

# Days out in the UK: Isle Of Man TT

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People who have me on Facebook or know me, probably already know that I embarked on a short trip to the Isle Of Man, to watch the 2018 TT. I booked this trip pretty last-minute and because of uni schedule, I was only able to go for the practice week. Regardless, it was an unforgettable experience and I already have the post TT blues being back home.

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For those who don't know much about the Isle Of Man TT, It is one of the most famous motorcycle events in the world, taking place on the public roads of the Island and stretching just over 37 miles long. The track is filled with tight corners and beautiful scenic roads. Riders taking part are travelling round the track at speeds in excess of 130mph, which makes this race well-known as being the most dangerous motorbike race in the world. The death toll from 1907 – 2017 for the riders taking part is 252. The spectators watch from the side of the road, sometimes in arms reach of the riders speeding past, it is as much a thrill for people going to watch this race as it is the riders themselves, which is why it is so popular with people from every corner of the globe.



I set off to Heysham on the 29th of May to get the ferry. It was a lovely, easy ride and it was no problem to find access to the port. The ferry itself takes around 3 hours (I disembarked at 3pm and arrived at 5:45pm). Upon arrival, we all stood with our bikes ready to ride off, however everyone viewed this time to showcase the enormous volume of their exhausts and had a 'rev off'. Having never even been to the Isle Of Man when the TT isn't on, I was a complete novice when it came to



finding my camp site. As the roads were also closed because of the race, I could not access Douglas rugby club, so I just had to strip off and watch the races to wait till the roads opened again. The campsite itself was brilliant, ran by a company called '[IntentsGP](#)' and they basically follow most F1 and MotoGP events across Europe, they are two young lads who, Anthony and Alex, who are the friendliest people you'll ever meet. They offer you a cold beer on arrival and will literally do anything they can to make your stay as best as it can be. The tent itself was a 2 man tent, however it was more than big enough for just me, you could have easily had 4 people in it, airbed and pillows are provided also a table and chairs. Sleeping bags, lamps and other little bits are available to rent from the reception for a small fee. I would 100% recommend staying with this company if you are heading to the TT or any motorcycling event, [click the link to view there website](#). I will definitely be staying with them again when I return next year.

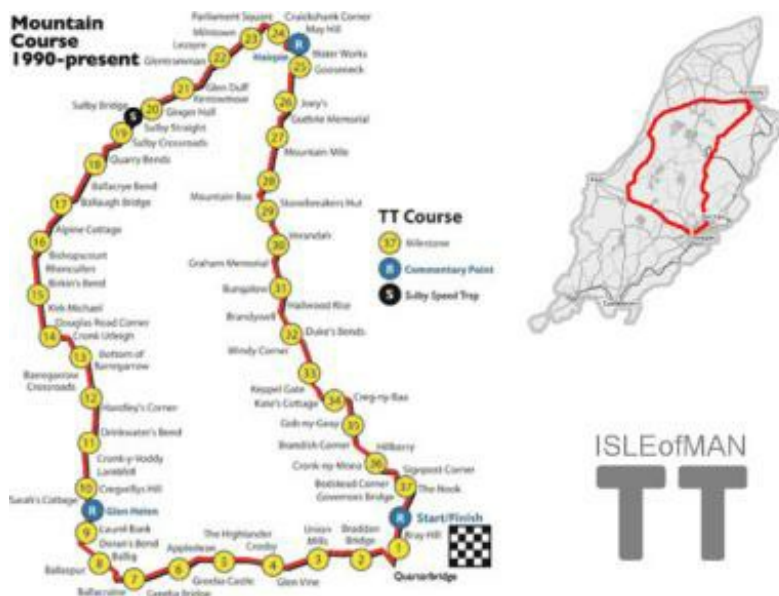


2 most beautiful machines



View from the pier in Douglas

The Island itself is so easy to navigate around. It isn't that big and its impossible to get lost. There are signs everywhere directing you back towards Douglas. The roads on the Island are also really nice and there are hardly pot holes which is a massive difference from riding round the Fylde coast. I travelled up and down the Island on my bike seeing a lot of the sights and meeting so many different people from all over the world.



Watching the actual racing, the main reason for my trip. I mostly hung around Douglas near the grandstand, which was where all the tents and food stands were. There are hundreds of view points around the track, so I only got to view a small percentage of them. Near the grandstand I managed to get right next to the road, to the point where you can literally feel the wind from the bikes speeding past you. It is such an experience seeing bikes and the sidecars flying down a public road at 130+mph, I have never experienced anything like it, the noise and the atmosphere is just amazing.

I travelled there solo, but it really never felt like I was on my own. Everyone was so friendly and chatty, it felt like a big community as everyone was there for the same reason, all sharing the common factor of loving bikes. I spoke to many people and tagged along to group rides around the track multiple times, it was such a nice atmosphere and vibe to be part of.

Sadly however there are some risks and dangers to riding a motorbike in such a busy time of year for a small island, as there are lots of riders wanted to break the land speed record who will come up your blind side and overtake everything on the road. If you do travel there, there is not really a quiet time on the island to ride, so you just have to take care and be extra careful, checking your mirrors on a regular basis. Sadly there isn't a year at the TT where they have no fatalities and just before I arrived a fan was killed whilst riding the track on his bike. Also on the Wednesday evening, the races were cancelled after the first few laps, as a rider Dan Kneen was killed after colliding with a tree at high speeds, as well as Stephen Mercer who is in critical condition after colliding with a safety car (which is the incident that changed the red flag procedure, and is still currently under investigation).

I was lucky with this years event as the weather was perfect, for everyday I was there. It rained once, but I was in my tent so it actually helped me get to sleep. The centre of Douglas was mostly populated with bike shops and TT merchandise, however at the same

time of the TT there was the 'hooded ram' festival right on the prom (I didn't get to pay it a visit, but it looked cool), so there is plenty going on other than motorbikes for the few weeks when the TT is on. But just be aware when the roads close, so does basically every shop in the town, so if you need any bits get them well before 5pm.

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