



Save The Dates: Empire City MC's 55th Anniversary Week-Long Road Trip

Every five years, Empire City MC celebrates their milestone anniversaries. On our 40th, we went to the Green Mountains and White Mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire. On our 50th, we went to Deal's Gap, NC to ride the "tail of the dragon". We're proud to say that 2019 is our 55th year, and we're continuing our tradition – this year, we'll be going to Provincetown, MA the week of 7th – 15th September. We're diligently working on plans and will keep you updated here in Rumblings as plans develop.

This will not be a motorcycle-mandatory event; however, we will be making some day rides, so if you don't have a bike, try to pair up in the house to come along – or, just relax on the beach!

Additional details and a run application will be coming out in a few months; however, until that time, please save the dates: 7th – 15th September 2019. Our week-long trips only happen once every five years – you don't want to miss this!

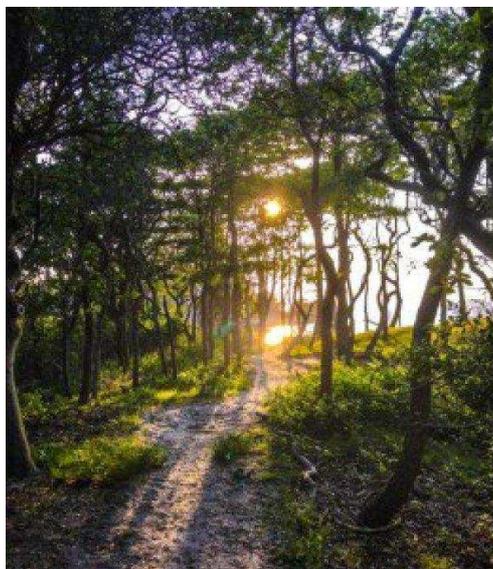


A Brief History of Fire Island's Famous Meat Rack

The Fire Island Preservation Society recently posted a brief history of the island's infamous sex hook up space dubbed the "Meat Rack."

"Since the early 50's the men of Cherry Grove found refuge and release in the wooded paths that connect the two communities of the Pines and Grove," writes the Fire Island Pines Historical Preservation Society.

"In the early days of Cherry Grove's gay population growth, it was a big draw for many closeted homosexuals, and would initially take place on various boardwalks. As the Grove became more populated it moved east to the woods. There were rules of conduct



including no lights or talking. All for the purpose of anonymity. The barriers of race and social class fell when you arrived. You could arrive alone and be assured that you could find a casual encounter in 'The Rack' as it was called. The word got to the mainland, and with that came the raids by the Suffolk Police where many were outed publicly."

You can read more and see some fabulous photos at their site here: <http://www.pineshistory.org/nature/meat-rack-est-1950s/>

This article was written by Savas Abadsidis, with special thanks to Bobby Bonanno, President, Fire Island Pines Historical Preservation Society and photos by Sean Basil McGiver.

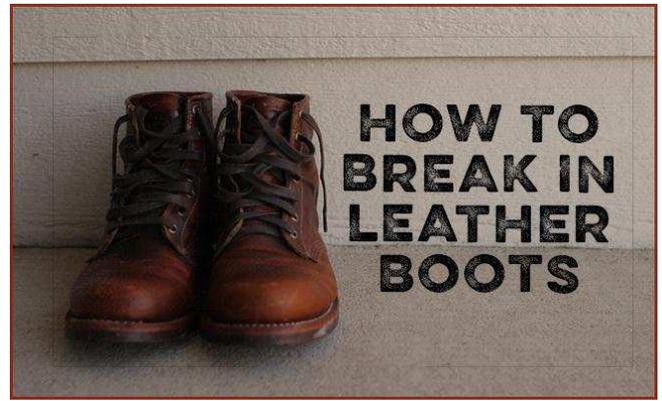
How to Break-In a Pair of Leather Boots

By Jeremy Anderberg

A good pair of leather boots is an essential part of every man's wardrobe, particularly in the fall and winter. Say you got a nice shiny pair of Red Wing boots for Christmas or your birthday, or you just wanted to splurge with your end-of-year bonus. You're excited to lace 'em up and wear your boots to work or out on a date, but they're stiff and a little hard to put on, and when you walk around, they feel a little uncomfortable after a while.

That's just part of the reality of owning a pair of boots made from leather: it's a hard, tough material (which is why it's so dang durable!). Leather boots thus need to be broken in before they're comfortable for regular and prolonged use.

How do you do that though? The tried and true method is to just wear them and deal with the discomfort — sometimes including blisters — until the leather becomes softer and more comfortable. We live in the internet age though. Aren't there any hacks or tricks to breaking them in a little quicker and without as much discomfort?



The short answer: nope. There are a few things you can do to ease the discomfort, but in general, any hacks or quick tips you see out there pose too much of a risk to the leather to be worth trying. When you're spending \$200 or more on your shoes (which is about as cheap as you can get a high-quality pair of boots), you don't want them wrecked before you've gotten a chance to enjoy them for a few decades.

Below you'll find out why some of the tricks you see online shouldn't be utilized, as well as a few tips for easing the discomfort of the breaking-in process.

Dispelling Some Internet Tricks

In doing some initial internet research, I was presented with almost exactly what I expected to find: a few apparently quick and painless hacks that would instantly break in a pair of leather boots.

Most of what I found revolved around subjecting the leather to extremes in terms of water and heat. Leather is obviously an incredibly resistant material, so while prolonged exposure to these elements isn't good for it, an initial blast to soften things up won't hurt. Right? That's how the thinking goes at least.

Thankfully, I didn't trust the internet, and called up a local Red Wing shoe store to get the dope on these shortcuts rather than trying them out first-hand and possibly ruining a nice pair of boots.

Water Exposure

I saw tips out there ranging from submerging the boots in a tub full of water, to wearing wet socks in an attempt to get the leather to mould more to your feet.

The logic of this line of reasoning isn't all that crazy. Water immersion does make leather more pliable, and in fact many leather projects rely on the material being soaked for the sake of moulding it into some shape (like a knife sheath). Leather boots have a blue-collar heritage, that typically isn't just a matter of aesthetics: you generally should be able to wear them in wet and messy conditions, and have them hold up just fine. Thus, manufacturers themselves sometimes used to in fact recommend breaking in their boots with the water exposure method.

It's hard to find any that do anymore, though. The problem is that water immersion can actually shrink your boots, doing the opposite of what you intended.

Plus, while not a guarantee, it's sure a possibility that the water could warp or otherwise damage not only the leather, but the soles as well, especially in more modern-style boots that have a cushioned insole vs. just a hard leather one. While your boots should be fine when worn out on a rainy day, that's not quite the same as giving them a prolonged soaking in a bucket of water. Bottom line: Avoid this route.



How to Break-In a Pair of Leather Boots (continued)

Direct Heat Exposure

The other primary line of thinking I saw in terms of break-in hacks was heat exposure. Again, from a purely logical perspective, this idea isn't too bad. Heat also makes leather more pliable, so putting a hair dryer on them or putting them next to a fire should help, right?

It can, but the risks to your leather aren't worth it. Prolonged or extreme heat exposure will dry the leather and make it crack. It can also warp the material and change the leather's colour. While you'll find plenty of sources out there that say a hair dryer on low heat is okay, the vast majority of manufacturers recommend avoiding exposure to any direct heat source like that.

The primary problem with heat is that you just don't know how your particular leather boot will react to it, or at what point the heat becomes too much and starts causing damage (which isn't always apparent; fibres can start to dry and crack before it's visible to the eye).

Avoid this route too.

Tips for Breaking-In Your Boots the Right Way

Keep in mind at the outset that every brand of leather boot wears and breaks in differently. My Chippewa boots are still getting broken in a few years later, but my Nisolo Andres — my new favourites — wore just about perfectly right out the box. Some discomfort at first is expected (especially if you try to wear them all day), but definitely not pain.

1. First, ensure the right size. Sometimes you'll see folks advocating buying boots a half-size or even full size too small so that when they break in, they'll be perfect. In some cases this can be accurate (like with Chippewas), but not all. I advocate for always buying your leather boots from the manufacturer directly, either online or in retail. Going to a big box store and asking about how their boots are sized isn't going to work very well. The manufacturer, on the other hand, will have the most accurate sizing information and be able to guide you. It all depends on how the leathers they use have been made and treated.

In general, it's okay if the boot seems a little narrow — leather can expand out to the sides fairly easily. On the other hand, you don't ever want to buy a boot that's too short. The toe box and heel are the thickest, most rigid parts of the shoe and aren't going to move much.

2. Use a leather conditioner/oil. Right when you get your boots, apply some leather conditioner (I like Chamberlain's Leather Milk) or mink oil. These will help soften the leather, and won't cause the damage that heat or water will. Apply weekly until the shoes are broken in, and then monthly or so after that as part of your leather care routine.

3. Ease into it. Wear them around the house, in thick socks, for 1-2 weeks. While it's true that simply wearing your shoes is the best way to break them in, it doesn't have to be such a painful process. Before wearing them all day at work or heading out on the town as a method of brute force adaption, wear them around the house with a pair of thick socks. You want it to feel tight and even a touch uncomfortable (in terms of tightness, not pain). Wear two pairs if needed.

There are a few benefits to employing this method.

First, when you wear your boots around the house you tend to be up and down a lot, giving your feet a rest between use rather than standing or walking around at a constant clip for an extended period of time.

Second, when you wear a thick pair or two of socks, you end up stretching the leather just a bit. Producing this kind of gradual pressure is preferred, as that's healthiest for the material. At the same time, you're generating some heat from the friction and warmth of the heavy socks, which will help mould the leather — again, very gradually, which is ideal.



How to Break-In a Pair of Leather Boots (continued)

Finally, by first wearing your boots with the padding of thick socks, you reduce the number of blisters and hot spots you'll get. If you do still get some, give the areas of irritation extra protection with a band-aid.

4. Use a shoe/boot stretcher. If after 80-100 hours of wear your boots aren't comfortable for an 8-hour day, you may need to take one final step, moving beyond breaking in your boots with your own fleshy feet, to re-shaping things a bit with external stretchers.

A couple years ago, I bought my spouse some Red Wing boots for Christmas. They were definitely the right size, and mostly comfortable, but after about a half day of wear, they'd start to feel a little tight and a little blistery just at the widest part of her feet. A small thing, really, but something that would perhaps keep them from wearing them as much as they wanted.

I looked into taking them to the Red Wing store to see what they could do, but I dug into some boot forums (yes, they exist!) and found that shoe stretchers — the kind you can just buy on Amazon — have generally rave reviews when it comes to small adjustments that are needed with your leather boots.

Shoe stretchers look basically like shoe trees, but instead of being solid, they have a mechanism that expands the tree while inside the shoe so that it gently and gradually stretches the material.

I bought a pair of stretchers for those Red Wings, and after just a few days they were perfectly adjusted (and have stayed that way). My wife went from being a little sore in them after a half day or so, to comfortably walking all around San Francisco on a vacation over the course of 3 very full days. I was pretty amazed actually.

There isn't much to using them: simply insert into the shoe, twist the knob that widens the toe sections — just enough to feel some resistance and hear the leather creaking just a bit, and let it go to work. You don't want to stretch them out too much all at once. Again, set it so there's some resistance, and then give it a little more over successive nights until it's just right. As an extra precaution, moisturize the boot while doing this with either conditioner or oil. It will both soften the leather for stretching and proactively protect against any cracking.

Some things in life just aren't hackable. Breaking in your leather boots is one of those things. Once you've done it though, they'll be set for everyday use and decades of wear.



My First Year with the Club

When I went to the first meeting of the Empire City Motorcycle Club, I was nervous, wondering what I was going to find, but excited to find out what the club was about and to meet the members, whom I had watched in videos on the Empire City MC website. From the first evaluation ride, to my first long ride up to the Ranch for the annual Biker Weekend, to the other many rides and events, my time with the Club has given me great experiences as a rider and a lot of great memories.

So, I want to thank my club brothers for all they have done for me. To Chaz, for the first evaluation ride and the constant friendship and support since. To KK, for his steadfast caring (and food adventures). To Steven, for being the first to offer to sponsor me, and for all the support when I was feeling uneasy. To Evil Ed, for all the long phone calls, both for advice and not, and the many laughs along the way. To Joe, for his gentle hints and tips, which I know have saved me several times from learning the hard way. To Aaron, for his wonderful hospitality. To Scot, for his remarks on the YouTube documentary, which were a large part of why I became interested in the club in the first place. To Michael, for his stories. To Mark, for his sharing of the history of the club. To Mario, for the wild ride back from the Fallen Heroes Ride in Pennsylvania. To Geno, for the really cold but really enjoyable ride in Staten Island. Mostly, I want to thank you all for sharing your adventures and brotherhood with me. To an adopted only child, having brothers who support me and care about me is a new and entirely satisfying experience.



In Love and Brotherhood,
Erik R.

The Polaris Slingshot: Three-Wheeled Car or Bike?

Rule one in determining if something is an automobile or a motorcycle tends to be that if you have to ask this question to begin with, it's *probably not* a motorcycle!

Automatic transmission, bucket seats, steering wheel (not handlebars), seat belts, side-by-side seating and I think there's even air conditioning, all of which in my opinion takes away from it even remotely being a motorcycle; however, in a recent article in American Motorcyclist Magazine, Chris Phillips dove into the debate head-first.

Chris writes: "From the front, it looks like a Formula-1 car, with its twin wheels and two-seater cockpit; however, from the rear its single-sided swing arm and single wheel was vexing.

So, is the Slingshot more like a motorcycle or a car? The Slingshot is a two-seater, like many cars; however, so are many, if not most motorcycles. With few exceptions, motorcycles can carry a rider and a pillion, while most cars can carry more than four passengers easily. The Slingshot's side-by-side seating does resemble a car, although it was reminiscent of a side car rig. Conclusion: Tie. The riding position sits too perfectly in between car and motorcycle to call."

Licensing was another issue that was discussed, after all, if you are going to ride a motorcycle in the United States or Canada, you need to have a special endorsement on your driving licence. However, in the case of the Slingshot, 45 of 50 states do not require a "motorcycle endorsement" on your licence for driving a Slingshot.

Some states have created a special class of licence entitled "autocycles" for Slingshots and other three-wheeled vehicles with side-by-side seating. Conclusion: Check your local laws.

As for driving and handling, the Jekyll & Hyde character becomes noticeable. Chris and his passenger were glad to have Bluetooth headsets in their helmets as at 70MPH with the open cockpit, the rush of wind made it difficult to converse without it.

The Slingshot's three-track setup meant when trying to avoid hitting potholes and road hazards with your *front wheels*, the rear wheel took the hit instead. When trying to prevent the back wheel from taking the hit, the front wheels got it. It was quite literally the worst of both worlds.

In the end, the Slingshot manages to defy categorisation – it combines a bit of motorcycle and a bit of car, but a while lot of neither, proving it to be an exciting mixture while retaining a wholly unique flavour of its own.



Newsletter SNAFU

You may have noticed that the attachments on the last two newsletter transmissions via e-mail were "rar files" (a compression format, similar to zip files). When I screwed it up on January's issue, I was kicking myself for attaching the wrong file – then presto, in February, I repeated the mistake! Just not my year. Of course, if you had a programme to uncompress rar files, or accessed the newsletter online with the provided links, you could see the newsletter; however, I got some e-mails from folks who were thoroughly confused. Sorry!

Keep in mind that every newsletter is online in PDF format at <http://empirecitymc.com/newsletter/> -- so you can always go there to view the newsletter. New issues are added on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (one week after our Open General Meetings).



11th Annual Hogs 4 Hope Ride

Come join Empire City MC and hundreds of other bikers and bike-lovers on this charity ride, supporting the Ronald McDonald House of New York. As the date approaches, check <http://calendar.EmpireCityMC.com> to see where our met-up locations will be.



TO BENEFIT
THE RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE NEW YORK

HOGS 4 HOPE

11th Annual HOGS4HOPE
FALLS TO RIVER RUN

APRIL 28TH

RAIN DATE MAY 5th

SPONSORS

POLICE ESCORT

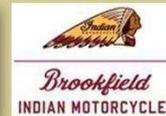
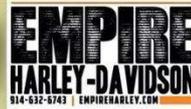
PIG ROAST

LIVE MUSIC

PINUP CONTEST

RAFFLE CONTEST

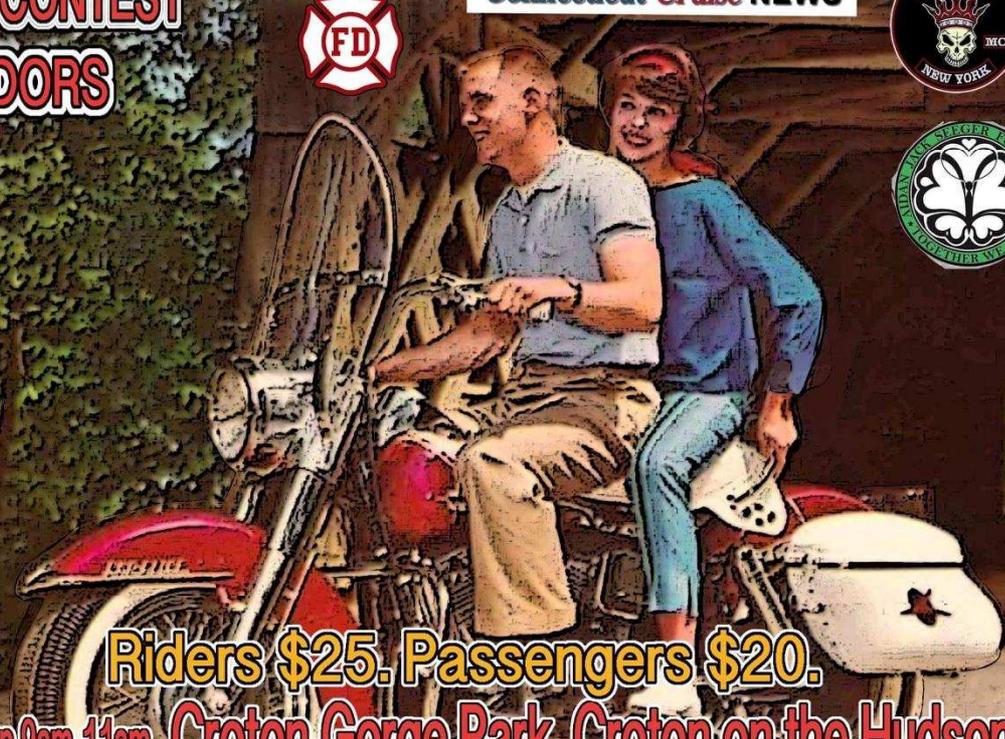
VENDORS



THE MEMBERS
OF THE YONKERS
FIRE DEPARTMENT



Connecticut Cruise NEWS



Riders \$25. Passengers \$20.

Sign up 9am-11am Croton Gorge Park, Croton on the Hudson

Kickstands up at 11am Pig Roast BBQ Party starts at Noon

The JFK Marina, Yonkers, NY

Contact Ken 914-424-8007 gkendricks@hotmail.com

rmh-newyork.org/events/hog-for-hope

UPCOMING EVENTS & RIDES

Sat 23rd March: EVENT: Long Island Ravens MC's 27th Anniversary Dinner, Long Island, NY

Fri 29th – Sun 31st March: EVENT: Bay State Marauders 16th Anniversary, Provincetown, MA

Wed 3rd April 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're booked into.

Sun 28th April: RIDE: Hogs 4 Hope, a benefit for Ronald McDonald House. A police-escorted ride, pig roast BBQ with live music and raffle prizes. If you cannot make the ride, you are welcome to purchase a ticket for the BBQ only! ALL MAKES/MODEL BIKES WELCOME! See: <https://www.rmh-newyork.org/events/hog-for-hope> or the advertisement in this newsletter!

Wed 1st May 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're booked into.

Fri 24th – Mon 27th May: RIDE: Empire City's 8th Annual Motorcycle Weekend in the fingerlakes! (admission by motorcycle only!)

Fri 31st May – Sun 2nd Jun: RIDE: 2nd Annual LGBT Motorcycle Weekend at Rainbow Mountain in the Pocono Mountains

Wed 5th Jun 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011. All interested men and prospective members are welcome to attend. Always check with the front desk/schedule to see which room we're booked into.

Sun 9th June 11:00-17:00: RIDE: 31st Annual Philadelphia Gay Pride March 2019. Meet-up at 13th & Spruce St, Philadelphia, PA

Fri 21st June 18:00-21:00: EVENT: ECMC's 55th Annual *FREE* Bike Blessing at Ty's Bar

Sat 22nd June 09:00-17:00: RIDE: ECMC's 55th Annual *FREE* Biker Picnic (admission by motorcycle only!)

Sun 23rd June 18:00-21:00: EVENT: Folsom Street East, 22nd Anniversary

Sun 30th June 12:00-16:00: RIDE: NYC Gay Pride March / World Pride / 50th Anniversary of Stonewall

Wed 3rd Jul Jun 20:00 – 21:00: Empire City MC's Open General Meeting, held 8pm-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month at "The Centre" 208 W 13th St, New York, NY 10011.

Fri 16th – Mon 19th August: RIDE: Montréal Gay Pride Weekend! Speak to any ECMC member for details on this fantastic trip!

Sat 7th – Sun 15th September: RIDE: Empire City's Week-Long Anniversary Ride to Provincetown, MA!

Fri 11th – Mon 14th October: EVENT: Empire City MC's 55th Anniversary In-Town Run and Dinner Cruise!

REMEMBER: There are plenty of other events and rides added to our official calendar on a regular basis, especially day rides! Bookmark our official calendar at calendar.EmpireCityMC.com and come along with us on some great rides!

Our physical mailing address is:

Empire City MC
10 W 15th St, Suite 609
New York, NY 10011-6821



Empire City MC is a proud member of the Atlantic Motorcycle Coordinating Council. For more information about membership with Empire City MC, [click here](#) to view/download our constitution, bylaws and membership application.

We're on facebook at <http://facebook.EmpireCityMC.com>

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Send any articles, photos or letters to the editor at news@EmpireCityMC.com

**Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend – 24th-27th May 2019
Information and Run Application**



With the help of many friends and the dedication of ECMC members, we're excited to announce another great Memorial Day Weekend riding experience including some meals, accommodations and more! Won't you join ECMC for Motorcycle Weekend?

Friday, 24th May Ride with us to "The Ranch" in Hemlock, NY through the scenic Hudson Valley Region and the Southern Tier of New York State with multiple breaks/pick-up points.

Saturday, 25th May Explore upstate New York's Finger Lakes region!

Sunday, 26th May Explore upstate New York's Finger Lakes region!

Monday, 27th May Ride with us back to New York City.

In order to best prepare and accommodate everyone, we ask that you carefully review the ride as outlined and submit your completed application with \$40/per person run fee to Empire City MC before 19th May, 2019. Space is strictly limited to 20 bikers/buddies!

This is a motorcycle only event! No four-wheeled vehicles are allowed! We understand there are riders from all over that would like to participate in this event without having to enter New York City; therefore, we have several meet-up points and times specified in the map on page two. Included for your \$40 run fee are: Accommodations at The Ranch, three dinners and three breakfasts, open bar all weekend at The Ranch. Each person must complete this form and send it in.

Name _____

Club Affiliation (if any) _____

E-Mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ - _____ I am: Buddy Rider / Rider

I will meet you at (see map on page 2): A, B, C, D, or E

Emergency Contact Person _____

Emergency Contact Phone Number (_____) _____ - _____

I, _____, certify that I have attained at least twenty-one (21) years of age and that I, based upon mutual covenants and considerations, will not hold Empire City Motorcycle Club, Inc. (a.k.a. ECMC), Al Rizzo/Dan Marty (a.k.a. The Ranch) nor the individual and collective officers, members, servants, agents, employees thereof liable for any injury to my person or property during the period of Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend. I further agree to indemnify, save harmless and hold harmless Empire City Motorcycle Club, Inc. (a.k.a. ECMC), Al Rizzo/Dan Marty (a.k.a. The Ranch) or the individual and collective officers, members, servants, agents, employees thereof from any and all liability, serious injury, economic loss, and any other loss arising from whatever event, source, manner and/or nature which they may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments against them, individually and/or collectively, arising out of their individually and/or collectively granting to me the privilege of attending and participating in part and/or whole of Empire City MC's Annual Motorcycle Weekend.

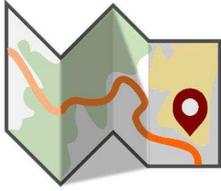
Signature _____ Date _____

Please mail this application in to our Run Chairman for processing. Bed space will be assigned on a 'first registered, first served' basis, so don't delay! Please read the directions carefully and return this page with payment (\$40 per person) by U.S. Mail to:

**Empire City MC Motorcycle Weekend
10 W 15th St, Suite 609
New York, NY 10011-6821**

Save time: Apply online at <https://ecmc-mw-2019.eventbrite.com>





Please note: This is a different route from prior years – new scenery – woo hoo!!

Don't forget to tick the box on page one to let us know where you're meeting up with us! Furthermore, it's vital that your motorcycle is in good working order and you are on time to your respective meet-up location.

Meet-up Point "A" (Lexington Candy Shop, New York, NY)

09:00 - 10:00 ... Breakfast at Lexington Candy Shop, 1226 Lexington Ave at 83rd St, New York, NY 10028
 10:00 - 11:00 ... Kickstands up from Lexington Candy Shop and ride 26.6 mi (0:60)

Meet-up Point "B" (Exxon Gas Station, 842 NJ-17, Ramsey, NJ 07446)

11:00 - 11:15 ... Gas up, bathroom/snack break. Everyone must gas up at this stop!
 11:15 - 13:30 ... Kickstands up and ride 128 mi (2:15)

Meet-up Point "C" (LUNCH STOP at Butterfields Cafe, 16 Division St, Deposit, NY 13754)

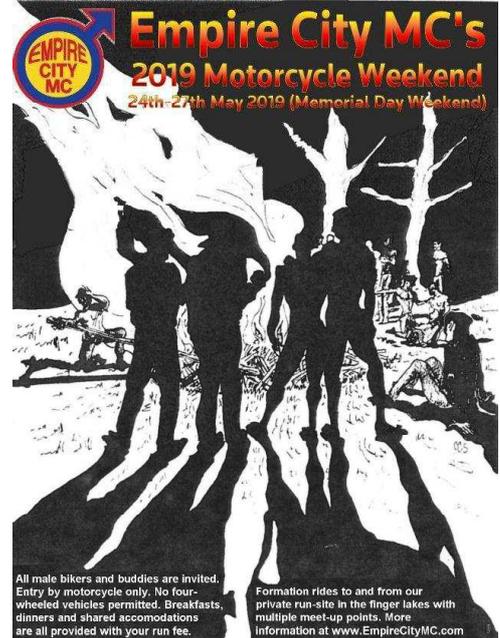
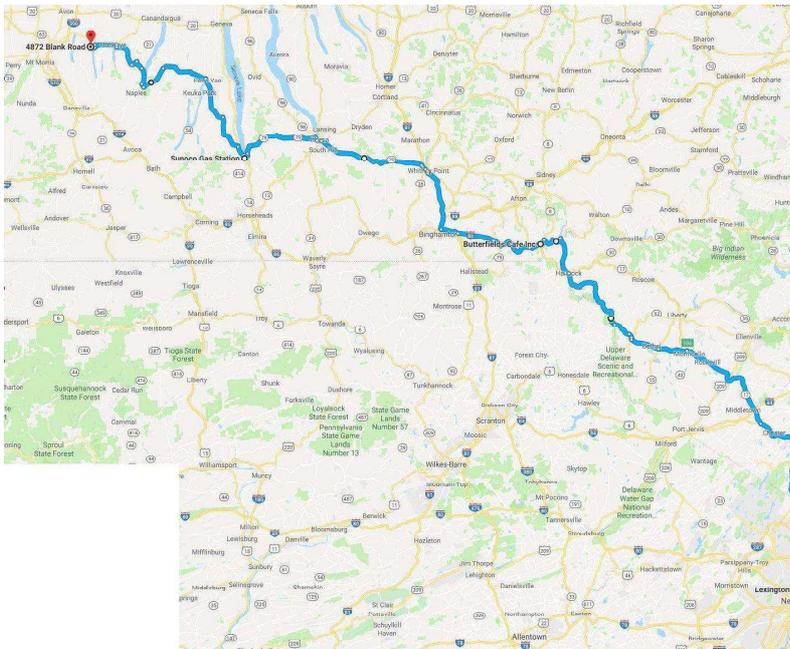
13:30 - 14:45 ... Butterfield's Café for lunch, then fuel stop at Sunoco 2nd St & Dean St
 14:45 - 16:45 ... Kickstands up and ride 100 mi (2:00)

Meet-up Point "D" (Sunoco Gas Station, N Franklin St & 9th St, Watkins Glen, NY 14891)

16:45 - 17:00 ... Gas up, bathroom/snack break
 17:00 - 18:30 ... Kickstands up and ride 68.4 mi (1:30)

Meet-up Point "E" (The Ranch, 4872 Blank Rd, Hemlock, NY 14466)

18:30 Arrive at The Ranch and get your first meal!



What do you need to bring?

A bed, clean linens and towels will be provided by The Ranch, but for your safety and comfort, we recommend you bring the following:

- bike tool kit
- extra bungee cords
- rain gear
- driving license
- motorcycle registration
- motorcycle insurance card
- mobile phone charger
- medications
- motorcycle insurance card
- dry clothing
- club colours (vest)
- favourite sex toy (optional) ;-)

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- You may view/tweak our interactive route map online at: <http://bit.ly/2019MW>
- The Ranch has play space as well as a pool, hot tub, bar, nature trails and more! Read more about The Ranch at <http://i.mp/TheRanch>
- We will provide gourmet meals at The Ranch on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.
- All lunch-time meals and on-the-road meals are your own responsibility.
- After registering, we will send you a confirmation letter with further details.



Save time and a stamp: pay online at <https://ecmc-mw-2019.eventbrite.com>