MEN'S JOURNAL

MEN'S JOURNAL

SPRING 2026 Vol. 34, No. 4

KEANU REEVES WON'T SLOW DOWN

GEAR SPECIAL

106 NEW **TOOLS** AND **TOYS** YOU NEED FOR YOUR NEXT **ADVENTURE**

▸ Inside Arch Motorcycle's HQ

\+

Epic Road Trips for America's 250th

MEN'S JOURNAL
GEAR SPECIAL
GEAR OF THE YEAR / EPIC ROAD TRIPS / AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY
SPRING 2026

261704

MEN'S JOURNAL

GEAR of the YEAR 2026

2026 CHEVROLET CORVETTE ZR1X

The 2025 Corvette ZR1's 1,064 horsepower makes even seasoned drivers nervous—and for good reason. I cautiously approached the American-made beast at the Circuit of the Americas in Texas last summer after a warmup session in a base Z51 Stingray set the stage, regularly cracking 140 mph on COTA's back straight. Stepping into the ZR1 the next day, those nerves evaporated almost immediately. The FE8 package delivered top speeds of 170 mph repeatedly, while the FEJ upgrade—stiffer springs, MagneRide dampers, carbon wheels, and Michelin Cup 2 R tires—sharpened everything dramatically. By the third lead-follow lap, my speedo read 181 mph, a new PB by 7 miles per hour over a Lamborghini Revuelto.

The ZR1's mid-engine balance is simply extraordinary. Advanced traction and stability control make it remarkably approachable for something this powerful—almost too approachable. As chief engineer Josh Holder put it, this is a hell of a hammer to hand the general public. At $200K-plus after options, it's absurdity in automotive form. On a racetrack, it's a weapon. On public roads, it demands complete respect.

Then Chevrolet went further. The **2026 Corvette ZR1X** adds a front-axle electric motor to the ZR1's twin-turbo LT7 V8, pushing total output to 1,250 horsepower and adding all-wheel drive. The result is 0 to 60 in under 2 seconds, a sub-9-second quarter mile, and a 233 mph top speed—numbers that embarrass hypercars costing four times as much. Massive 16.5-inch carbon-ceramic brakes with Alcon 10-piston front calipers handle the stopping. A new triple-screen cockpit, Stealth EV mode, and track-specific energy-management strategies round out a package that is, remarkably, a full production vehicle. The ZR1X isn't just the most powerful Corvette—it's the most powerful production car America has ever produced. From $207,395; *chevrolet.com* —MICHAEL TEO VAN RUNKLE

HUNDREDS OF NEW PRODUCTS. THESE ARE THE BEST OF THE BUNCH.

MEN'S JOURNAL GEAR of the YEAR 2026

PINARELLO DOGMA GR GRAVEL BIKE

The Pinarello Dogma GR brings road racing DNA to gravel. At just 16 pounds, the M40X carbon fiber frame delivers instant acceleration and confident cornering without twitchy handling. An adaptive seatpost with 8mm of longitudinal flex and 40mm Vittoria Terreno tires absorb gravel chatter, while 45mm tire clearance adds versatility. In-frame downtube storage and snack bag bosses are practical touches—but make no mistake, this is a race-bred machine built to go places fast. $14,500; *pinarello.com* —LINDSAY WERNER HRENKO

AVENTON SOLTERA 2.5 E-BIKE

This sleek urban e-bike has hydraulic brakes and low-resistance tires to inspire confidence at speed, while a lightweight frame and advanced torque sensor deliver smooth, efficient pedal assist that never feels intrusive. Slick integrated turn signals and rear brake lights keep you visible to traffic day or night—a genuinely useful safety feature most e-bikes overlook. **$1,199; *aventon.com*** —ADAM BIBLE

SMITH HARDLINE HELMET

Smith's Hardline full-face helmet brings serious protection to downhill mountain biking without the weight penalty at just 35 ounces. Koroyd technology uses thermally welded tubes that crumple on impact while maintaining airflow, backed by Mips rotational protection and a collarbone impact zone. Antibacterial liners ensure a snug fit, and the adjustable visor handles camera mounts and pairs seamlessly with Smith goggles. It's protective enough to trust, yet comfortable enough to forget you're wearing it. **$270; *smithoptics.com*** —KATE ERWIN

SPECIALIZED TURBO LEVO R E-MTB

Built for riders who prefer full attack mode, **Turbo Levo R** leverages Specialized's 3.1 motor to deliver up to 850 watts and 111 Nm of torque with intuitive, grippy assistance on technical terrain. A trail-tuned 140/130mm chassis, 29-inch wheels, and Genie suspension keep it low and surgical through corners. Modular options boost range past four hours. **From $9,200; *specialized.com*** —AB

Freedom Flyers

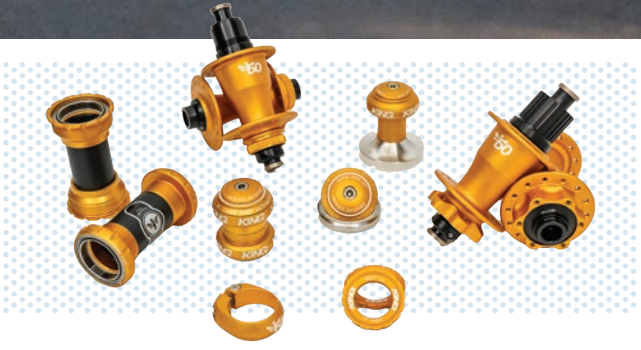
Custom helmets, cult-favorite brakes, and beyond—these bike brands keep design and manufacturing close to home.

by LINDSAY WARNER HRENKO

MADE IN AMERICA

Ornot Micro Grid Jersey

With Ornot's Micro Grid Jersey, what's missing matters most. Built with Polartec Power Grid, the fabric's gridded fleece creates space for the real performance feature: air. Those raised fleece channels feel soft but work hard—boosting airflow, wicking sweat, and pulling in cooling breeze on hot rides. Worn solo, the jersey keeps you dry and comfortable through midsummer miles. Layer it and the script flips. Add a wind shell and those same air channels trap warmth, turning the Micro Grid into an effective insulating midlayer for shoulder-season rides. It's a rare piece that handles both heat and chill without adding bulk. **$174; *ornotbike.com***



Chris King Precision Components

Chris King built his empire on bearings—specifically, stainless-steel ones that improve with use. Nearly 50 years later, the Portland company still machines fully rebuildable headsets, hubs, and bottom brackets in-house. To mark its golden anniversary, King released a matte-gold collection. Flash aside, the fundamentals remain: smooth, weather-resistant bearings built to last decades. **From $180; *chrisking.com***

North Street Bags Woodward Backpack Pannier

Commuters face a simple dilemma: What happens to your pannier once you reach the office? Portland's North Street Bags solves the conundrum with its Woodward Backpack Pannier—a waterproof rack bag that converts to a backpack in seconds. Made from recycled sailcloth and burly 1,000-denier nylon, the 32-liter pack includes a laptop sleeve, modular pockets, and secure rack attachments. **$295; *northstbags.com***

ENVE SES 4.5 PRO Wheelset

Designed and manufactured in Ogden, UT, ENVE's SES 4.5 PRO Wheelset represents incremental gains done right. Developed alongside pro riders, it features lighter carbon laminate, updated rim shaping optimized for 28mm tires, and in-house ceramic-bearing hubs. The result: roughly 150 grams lighter than the standard 4.5s. Will most riders notice? Maybe not. But in performance cycling, marginal gains add up. **$3,750; *enve.com***

KAV Helmets Rhoan

KAV builds the only bike helmets manufactured in the U.S., 3D-printing them in Buffalo, NY. Its proprietary hexagonal structure is designed to absorb and redistribute crash forces, earning top ratings from Virginia Tech's Helmet Lab. The honeycomb holes allow for optimal airflow. Printing them also means that Rhoan helmets can be custom fit to match your unique head shape using just a photo with the brand's app and a preliminary fit cap. **$300; *kavhelmets.com***

Dynaplug Air

Dynaplug started with tubeless repair kits for cars and motorcycles. Today, the Chico, CA–based company focuses largely on bikes—and builds its compact plug kits in the U.S. The concept is simple: find the hole, insert the rubber plug, and let the sealant do the rest. The redesigned Dynaplug Air streamlines the process further by combining repair and inflation in one step. Insert the plug, trigger the attached CO2 cartridge, and inflate the tire through the puncture itself. Once sealed, remove the tool and ride on. Machined from billet aluminum and stainless steel, the Air is small enough for a jersey pocket and durable enough for repeated use. It's hard to imagine a faster trailside fix. **$75; *shop.dynaplug.com***

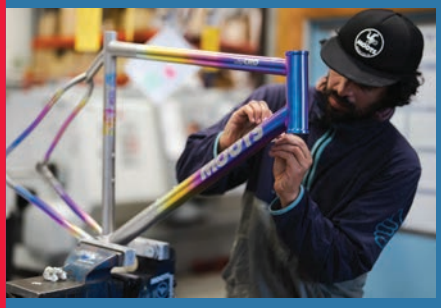
Park Tool TS-2.3 Professional Wheel Truing Stand

For nearly 50 years, Park Tool's TS-2.3 has been a staple in pro shops and home garages alike. Welded and assembled in Minnesota, it accommodates nearly every modern wheel standard. Aside from minor updates, the stand remains largely unchanged since 1976—a testament to thoughtful design. Roughly two-thirds of Park Tool's lineup is still made in the U.S., finished in the brand's trademarked blue. **$450; *parktool.com***

Paul Component Engineering Klamper Disc Brake

Inside a former Texaco warehouse in Chico, CA, Paul Component Engineering machines bike parts from U.S.-forged aluminum. The cult-favorite Klamper Disc Brake is its calling card. While most modern bikes rely on hydraulics, the Klamper delivers comparable power and modulation through a fully mechanical, serviceable design—no fluid, no bleed kits. Oversized bearings, machined pistons, and tool-free adjustment make it durable and easy to maintain. **From $255; *paulcomp.com***

THE LAST BIKE YOU'LL EVER BUY



A small cohort of welders and finishers in Steamboat Springs, CO, is quietly crafting bike frames meant to last a lifetime. Moots bikes are built from aircraft-grade titanium with traditionally shaped round tubes sourced entirely from U.S. mills. There are no aero-optimized carbon airfoils or glitter-infused paint jobs here; bikes are welded, not molded. Frames are designed to be rebuilt and refinished without compromising strength, delivering the ride feel of steel without the weight.

Composite frames can feel harsh, transmitting fatigue-inducing vibration. Titanium, by contrast, rides smooth, dampening chatter while staying lively. Nathan Bradley, Moots' COO, credits domestic sourcing for much of that feeling. The 22-person team works with three U.S. mills, specifying not only grade and dimensions, but also precise heat treatments.

A seat stay can be tuned for springlike compliance, while tubes are treated for stiffness and strength. That level of material control is rare—and central to Moots' identity. The frames use 3Al/2.5V titanium alloy drawn into round tubes with Cold-Worked Stress-Relieved (CWSR) conditioning, requiring exact tolerances and rigorous batch testing.

Today the lineup spans 11 models across road, gravel, mountain, and adventure categories, all produced within a two-block radius of where founder Kent Eriksen first sold Moots frames out of a bike shop in 1981. Every 2026 bike carries a 45th-anniversary head-tube emblem alongside the brand's mascot, Mr. Moots—an alligator on a bicycle. And if the reptile isn't your style, Moots' refurbishing program can strip and refinish any frame. After cleaning, alignment, and bead blasting, the team reapplies a custom finish.

"You can anodize titanium to refract color without affecting the metal," says Operations Director Nick Resignolo. "That's unique."

This spring, Moots will debut its first finish combining anodized and ceramic coatings, and its first titanium crank. The brand's trade-up program offers credit toward a new frame—ensuring old bikes stay in circulation.

"It's a lifetime product," Bradley says. "And if your needs change, we want you to stay in the family."