



WORDS:
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Above:
Imagine the most
fun supermarket
of all time...

THE SMARTER ALTERNATIVE?

Imagine having a wide variety of very impressive bikes at your disposal. Imagine then the chance to ride them without having to worry about additional hassles like insurance, servicing, maintenance, or depreciation. Such a world sounds too good to be true doesn't it? In fact it's reality, and exists here in the UK. MSL's Chris Moss went to find out more...



Spyder Club, a firm with bases at Donington Park and Maidenhead, gives its members the opportunity to ride, anywhere in Europe, such exotica as a Ducati 1198S, Aprilia RSV4 Factory, MVF4 R312 and Brutale 910S. It also has a Triumph Street Triple R, Ducati Hypermotard 1100S and KTM 990 Adventure. More bikes will be added to the fleet next year, with the new and much-hyped BMW S1000RR likely to become one of the most popular.

For an annual fee you earn time, mileage and points. Depending on when you want to ride, and which group your chosen bike sits in, points will be deducted from your total. With insurance and all other running costs bar fuel included in the price, the hire scheme represents a real alternative to buying your own bike and all the other considerations that have to go with it.

For an

annual fee of £3000 you earn 50 days, 5000miles or 1200 points. For £2100 you get 33 days, 3300miles and 790 points. Pay £1150 and you're entitled to 16 days, 1600miles and 380 points. £650 buys eight days, 1000miles and 200 points.

Now that might sound like a lot of money to ride something you'll never own. But a recent trip to a Spyder Club open day, where I got the chance to meet some of its members enlightened me to its value.

DEPRECIATION

David Marsh, 42, an Aussie working in London describes the club as being perfectly convenient for him, not to mention economical. "You only need to do the maths to appreciate it. Depreciation alone can cost more than the membership fee itself. And with none of the hassle like having to garage your bike, clean or service it, for me it's a winner. The social side of things, and being a member of a club is a big draw too."

David Sorbie is another fan. The 43-year-old from Bucks, uses the Maidenhead outlet, says his time is precious. "With the Spyder Club all I do is ride, which is exactly what I want. I don't have to waste time on chores like maintenance. I ride during the week and get the chance to ride a vast selection of very special bikes. The convenience of it all makes real sense to me. After joining I have to ask the question, why would anyone want to buy a bike?!"

Convenience is definitely the most attractive factor for Derby-based Dave Needham. "This is my second year of membership. I don't have my own bike any longer due to a shortage of time. Being based near to Donington means I

can just pop in when I feel like it. I often use bikes to go and visit clients. To me it's an economic way of motorcycling on some really special machines."

Other customers (not called Dave!), also sang the praises of the club. Most liked the hassle free nature of the set up, which can even include bike delivery and pick up at an extra cost. Some enjoyed finding out more about different sorts of bikes they've never tried before, and many liked the thrill of experiencing dream bikes at an affordable price. Groups of clients took advantage using a selection of machines and then sharing them around, sometimes on holidays. Others benefitted from Spyder Club's track day bikes including a Honda Fireblade, Suzuki GSX-R 750 and Yamaha R6 which can be used at any circuit in the EU. Enjoying the company of other motorcyclists at club events was also a frequently mentioned view.

TEMPTED TO JOIN

I have to admit if I wasn't a bike testing journalist I'd be very tempted to join the club myself. I love motorcycling, but only the riding. To me that's sadly only around 50 per cent of the biking experience. The other 50 per cent is just hassle. The advantage of the Spyder Club for me personally would be expanding the riding 50 per cent to 100 per cent, and reducing the other less attractive half to nil. In my opinion that's definitely worth paying for.

For more details for the Spyder Club, contact Mark or Lizzi Smith-Young - 01332 850344, www.spyderclub.co.uk

Above:
If you want a
Bonnie, it's here.
If you want an F4,
it's here. If you
want a Ulysses...
Well, you get the
idea

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