

Found this on the AMA site and thought I'd share it with everyone traveling to Star Days. 🤔👀

There's nothing like the feeling of loading up and heading out on a big motorcycle trip.

And there's nothing like the security of knowing you're prepared for life on the road. It can take years to develop that knowledge through trial and error. But we've got a shortcut. We've asked AMA staff members to share with you the experience they've accumulated over decades on the road.

What you'll find here isn't a comprehensive collection of touring knowledge. Instead, here are 33 insider tips—useful suggestions that have made our tours more organized and more fun. We guarantee you'll learn something.

1) Eat at weird times. Everyone and their dog eat around 8 a.m., noon and 6 p.m. To get in and out of restaurants in a hurry, don't be hungry then.

2) A short metal cable with loops on both ends (like those made to keep people from stealing bicycle seats) is perfect for securing a jacket and helmet to your bike's helmet lock.

3) Carry a spare key. Zip-tie or duct tape it somewhere hidden on your bike, or better yet, give it to a traveling companion.

4) Portable weather radios are now in the \$20 range, and the first time one saves you from running right into a massive storm, you'll wonder why you ever traveled without one. Check accessory companies like Aerostich, or Radio Shack.

5) On high-mileage days, you'll feel a lot better if you carry eye drops and use them every time you stop for gas.

6) If you're nearing the end of your riding day, and want to set yourself up for a quick getaway in the morning, consider riding to the far side of the next city you reach before you stop for the night, eliminating urban traffic the next day.

7) Take a tip from off-road riders and carry a backpack hydration system so you can drink while you ride. A must for arid weather.

8) Going on a long, complex trip? Keep yourself organized with the envelope system. Before you leave, prepare one envelope for each day on the road. Mark the dates and locations on the outside, and then stuff things like hotel reservation info and lists of things to see inside. Instead of juggling your entire stack of literature to find the piece you need, you can just open up that day's envelope.

9) A simple map case attached to your bike's tank (we've used a Rev-Pak version that has been available through www.whitehorsepress.com for years) can keep you on course without the bulk of a tank bag.

10) Keep your stuff dry in saddlebags by using trash compactor bags as waterproof barriers. They're thicker and more durable than standard garbage bags.

11) Use earplugs to help reduce wind noise. You can get them from most mail-order shops or dealers or in bulk from safety-equipment supply houses.

12) Don't forget that pack-and-ship places are just about everywhere these days. They're perfect when you spot that antique umbrella stand you're dying to buy hundreds of miles from home.

13) Don't forget a small towel or rag for wiping dew off seats, windshields and mirrors, and even for doing a quick whole-bike cleanup. Those synthetic chamois cloths work particularly well.

14) Pack extra bungee and zip-ties. 'Nuff said.

15) Go ahead; buy that GPS you've always wanted. They're perfect not only for finding yourself, but also for allowing you the freedom to get lost in the first place.

16) You've heard it a million times, but we'll say it again: look over your bike carefully every morning on the road. Checking the simple stuff—air pressure, oil level, loose or missing fasteners—can save you from big trouble.

- 17) Sign up for AMA MoTow. For \$25 a year, you get peace of mind, knowing that if you do break down, a motorcycle-savvy towing crew is only a phone call away. To sign up, call the AMA at: (614) 856-1900.
- 18) Stash a little cash somewhere hidden on the bike or on you, so you can make something happen when all else fails.
- 19) Before you take off from the hotel or campground in the morning, double check every strap on tank bags or soft saddlebags, and every latch on hard luggage.
- 20) Especially if you're riding alone, wear a dog-tag with your name and contact info. You can get them lots of places, including from the AMA. Call (614) 856-1900, ext. 1272.
- 21) Take a look back at where you were parked every time you leave someplace. You'd be amazed at what you find.
- 22) A cell phone can be a lifesaver in an emergency. You can dial 911 for help anywhere you find cell service, but you'll need to tell a dispatcher where you are. Keep track of route numbers, interstate exits, towns you've passed, mileposts—anything that can save emergency officials time in getting to you.
- 23) Good motorcycle gear really is worth it. Waterproof, breathable linings in boots and jackets will transform the way you think about bad weather. A number of companies offer materials that work well, but always test your gear on a rainy day at home before facing a storm on the road.
- 24) Do routine maintenance at home with your bike's toolkit, so you're sure you have what you need along the side of the road.
- 25) On a long tour, plan for at least one day every week of doing nothing. Time is the ultimate luxury, and can mean the difference between a vacation and an endurance run.
- 26) Be realistic with your daily mileage. In really scenic areas, 150 miles may make a very full day. Don't assume you can achieve freeway mileage on good back roads.
- 27) Guidebooks can be invaluable, but these days, a search of the Internet can add spice to your trip by revealing special-interest locations most books fail to include. One of the sites we've used is www.roadsideamerica.com. World's largest concrete bison, anyone?
- 28) It is possible to use a kit to make emergency repairs on tubeless or tube-type tires alongside the road. But before you count on this as your safety net, practice using the kit on an old tire in your garage.
- 29) A pack able motorcycle cover not only keeps your bike clean and dry overnight, it also discourages thieves. And don't forget a stout lock of some kind for the bike itself.
- 30) If you can afford it and are short of time, you could always ship your bike somewhere cool and ride it back. Coast to coast, uncrated motorcycle shipping was in the \$600 to \$700 range for AMA members at press time—much less than your cost to ride it that far. Call the Federal Companies at (800) 747-4100, ext. 217 or 218, for details.
- 31) If you call a hotel—even if you're two blocks away—you can often get a better rate than if you just walk in. And if you have access to a computer, there are some spectacular Internet-only deals available these days. Either way, do yourself a favor and have a reservation by 4 p.m. You never know when a convention will take over your destination city. Remember that AMA members get a discount at Red Roof Inns (call (800) RED-ROOF and use AMA code CP503343) and Super 8 (call (800) 800-8000 and use the AMA code VIP880000165469).
- 32) A nap can do wonders on a long day.
- 33) If you're traveling east or west, schedule your breakfast or dinner times near sunrise or sunset so you don't have to stare into the sun when it's low on the

horizon.

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