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Winter is coming on. Should great-uncle Arthur (R.I.P.) have left you a bit in his will, you can either hop on a plane and fly for way too many hours across the Pacific to the Southern Hemisphere and beautiful New Zealand and ride those delightful islands, or settle in with this book in front of the fire and plan a trip for next spring to the European Alps. I am overly fond of both destinations, but I prefer the Alps.

John Hermann, a.k.a. The King of the Alps, has ridden every motorcycle-worthy pass in the Alps, and is positively addicted to the practice. I will boast that I have been riding the Alps longer than he has, since I began in 1957 on my NSU 250, when the 6,800-foot Monte Giovo Pass (*Jaufenpass* in German) was still dirt. And I have been back many, many times, but Hermann has dedicated himself to riding every road and has been over passes that are still on my to-do agenda. On his pass-bagging list he has over 300 passes, and maybe I've been on 200 of them.

This Alpine chain of mountains curves for some 700 miles from the French Riviera through Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Italy all the way over to Slovenia on the Adriatic Sea, and Hermann covers 75 different routes in these mountains, which are grouped into 20 sections. A section would be a part of the Alps where you might want to stay a few days.

In the Dolomites section he lists eight routes, including his infamous "17 Passes in One Day." Just make sure the day is in June, with much daylight. If you want to ride the area around Lake Garda, a little to the west, he details four routes. Including one of my very favorites, up to the Hotel Paradiso in Pieve – not really suitable for anyone suffering vertigo.

In his "Beyond" sections he also includes 15 routes in Corsica and northern Spain, just in case you have an extra-long vacation.

Each route is well-described, and if there is a *Gasthaus* on top of the pass where you can get a cup of hot cocoa, that is detailed. Some passes have a day of the week on which motorcyclists congregate, and he tells you that. In each section he mentions hotels he has enjoyed, but does not give phone numbers or street addresses. Choose your own.

The big choice is really whether to go on your own, or on a tour, and in appendices he talks about shipping your own bike, or renting one. And he also lists the organized touring companies. To tell the truth, I would choose a tour outfit, especially for first-timers. Expensive, yes, but you arrive at the airport, taxi to the hotel, and from then on all you have to think about is enjoying the roads you ride. You can go off on your own, or follow a guide, knowing that you will have a nice hotel that evening, and your bags will be there waiting for you.

Reading this book will have you counting the days until you leave. If you can only take one motorcycle trip to a far-off land, I recommend the Alps.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [Motorcycle Journeys Through The Alps & Beyond](#), Fifth Edition, by John Hermann, is published by Whitehorse Press, whitehorsepress.com or call 800-531-1133. Cost is \$29.95 and it can be ordered directly from the publisher or through your local bookstore.