

Zimbabwe May 2012

This was Ronelle and my second bike trip though Zimbabwe, the first was May 2011 when we decided that we would have to come back to see much more of this beautiful land. On the 2011 trip it was just Ronelle and I on my 990R, but this time around I convinced my brother, Nolan, to join us (BMW 650 Dakar), his wife could not make it due to a trip to Oz.

I think the pictures tell the story so I'll just fill in some facts and stats here and there. By the way, with each of us having a camera we managed to come home with a combined total of 2010 photos!



Day One: Sun City (home) - Thabazimbi - Vaalwater - Mokopane - Polokwane (Meropa Town Lodge) 386 km

Ready to leave. The route being as much dirt as possible (isn't that the point?) to Polokwane, via Rankin's and Vaalwater. Loaded on the 990R - two Trax panniers, one for me and one for Ronelle, filled with clothes, etc. The Kriega bag on top of each pannier has our toiletries, mozzie stuff, chargers (for helmet intercom, phones, etc.) Each loaded pannier, with Kriega bag on top weighs 10kg. The small tail bag has some tools, two short tyre levers, tube and tubeless puncture repair kits (both front and back rims have sealed up spokes so therefore no tubes), 21" tube (for emergency), four air bombs, Slime mini air-compressor (as big as my palm, bought from a USA Walmart store for US\$9.99 (R80!) last September...I bought the last four they had on the shelf!), duct tape and other bits and bobs. Total weight 3.7 kg. In my tank bag - a 500ml water "Bobble" filter water bottle each, first aid kit, floppy sun hats, camera, Leatherman, etc. In the cubby under the tank bag is electrical spares (fuses, globes), 250ml engine oil (don't know why I still carry this, these bikes never use oil), Pratley Steel, contact adhesive and a tow strap. Under the seat - KTM tool bag, spare clutch lever, spark plug, cable ties, chain lube, etc.

Day Two: Polokwane - Musina - Beitbridge - Lion and Elephant 302 km



Polokwane to Beitbridge was just a straight haul up the N1. Here's Nolan crossing over into Zim with the Limpopo in the background



Beitbridge border, Zim side. I sneaked this pic of Ronelle (pink hat!) She keeps an eye on the bike while I do the queues!). Although the queues were long we were through both S.A. and Zim sides in about 90 minutes. After living in Swaziland, Lesotho and Namibia for 14 years I have some experience of African border crossings, just follow the process, don't use any "helpers / touts", keep your sense of humour, smile and be a "little" friendly, i.e. make like this is all rather ho hum, you do this every day. Too friendly and they get suspicious!



Eish, choices choices! First fuel stop in Zim...use left hand side to fill up and pay in rand, use right for US\$!





First night in Zim was at the Lion and Elephant, on the banks of the (very dry) Bubyee River.