



ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLES - ACCESSORIES AND RELATED ITEMS

HARLEY DAVIDSON 1942 WLA 750CC 2 CYL SV 2808



SOLD





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PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Harley-Davidson 1942 WLA 750cc 2 cyl sv Frame # 42WLA64190 Engine # 42WLA64190

Harley-Davidson began producing the WLA and WLC (for the Canadian Army) in small numbers during the early Forties, as part of a general military expansion.

The later entry of the United States into World War II saw significantly increased production, with over 90,000 being produced during the war (along with spare parts the equivalent of many more) and would also supply smaller numbers to the UK, South Africa, and other allies, as well as filling orders for different models from the Navy and Marine Corps.

Many WLAs would be shipped to allies under the Lend-Lease program.

The largest recipient was the Soviet Union, which was sold over 30,000 WLAs.

Production of the WLA would cease after the war, but would be revived for the Korean War during the years 1949 to 1952.

Most WLAs in western hands after the war would be sold as surplus and "civilianized"; the many motorcycles available at very low cost would lead to the rise of the chopper and other modified motorcycle styles, as well as the surrounding biker culture.

The US Army would use motorcycles for police and escort work, courier duties, and some scouting, as well as limited use to transport radio and radio suppression equipment.

Allied motorcycles were almost never used as combat vehicles or for troop mobility.

Nevertheless, the WLA acquired the nickname "Liberator", since it was seen ridden by soldiers liberating occupied Europe.

The engine of the WLA is a 45 cubic-inch or 750cc side-valve design, which is reliable though not particularly efficient

however was popular in applications needing reliability more than power.

The engine develops around 24HP and the transmission is a hand-change 3-speed and foot operated clutch.

All standard WLA engines were medium-compression.

In modern terms, the WLA's compression ratio of 5:1 is very low.

Due to this low compression, a WLA will run on 74 octane gasoline, necessary due to the poor quality of refining at the time, although fuel technology would improve rapidly during the war.

The WLA also features springer front suspension. Harley-Davidson would not adopt telescopic front forks until after the war.

The rear wheel had no suspension, giving this type of motorcycle the nickname "hard tail".

This civilianized WLA is a very well presented Harley-Davidson.



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