



ANTIQUE MOTORCYCLES - ACCESSORIES AND RELATED ITEMS

**HARLEY DAVIDSON 1945 WLA 750CC 2 CYL SV 2608**



**SOLD**





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### PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

#### **Harley Davidson 1945 45 cubic-Inch, 750cc.**

Harley-Davidson's first flathead V-twin appeared in 1929 as the Model D. Its 45-cubic-inch engine was smaller than the company's existing 61- and 74-cubic-inch F-head V-twins, which then became known as "Big Twins." The latter switched to a flathead design the following year, but those larger engines were neither as reliable nor as long-lived as the under stressed "Forty-five."

Though the Forty-five was no powerhouse, it proved to be a versatile engine that remained in production for more than four decades.

During that time it served duty not only in street motorcycles, but also in three-wheeled Servi-Cars (1933-1973), military WLAs of the 1940s, and WR racing bikes of the 1940s and 1950s.

It's no coincidence that the history of Milwaukee-based Harley-Davidson, founded in 1903, parallels that of the 20th Century, the American Century.

Racers and cops, soldiers and stars, lawyers and loners, all seem to have found themselves on a Harley. Harley-Davidson began producing the 45" 750cc in small numbers in 1940, 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).

Harley Davidson would also produce a close WLA 45" variant for the Canadian Army called the WLC 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.

#### Description:

The engine of the WLA is a 45 cubic-inch or 750cc side-valve design, which is reliable though not particularly efficient in comparison to overhead-valve designs. Harley Davidson already had overhead valve engines in production for its Big Twin lines, but the "small twin" flathead design 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. This engine remained in production from 1937 to 1973 in the Servi-Car, although it was superseded in two-wheeled motorcycles by the more advanced flathead engine used in the Model K (the ancestor of the OHV Sportster) in 1952.

Though the model designation suggested high compression, for reliability, the Army version actually used a



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medium-compression version. 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 rear wheel had no suspension, which makes this a "hard tail".

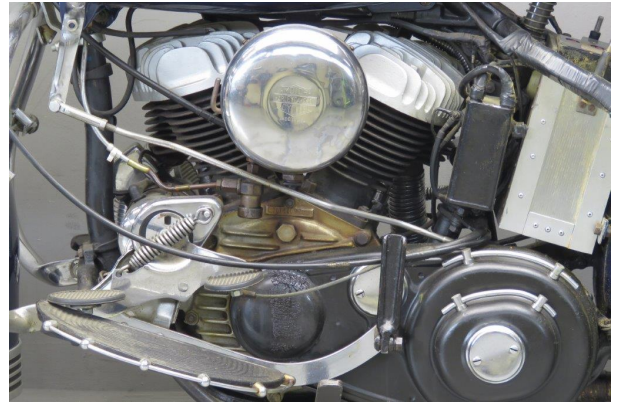
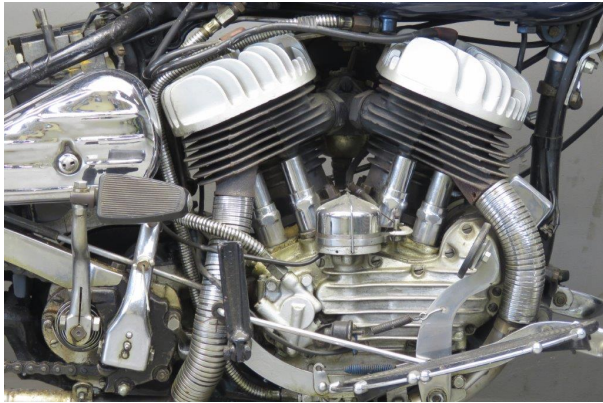
This c. 1945 45 cubic inch, 750cc is an extremely well running matured restoration and comes complete with original Harley-Davidson saddle bags, chummy seat, wind screen, rear bumper, luggage rack and front crash bars.

She has been further personalized by fitting Harley-Davidson hydraulic front forks of a somewhat later design. The former owner of this Harley-Davidson kept and maintained this machine for the last 44 years and he used her very regularly on summer tours and family outings.

This Harley-Davidson will bring you anywhere. !



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