



Love & Merci Grand Tour

March 1 to October 31, 2017

TeamStrange is proud to present the Love & Merci Grand Tour!

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The first part of this GT involves the Merci Train. What is the Merci Train? Well, it all started in 1947 when the United States sent 700 boxcars of relief supplies to the people of France. Most of the goods in those boxcars came from everyday Americans who wanted to do their part to help our allies recover from WWII. In 1949, the French sent a Merci Train with 49 boxcars containing more than 55,000 gifts back to the United States as a sign of gratitude. Merci! One boxcar from the Merci Train was sent to each of the 48 states and the 49th boxcar was shared between Washington DC and the Hawaiian Territory. At last count, more than 40 of these Merci Train boxcars are still in existence.

Your mission is to find Merci Train Boxcars and obtain photos of these boxcars with your GT flag and motorcycle. Will we tell you where the Merci Train Boxcars are located? No. You will figure it out and you can start by looking...

here: <http://www.themetrains.com/merci-train-main.htm> and here: <http://www.mercitrain.org/>

The second part of this GT involves love. Awwww. Love. You can never have too much! Just spell out the word love, one letter at a time, using the first letter of city/town names. You may spell out love as many ten (10) times to increase your score but you may only use a city one time. For example:

Lincoln, NE
Ogden, UT
Victorville, CA
Eagan, MN

These four cities spell the word love and would score points but you may not use any of these four cities again when spelling out love. Got it?

Your entry includes the following: GT Flag and a custom designed sticker. Entry fee is \$40 for one or two up.

GT Flag and sticker mailings will begin around February 15, and thereafter, upon sign up.

[**SIGN UP HERE**](#)

[**QUESTIONS? Ask Jon J.**](#)

Love & Merci Grand Tour Scoring

Points and points alone decide your final finishing position in the Love & Merci Grand Tour. Scoring in this event is as follows:

- 1) Merci Train Boxcars visited:** 50 points each
- 2) Spelling Love:** 50 points for each set of city names spelling out L-O-V-E (Maximum of 10 times for 500 points).
- 3) Bonus Locations:** Points as described

Bonus Locations

The photo standards apply to all bonus locations.

- 1) **Big Love:** The rider with the greatest number of miles between four cities when spelling out L-O-V-E. Riders attempting to claim this bonus must declare the four cities they are using for this challenge in their final submission. TeamStrange will calculate the mileage. (Limited to continental USA) **150 Points**
- 2) **Just a Little Love:** The rider with the least number of miles between four cities when spelling out L-O-V-E. Riders attempting to claim this bonus must declare the four cities they are using for this challenge in their final submission. TeamStrange will calculate the mileage. **75 Points**
- 3) **Love Actually:** Submit a photo of a city/town with the letters I-o-v-e appearing in the name and in that order. **20 points (Limit 1)**
- 4) **The City of Brotherly Love:** Visit the Love Sculpture in Philadelphia created by Robert Indiana. **50 Points (limit 1)**
- 5) **Love and Mercy:** In honor of Brian Wilson, visit the historical marker for the Beach Boys Boyhood Home in Hawthorne, California. **50 Points (limit 1)**
- 6) **Lone Star Love:** Visit Dallas Love Field. Photo must include signage for Dallas Love Field : **50 Points (limit 1)**
- 7) **Love Road (Alaska):** Visit Love Road in Fairbanks Alaska. Get the standard photo of the street sign & a local receipt indicating the date. **250 Points (limit 1)**
- 8) **10-10-10.** Yes. It is what you think it is. Document 10 Merci Train Boxcars within 10 days, with each boxcar being in a different state. You need to meet the photo standards and produce dated receipts for each location. 10 boxcars, 10 states, 10 days, 10 dated receipts. **250 points (limit 1)**
- 9) **Any Statue of Liberty:** Visit the original statue or any of the smaller Statue of Liberty replicas found all around the country. We mean actual replica statues. Not souvenir statues, inflatables, cardboard cutouts or signboards. For reference search “Boy Scouts & replica Statue of Liberty” on the internet. The replicas do not have to be from the Boy Scouts but their examples will make clear what is acceptable. **10 Points each. (Limit 10)**

FINISHING THE GRAND TOUR

- 1) To complete this GT, you must have a finishing score of at least **252** points. Finishing will earn you bragging rights, an Official Love & Merci Grand Tour Finisher pin/medal and a single entry in the prize pool.
- 2) Riders earning a finishing score of **454 points** or more will earn bragging rights, an Official Love & Merci Grand Tour Finisher pin/medal and 5 additional entries in the prize pool.
- 3) Riders scoring **656 points or more** will earn bragging rights, an Official Love & Merci Grand Tour Finisher pin/medal and 10 additional entries in the prize pool.
- 4) Riders scoring **959 points or more** will earn bragging rights, an Official Love & Merci Grand Tour Finisher pin/medal, and 25 additional entries in the prize pool.
- 5) The top finisher (based on point totals) will be declared the “Love & Merci Grand Tour Grand Champion” and will receive a commemorative plaque to document their amazing feat.
- 6) What is in the prize pool? Why cash and prizes of course.

Photo Submission & General Standards

- 1) **When documenting a Merci Train Boxcar** your photos must include your GT flag, motorcycle and a Merci Train Boxcar.
 - a. Be sure to include the location of each boxcar you are claiming with your submission. You can do this via a simple list or by labelling your photos/files.
- 2) **When documenting cities, while spelling out love**, your photos must include your GT flag, motorcycle and a city welcome sign, city limit sign or post office.
 - a. If using a post office, the name of the city MUST be clearly visible in photo.
- 3) **For all bonuses**, your photos must include your GT flag, motorcycle and the subject of the bonus.
- 4) If you cannot get your flag, motorcycle and required subject, in a single photo, you may add no more than two additional photos for clarity and validation. Oftentimes this means including close up photos of a sign or subject and distance photos of your motorcycle and flag.
- 5) Some of the Love & Merci and bonus locations may not be readily accessible on your motorcycle and will be located indoors, down alleyways, or deep inside a park, etcetera and so forth. In these cases, where documenting your motorcycle is not possible, you must appear in the photo along with your GT flag and the boxcar, city sign, or bonus subject. If you are riding two up, both riders must be in the photo.
- 6) Be safe and smart. If conditions or circumstances make capturing a photograph unsafe, a crime, or will result in a ticket or safety violation, do not take the risk. Find a safe alternative to capture your photo or skip the opportunity.
- 7) Our judges are simple folk. If your photo(s) is/are not clear you will not score points.
- 8) You may submit your photos electronically/digitally or via the mail. **All digital photos (or links to digital photo albums) must be submitted to teamstrange@live.com.** If you would prefer to mail your photos, please contact Jon J at teamstrange@live.com for the appropriate mailing address. Photos, disks, pen drive and anything else you mail will not be returned.
- 9) **Submission must be submitted or postmarked on or before November 1, 2017.**

Questions? Contact Jon J at teamstrange@live.com