

PARTING SHOT

# Ewan McGregor

**➤** EWAN MCGREGOR RIDING AN ELECTRIC HARLEY INTO THE FUTURE IS EXACTLY what 2020 needs. From his breakthrough role in *Trainspotting* to playing *Star Wars*' legendary Obi-Wan Kenobi, McGregor has won over legions of fans. Now he's playing himself, back on a bike with his best friend Charley Boorman in *Long Way Up*, the third series in their epic motorcycle saga around the world: "I've forged a relationship with Charley that I don't have with anyone else." A lot has changed since the first *Long Way* series in 2004; now they're focused on reducing their carbon footprint by riding prototype electric Harley-Davidsons. Harleys are known for their distinctive growl, but with these bikes the two roll into town quietly, asking locals, "Mind if we plug in?" The Scottish actor is swarmed by fans in a few spots, but mostly it's only him and Charley on the road filming each other from cameras mounted on their crash helmets. Two old friends riding through otherworldly landscapes on custom electric Harleys—maybe there is a bit of star power involved. But the journey is fueled by an even stronger force—friendship.

## What's the inspiration behind taking the *Long Way* around the world on motorcycles?

I read this book by Ted Simon. In the '70s, he decided to go around the world and write about it. He wasn't a biker, but he decided the best way to do it would be on a motorbike. He spent four years riding around the world and wrote a beautiful book about it called *Jupiter's Travels*. It's sort of like our shows in that it's not bike obsessive. It's about the world and his experience traveling the world.

## Why do you think now—during a pandemic when travel has been stalled for many—is a good time for *Long Way Up* to come out?

Hopefully, it's a pleasure for people to live vicariously through our eyes; after six months or more of being stuck and not being able to travel, that might be a bit of a relief. The nature of our trips is that people feel like they come along with us. It's very immediate. It's unplanned and unscripted, and whatever happens happens.

## Beyond a mental escape, what do you hope *Long Way Up* inspires?

Hopefully, it might inspire people to go and explore themselves. We have a certain way of life in America, Europe and Great Britain, and people in the rest of the world have very different ways of life. That's the beauty of the human experience: that we all live in different ways. We experienced that when we traveled and we bring it home with us. —Kathleen Rellihan

**"It's unplanned and unscripted, and whatever happens happens."**

