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## TALK TO US

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# A BIKER'S GUIDE: Conquer the Scenic Thrills of Colorado's Million Dollar Highway

Also known as US Route 550, Colorado's Million Dollar Highway is a legendary and exhilarating ride that has captured the hearts of bikers worldwide. With its breathtaking mountain views, hairpin turns, and awe-inspiring landscapes, this highway offers an unforgettable experience for those seeking the ultimate biking adventure. In this article, we'll delve into the history of the Million Dollar Highway, what bikers can expect on their journey, the best places to stop along the way, and the optimal time of year to embark on this thrilling ride.

### **A Historic and Scenic Marvel:**

The Million Dollar Highway earned its name due to the extraordinary cost of construction at the time. Originally constructed in the late 1880s, this winding stretch of highway connects the towns of Silverton and Ouray in the rugged San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado. Originally a part of the Silverton Railway, the highway was later paved and transformed into a scenic road that has become a magnet for motorcyclists.

**What to Expect:** Riding on the Million Dollar Highway is a journey of adrenaline and visual splendor. As you navigate the 25-mile stretch, be prepared for tight turns, steep cliffs, and dramatic drops. The road's narrow passages wind through breathtaking alpine scenery, offering stunning views of towering peaks, cascading waterfalls, and lush forests. The sheer beauty and serenity of this route creates an experience like no other for motorcyclists seeking thrills and natural wonders.

**Places to Stop and Savor:** Along the Million Dollar Highway, there are several noteworthy stops that add to the overall experience:

**Silverton:** Begin your journey in this historic mining town. Take some time to explore the well-preserved downtown area, filled with charming buildings and unique shops. Additionally, consider visiting the Silverton Museum to learn about the area's rich mining history.

**Red Mountain Pass:** Located at an elevation of over 11,000 feet, this pass is a highlight of the ride. Be sure to stop and take in the panoramic views of the surrounding peaks, including the iconic Red Mountain, which gives the pass its name.

**Ouray:** Known as the "Switzerland of America," this picturesque mountain town is a must-visit destination. Take a break from riding springs or through the charming streets, relax in the natural hot springs, or enjoy a meal at one of the local eateries.

**Timing Your Ride:** The best time to ride the Million Dollar Highway is typically from late spring to early fall when the road is clear of snow and ice. The summer months offer the most pleasant weather, allowing you to enjoy the ride without extreme temperatures. However, be prepared for occasional afternoon thunderstorms in the mountainous region, and always check the weather forecast before setting out!



# THE FIRST MOTORCYCLE:

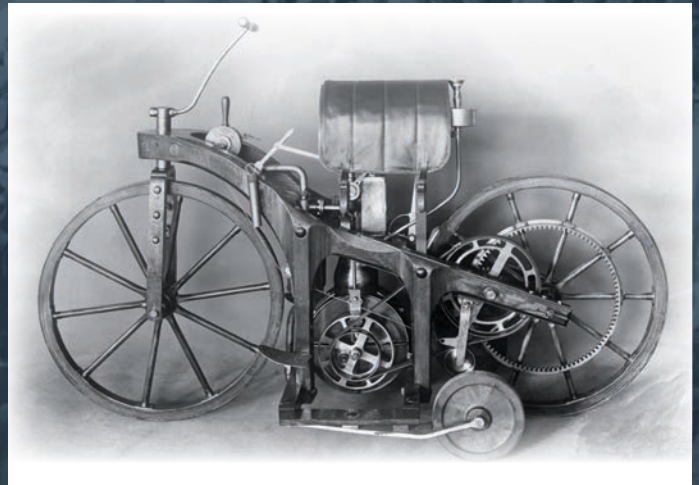
## A Revolutionary Ride into History

A symbol of personal freedom, exhilaration on the open road, and maybe a touch of rebellion, motorcycles have a fascinating history that traces back to the mid-19th century. While there were many early attempts to create self-propelled two-wheeled vehicles, it was not until the late 1800s that the first true motorcycle was born. Let's take a closer look at the origins and evolution of what was, at the time, a revolutionary mode of transportation.

**The Birth of a New Era:** The year was 1885 when two German inventors, Gottlieb Daimler and Wilhelm Maybach, unveiled their creation, the "Reitwagen," meaning "riding car" in English. The Reitwagen is widely considered the first motorcycle ever built. It featured a lightweight frame made of wood, equipped with a small internal combustion engine and a simple fuel system. This groundbreaking invention marked the beginning of a new era in personal transportation.

**Essential Components and Design:** The Reitwagen embodied the key elements that defined a motorcycle: a combustion engine, two wheels in-line, and a saddle for the rider. The engine, a single-cylinder, four-stroke design, was positioned beneath the rider's seat, and its power was transmitted to the rear wheel via a series of belts. The bike had no suspension, and steering was achieved by changing the wheel's direction manually.

**Challenges and Advancements:** While the Reitwagen was a significant step forward, it faced several challenges. The primitive engine had a low power output, limiting the motorcycle's speed and range. Additionally, the lack of suspension made the ride uncomfortable on rough terrain. Nevertheless, this pioneering machine laid the foundation for further advancements in motorcycle technology.



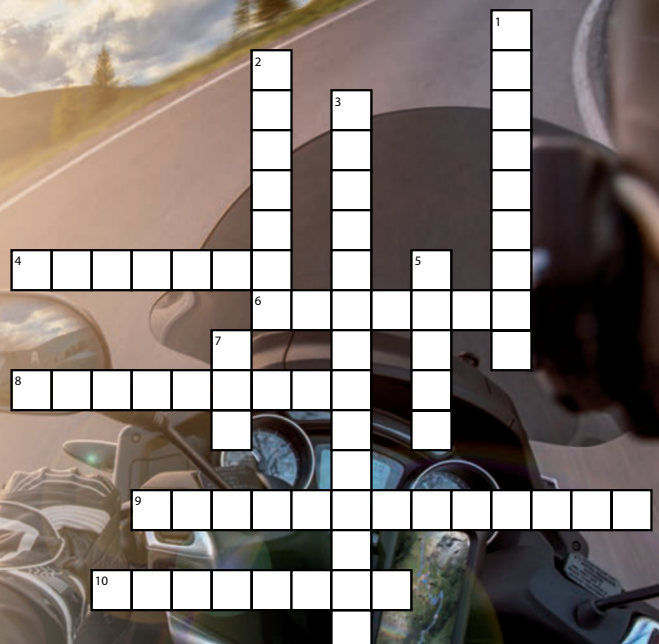
## MOTORCYCLE CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### Down:

1. style that originated in the 1960s and emphasizes speed and handling
2. a bike that has been modified (extended front end + high handlebars + a raked-out fork)
3. lover of high speeds
5. Suzuki GSX-R sportbike
7. Harley-Davidson bike

### Across:

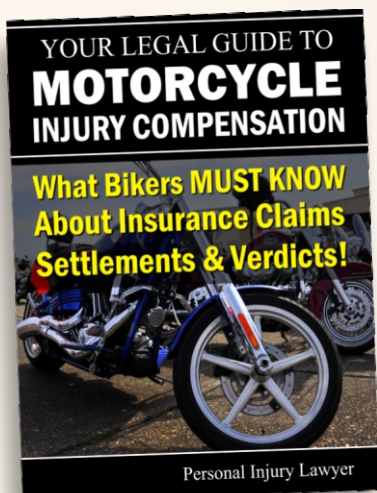
4. front up + bottom down
6. intentionally kept in a rough + unfinished appearance
8. implies power and strength
9. riding @ high speeds on the road
10. fun rides but lots of turns



**Evolution and Popularity:** Following Reitwagen's debut, numerous inventors and engineers worldwide embarked on improving and refining the motorcycle's design. In the early 20th century, manufacturers in Europe and the United States started producing motorcycles with stronger and more efficient engines, enhanced suspension systems, and improved brakes.

As technology progressed, motorcycles gained popularity and began to be widely used for transportation, leisure, and even in various motorsports disciplines. Brands like Harley-Davidson, Triumph, Indian, and BMW emerged as pioneers in the industry, shaping the distinctive styles and cultures associated with motorcycles.

Regardless of its humble beginnings, the Reitwagen laid the cornerstone for a global phenomenon that forever changed the way we ride and perceive personal transportation. Today, motorcycles have evolved into powerful symbols of freedom, exhilaration, and personal expression. From the pioneers of the past to the iconic brands of the present, the motorcycle industry continues to push the boundaries of technology and design, delivering awe-inspiring machines that ignite the passion of bikers around the world, reminding us that life is more fun when it's lived with passion, curiosity, and a little bit of risk. 😊



## Your Legal Guide To **MOTORCYCLE INJURY COMPENSATION**

This insider's guide explains how motorcyclists can maximize claims after an accident and avoid expensive mistakes that could devalue their case and cost them tens of thousands of dollars or more. Readers will learn the answers to 11 questions that injured bikers need to ask before they sign any settlement documents with an insurance company.

Read this important legal guide  
BEFORE you are involved in an accident!  
[www.NAMIL-LAW.org/Lebrocq](http://www.NAMIL-LAW.org/Lebrocq)



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## HIT THE ROAD:

## Top 5 Biker Rallies to Attend in September-October!

Get ready to rev your engines and experience the thrill of the open road this fall. Here's a list of **5 noteworthy rallies** to attend this fall across the US:

- ▶ **Midgeville Thunder Rally (9/22-9/24)—Bowling Green, Kentucky**—This three-day extravaganza celebrates the spirit of motorcycling with a blend of thrilling rides, live music, and exciting contests.
- ▶ **So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet (9/24)—Long Beach, California**—This one-day event is a paradise for motorcycle enthusiasts and collectors. Discover an extensive selection of bikes, parts, and accessories from a wide range of vendors.
- ▶ **Peotone Motorcycle Swap Meet (10/1)—Peotone, Illinois**—Calling all gearheads! Join fellow riders in celebrating the spirit of customization and find that missing piece for your dream bike.
- ▶ **Ride the Ozarks Rally (10/13-10/14)—Harrison, Arkansas**—This two-day event is perfect for riders seeking an adrenaline rush amidst breathtaking landscapes.
- ▶ **Route 66 Fall Biker Rally + Halloween Bash (10/19-10/22)—Depew, Oklahoma**—Enjoy live music, costume contests, and thrilling rides along the iconic Route 66. This event promises a spooktacular experience for riders of all ages.

