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VaVaVroom 1.0 Riding Jacket

By Nancy Hendrickson, riding two up with Furman Hendrickson #122149

DENISE MAPLE HAS A PRETTY GOOD story. This motorcycle enthusiast spent 17 years climbing the corporate banking ladder to reach the position of senior vice president and manager, only to walk away from it all to start her own motorcycle apparel business. As a long time motorcycle rider and member of BMW MOA, Denise would often meet with frustration when shopping for her riding gear. In an effort to solve the problem, she started VaVaVroom. Its mission: bringing comfortable, functional, fashionable and fun motorcycle riding gear and clothing to women. Take a look at Denise's web site and you will find a variety of tanks and tees, boots, helmets, gloves and the item I will be reviewing here, the new VaVaVroom 1.0 Jacket.

Out of the packing, the jacket feels heavy and bulky. It carries the weight of CE-approved, removable armor at the shoulders and elbows, a removable back pad, and a zip out lining. Nevertheless, when I haul it up over my shoulders and put it on, it feels really comfy cozy. The tightening straps at the wrist cuffs are set just right. It zips up smoothly, and with just a slight adjustment of the hook-and-loop tightening straps at the hips, I'm in. It is a great fit. I feel packed in like a piece of Waterford wrapped carefully in foam sheeting and then secured with tape. It's a comfortable secure feeling. I don't think I have ever been so well protected. I should mention I've been known to ride in a tank top. I don't feel restrained or constrained at all. Nor do I feel any discomfort in relation to the armor. I can't even feel it, but it gives me confidence knowing it's there.

On the calendar is a morning ride up river to the Frenchtown Café for breakfast. Once I have the Café's French toast with ham and brie in my head, it is hard to let it go. So on this cool, overcast and foggy, 60-degree Sunday morning, with the weatherman calling for rain, I'm thinking this is the perfect day to give my new jacket a try. I don't think the liner will be necessary, so I unzip it and then go to detach the

cuffs. To my surprise, I find not the frustrating buttons and loops like I have on my leather riding jacket, but snaps. Snap, snap, tug, and out comes the sleeve. Nice! Something else to note is that when I take out the liner and figure I'm going to lose the two pockets, I find a nice big pocket underneath it on the interior of the jacket. Sweet! There are also two zip pockets at the waist on the outside. I like pockets and this jacket has them. It also has a hood which, I worried, might be annoying while riding. But it wasn't, as it has two strategically placed snaps to hold it in place while moving.

Not more than 10 minutes into the one-hour ride north, and I'm thinking the fog is really bad and it's making my face shield all wet. At breakfast I'm asked, "How did you like riding in the rain?" Did you say rain? My answer, "I thought that was fog" meets with incredulous, head-shaking wonder. I'm so happy, comfy cozy riding in the rain with this jacket on that I don't even know it's raining. Are you kidding me? No, I'm not. Now granted, it isn't a pouring rain. It's a light, misty, steady rain for about 30 minutes and upon arrival at our destination, I'm nice and warm and dry and happy to be eating my French toast with ham and brie.

The 1.0 Jacket is made of 600 Denier Cordura Nylon for abrasion resistance. Wind doesn't seem to penetrate and it is water resistant. It has reflective piping for visibility. There are zippers up the cuffs so you can wear them open to let air in. In the back, camouflaged so nicely that I had to call



Denise and ask her where to find it, is a zipper opening hiding under the piping to vent air out. The jacket comes in black with vertical white stripes on one side for style. Additionally, the seaming in the back is stylish and trimming. I can see myself wearing this jacket rain or shine, late into the fall, right up until hubby puts the bike away for winter.

VaVaVroom 1.0 Jacket retails for \$149. It is offered in sizes Small-3XL and is marketed as "true American sizing." I checked with Denise regarding size. I fall in that medium to large range, sometimes a 10 and sometimes a 12. She knows her products. She sent me a large and it fit just right. Check out this mission accomplished jacket that is, indeed, comfortable, functional, fashionable and fun, along with all of Denise's other apparel, at www.vavavroomonline.com/index.php/