go to new places and make new friends - oh, and see new things too. These types of events will usually cost just gas money and fees you pay for attending, and will undoubtedly produce prodigious amounts of pictures to show to your friends who could not make the ride.

Arliss' "A" list of major events for 2008" (I rate these events between four and five stars as the best overall to attend):

Starts	Ends	MAJOR EVENT	City	State	Rating
29-Feb	- Mar 9 2008	Daytona Beach Bike Week	Daytona Beach	FL	★★★★★
2-May	- 4 May 2008	Virginia Beach Bike Classic	Virginia Beach	VA	★★★★★
9-May	- May 18 2008	Myrtle Beach Spring Rally	Myrtle Beach	VA	★★★★★
24-May	- May 24 2008	5th Annual Oscar Wood Fundraiser	Springfield	VA	★★★★★
25-May	- May 25 2008	Rolling Thunder ® XXI	Washington	DC	★★★★★
18 Jun	- 21 Jun 2008	Honda Hoot Rally	Knoxville	TN	★★★★★
25 Jul	- 27 Jul 2008	Carlisle Bike Fest	Carlisle	PA	★★★★★
10-Jul	- 13 Jul 2008	Gettysburg Bike Week	Gettysburg	PA	★★★★★
4-Aug	- Aug 10 2008	Sturgis Motorcycle Rally	Sturgis	SD	★★★★★
6-Aug	- Aug 10 2008	EAST COAST STURGIS MC RALLY 5th	Little Orleans	MD	★★★★★
11-Sep	- Sep 14 2006	Delmarva Bike Week	Ocean City	MD	★★★★★
19-Sep	- Sep 28 2008	Thug-Bee-Q @ Sunset Inn GMAKOOS island	Sunset Island	NC	Not Rated
16-Oct	- Oct 19 2008	Biketoberfest®	Daytona Beach	FL	★★★★★

Arliss' "B" list of events for 2008" (My ratings for these events range between one and three stars):

Starts	Ends	EVENT	City	State	Rating
5-Jan	- May 23 2008	Biker Social Saturdays (see website for dates)	Baltimore	MD	★
11-Jan	- Jan 13 2008	International Motorcycle Show	Washington	DC	★★
17-Feb	- Feb 17 2008	Chester West Virginia Motorcycle Swap Meet	Chester	W VA	★
22-Feb	- Feb 22 2008	Fisher House Benefit	Allentown	PA	★★
23-Feb	- Feb 23 2008	The Biker's Ball	Pittsburgh	PA	★
24-Feb	- Feb 24 2008	Scranton/WilkesBarreWinter Blast	Scranton	PA	★
19-Apr	- Apr 20 2008	Hogs4hokies.org spirit ride	Fairfax	VA	★
10-May	- May 10 2008	Big House Benefit Run 8th Annual	Coal Twp.	PA	★
28-May	- Jun 08 2008	PA Rally on the River	Northumberland	PA	★★★
21-Jun	- Jun 27 2008	2008 Honor and Remember Ride to Washington	Roanoke	VA	★
30-May	- May 31 2008	Rally on the River	Kinston	NC	★★★
7-Jun	- Jun 07 2008	Mercer County Fallen Heroes Run	Jackson Center	PA	★
26-Jun	- Jun 29 2008	Johnstown Thunder in the Valley	Johnstown	PA	★★★
10-Aug	- Aug 10 2008	Mid-Atlantic Bike and Car Show	Waldorf	MD	★
17-Aug	- Aug 17 2008	Rally for RAACE 3rd Annual	Bel Air	MD	★
29-Aug	- Sep 01 2008	Million Motorcyclist Motorcade	La Plata	MD	★★
20-Sep	- Sep 20 2008	POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony	Bedford	VA	★★★
27-Sep	- Sep 27 2008	Buffalo Soldier Annual Family & Friends Day	Spotsylvania	VA	★
29-Aug	- Aug 31 2008	Hero's Forever Veterans Ride	Portsmouth	VA	★★
8-Sep	- Sep 08 2008	Flight 93 Memorial Ride	Philadelphia	PA	★
4-Oct	- Oct 04 2008	CCG 5th Annual Toy Run	Elkton	MD	★
1-Nov	- Nov 01 2008	Mid-Atlantic Toy Run	Ft Washington	MD	★
2-Nov	- Nov 02 2008	Eastern PA Toy Run	Leesport	PA	★

Sources on the Internet for Motorcycle Events:

- <http://www.motorcycleevents.com>
- <http://www.lets-ride.com/ridesevents.htm>
- <http://www.dambikers.com/usevents/>
- <http://www.officialbikeweek.com/>
- <http://www.sturgis-rally.com/>
- <http://myrtlebeachrallies.com/?gclid=CNOX1e7q0JACFQQjPAodAWZwXA>
- <http://www.vabeachbikeclassic.com/>
- <http://www.gettysburgbikeweek.com/>
- <http://www.rollingthunder1.com/>
- <http://www.carsatcarlisle.com/bike/index.asp>
- <http://www.lightningcustoms.com/hondahoot.html>