

Spain's race-bred road bikes are the pride of my collection

Alan Singer

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Alan Singer is a Bultaco connoisseur, owning every variant of the Spanish brand's Metralla motorcycle. Courtesy Alan Singer

Bultaco, a long-lost Spanish motorcycle brand, is best remembered for its dirt bikes, racers, and trail bikes, but it also built some well-respected road bikes. The top-of-the-line model was the Metralla, several iterations of which were produced over a 15-year period.

I always wanted a Metralla, and around 2002, I found a nice Mk2, the classic example, on eBay in Canada. It was original and minimally restored. I detailed the heck out of it, and it won several awards.

This satisfied my Metralla fix for several years, though I did restore a few other Bultacos in the interim—a Matador, a Metisse, and a Sammy Miller trials bike among them.

Then in 2015, I spotted an El Tigre for sale at auction. El Tigres were a street-scrambler version of the Metralla. The one at auction didn't sell, but the seller was desperate, so I made an offer and he relented. This is a beautiful motorcycle and has since won an Antique Motorcycle Club of America senior award, scoring 99.25 points.



Singer Courtesy Alan Singer

The following year, I discovered an early Metralla 62 that had been in a California garage since the late '70s. It was originally purchased by a U.S. airman in Spain, but the motor had since locked up and it was quite badly corroded. The shipper described it as a "rust bucket." It took a year of hard work to restore it to its original European spec. When I'd finished, it was selected as best in class at the Riding Into History concours in Florida.

Then I was only missing the late-model six-speed Metralla GTS, of which only six were imported before the EPA shut down all two-strokes. I found a nasty one in South Florida, but the owner wouldn't sell, so I looked to Spain, where I finally located a decent one and went through the shipping and importing hassle.

Finally, I had an example of each of the Metralla variants. To my knowledge, this is the only complete set in the U.S.
