

**FREE  
since  
1984**

**November 2015**

# **CITY @ BIKE**

**RIDE FAST** **TAKE CHANCES**

## **GS-EXCESSIVE**

**Suzuki Flexes its Muscles  
with the GSX-S1000F ABS**



**Beemer Bashing on a K1600GTL · New York Motorcycle Film Festival  
Harley-Davidson Museum · FZ-07R First Look · Horizons Unlimited Travellers Meeting  
Cardo Scala Rider PackTalk · MotoChic Lauren**

my helmet in the kitchen by singing “This is ground control to Major Tom...”

But otherwise installation is relatively painless.

The next day I wind onto Oak Street. While passing the panhandle I use the voice activation: “Hey!” I yell—you have to yell pretty damn loud to trigger the voice commands. And after waiting for the beep: “Radio on!”

The hard rock radio I preset kicks on and it’s a real game changer. “Flies in the Vaseline” by the Stone Temple Pilots is pumping through the helmet without even touching a button. I already felt like a force to be reckoned with—riding a road I know well on a nimble little bike—but now I am bad. I will break you with my face. Out of the way, world. I am distortion fueled fire with a throttle and dual ABS.

Then I remind myself not to be a total asshole and I lane split like something approaching a gentleman.

Unfortunately, I find my loud yelling for voice commands is disturbing pedestrians and drivers at stop lights. But while riding down 580, I start whistling along to a song when the music stops unexpectedly, then I hear the beep I’ve come to recognize as the voice command cue. I experiment with whistling to get the Cardo’s attention and it works much better.

After getting the general knack of the Cardo (including making sure the its phone app is turned on before putting the kickstand up), I make several calls to friends and family and it’s wonderful. Old



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba

friends and I catch up and everyone’s impressed by how clear the connection sounds.

I even get to to freak out the girlfriend:

“Yeah, I’m talking to you on the phone and

Finally, my husband, sick of watching me adjust it at very stop, suggested I try a backpack. After many years and Many more backpacks, I’ve gained extensive backpack experience and knowledge, enough to be fairly picky about details. Editor Surj knows this, in fact I think this is one of the reasons he hired me.

So, along comes the MotoChic Lauren Bag. I’d seen this bag online when it was just a Kickstarter campaign, then checked it out a bit later when friends brought theirs out to show off.

Not bad.

I’m just not a big designer purse gal, so the marketing around this didn’t really catch my attention. Typically, I go for a more, I dunno... Mad Max style?

I’m tough on gear and don’t want to worry about getting grease on my stuff, loading it full of tools, trackday supplies, whatever.

But then the MotoChic bag arrives on my doorstep; a foxy little black ‘n’ red number, and ok, I’m sort of a sucker for things that match my red belt covers.

First things first: the elephant in the room is the price on the website. At \$325, it ain’t even close to cheap. Not even in the same neighborhood.

Going back to the designer bag customer... maybe this is a normal price tag for such a bag, but to me, who would compare it to other backpacks, it’s pricey.

Visible: it’s reflective. Black by day, glowing by night. This is a big deal for obvious reasons.

Options: initially I thought it was kinda cool that you could tuck away the backpack

straps and pull out a couple other straps to make it into a regular bag, though I didn’t think I’d use that feature much because, like I said earlier, I’m a backpack person. But I’ve used the different straps and it’s pretty damn handy. I even look professional if I go to a meeting at work.

Lightweight: Lauren was light until I loaded her up with all my shit; but even fully loaded, she was easy to put on. There’s a small front chest clip that is adjustable up and down, so Lauren can be a happy monkey on just about anyone’s back.

Pockets: I’m organizationally challenged, so lots of pockets easily confuse me. I think, “Oh good, this pocket can be for my keys!” and then I can’t find my keys. But, for the lady who likes everything in its place, pockets are good—there’s even a big padded pocket for a laptop.

Stylish: like I said—work friendly. If there’s a power failure in the building, shine a flashlight on that baby and your coworkers



Photo: Angelica Rubalcaba



Photo: Harrison Cole

The computer is undoubtedly monitoring the sonic landscape and any significant spike in the aural terrain triggers its attention. This poses any interesting challenge when singing along to a song – if you sound too different from the song, the music will stop and the electronic ear butler will beep: computer-ese for “You rang, sir?”

The PackTalk clearly has a hard time picking up my baritone voice amongst the wind and engine noise. But it responds better if I affect a high-pitched Leprechaun twang. And when trying to place a call by stating the number, I first affect a robotic voice, enunciating the phone number clearly. But this proves frustratingly ineffective. It’s when I lose my cool and inconsiderately rattle off the digits that the computer actually interprets things correctly. Go figure.

standing up with no hands.”

“Jesus, focus on what you’re doing!”

Pretty sure I’m hooked on this helmet headset. Can’t wait to tour with one. Two thumbs up.

\$329.95 single / \$579.95 duo. Learn more at [cardosystems.com](http://cardosystems.com).

### That’s What Chic Said: MotoChic Lauren Backpack

By An DeYoung

There are different types of motorcycle riders in this world, and they carry different stuff: courier bags, fanny packs, backpacks, nothing but a wallet. I’m a backpack person. I used to be a courier bag person, but there was always too much fussing with it.

**CALIFORNIA**  
SPORT TOURING

Apparel, Tires,  
Parts & Accessories

Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki,  
Suzuki, Yamaha & More

Full Service Center

Low \$75/hr shop rate

636 Alfred Noble Dr., Hercules, CA 94547

CaSportTouring.com  
510-741-3700

**bello moto**

Scooters Are Our Passion

Vespa SERVIZIO

Vintage Scooters in SF  
Vespa & Lambretta SALES

SERVICE • PARTS • RESTORATIONS

[www.bellomoto.com](http://www.bellomoto.com)  
415 872.5567