



The Return: Riding Western China

Produced by Carl Parker

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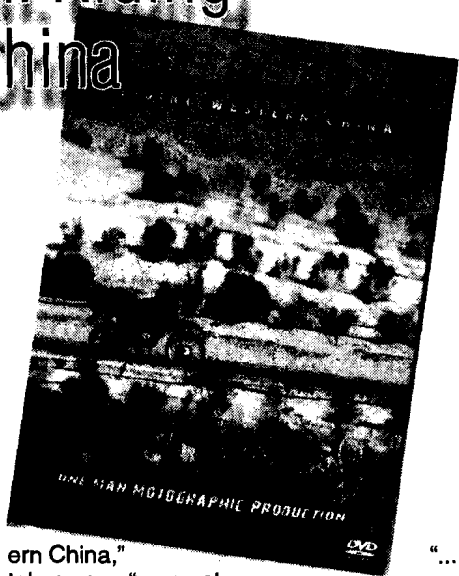
by Motocyclops Prod., Chantilly, VA
motocyclops.com

98 minutes/Dolby Digital 2ch Stereo

It used to be that there was only a handful of true "adventure tourers" on the planet. They were famous dudes with a faraway look in eyes deep-sunk into faces darkened by the sun and etched by the dust. To a man, they limped. In recent years, the number of people who fancy themselves motorcycle adventurers has veritably skyrocketed. Now, maybe one out of, oh, 20 or 30,000 motorcyclists has packed his bags and platinum credit cards, installed new "universal" tires on his plush, \$16,000, 1200cc "dual sport" machine, and set off down the Pan-American Highway for Tierra del Fuego or up the Alaskan Highway towards the Great White North. But there are still a few who have truly set out for parts unknown, with little but lint in their pockets and astride bikes that other riders wouldn't trust to make it to the mall.

That's Virginian Carl Parker. There are very few westerners, and pretty much none who travel alone, by motorcycle, who have ventured to the mysterious western provinces of China. Not only was Parker eager to tackle one of the most barren areas on earth, often hundreds of miles from the simplest amenities, but he wasn't astride some long-travel twin with enough load capacity to carry a camel along as a spare. Amazingly, he rode a little, Chinese-made, 150cc Jialing dual sport.

But that isn't close to the full measure of Parker's intrepid spirit. No, even riskier, he set out to produce what he calls "motography," the relating, in audio and video, of his motorcycle adventures. His 98 minute DVD, "The Return: Riding West-



ern China," takes us ... "on a solo 'motographic' ride from Sichuan, China, through Tibet-Qinghai then into Xinjiang—home of the great Taklamakan Desert and the Karakoram Highway leading us to our ultimate destination—Kashmir."

Parker is a one-man production crew, from riding the bike, to narrating, to taking the photos, to translating the local dialects, to eating whatever creepy, crawly unimaginable he was served, to producing, directing, and editing a more-than-amateur/less-than-professional quality DVD travelogue of his journey. Okay, so he didn't perform the musical score (nicely done by Proximity Butterfly). But you get the feeling that he could have.

The Return has a "National Geographic" quality about it, but the "National Geographic" from times past. Parker rode into a land where progress isn't, into a landscape like the American Southwest before the railroads arrived. He befriended its people, slept in yak-hide yurts, braved sandstorms, floods, and broken motorcycles. This is a fascinating production—authentic, personal, unpretentious. The Return invites you to ride pillion on the adventure of a lifetime.