

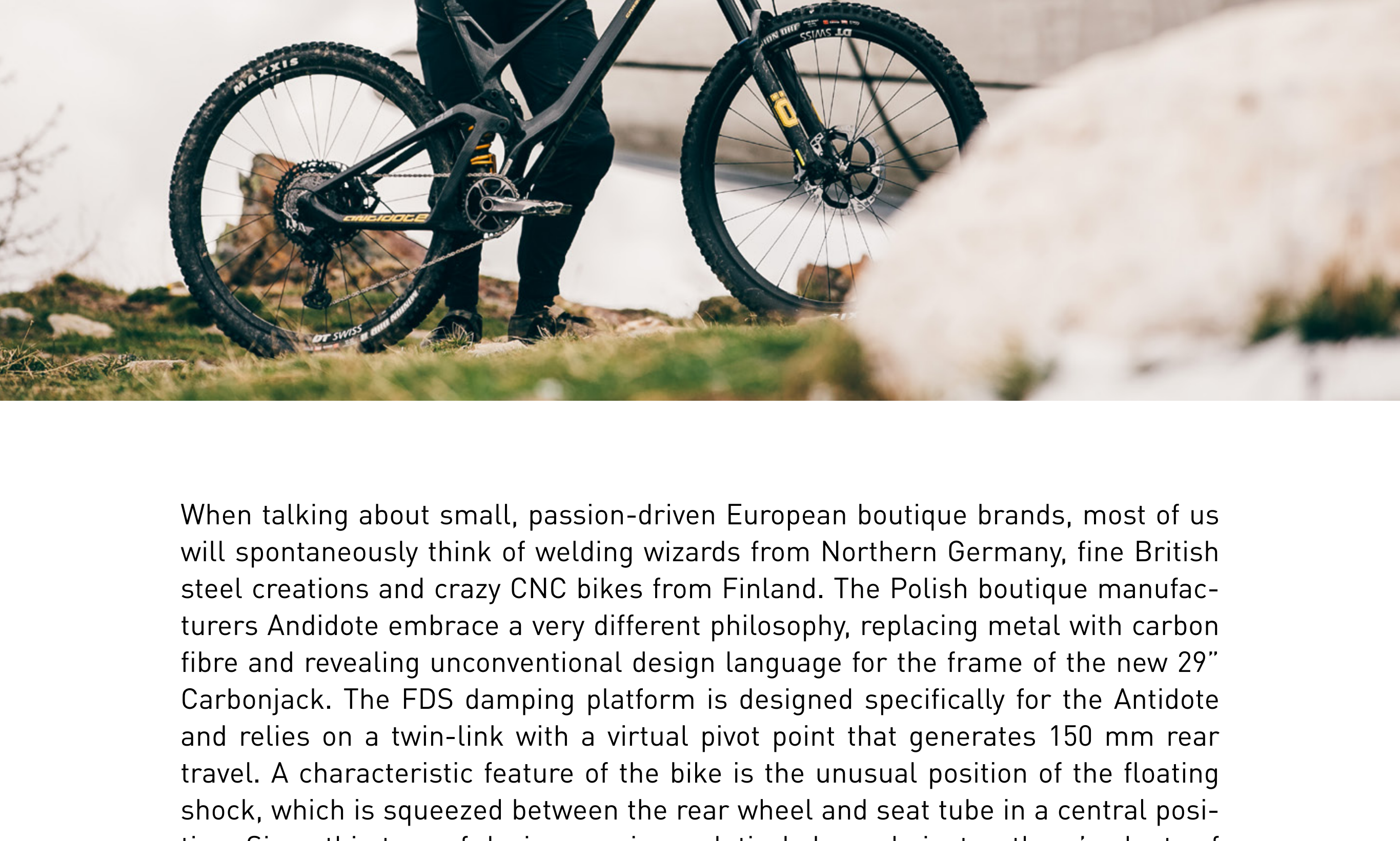


THE ANTIDOTE AGAINST BOREDOM

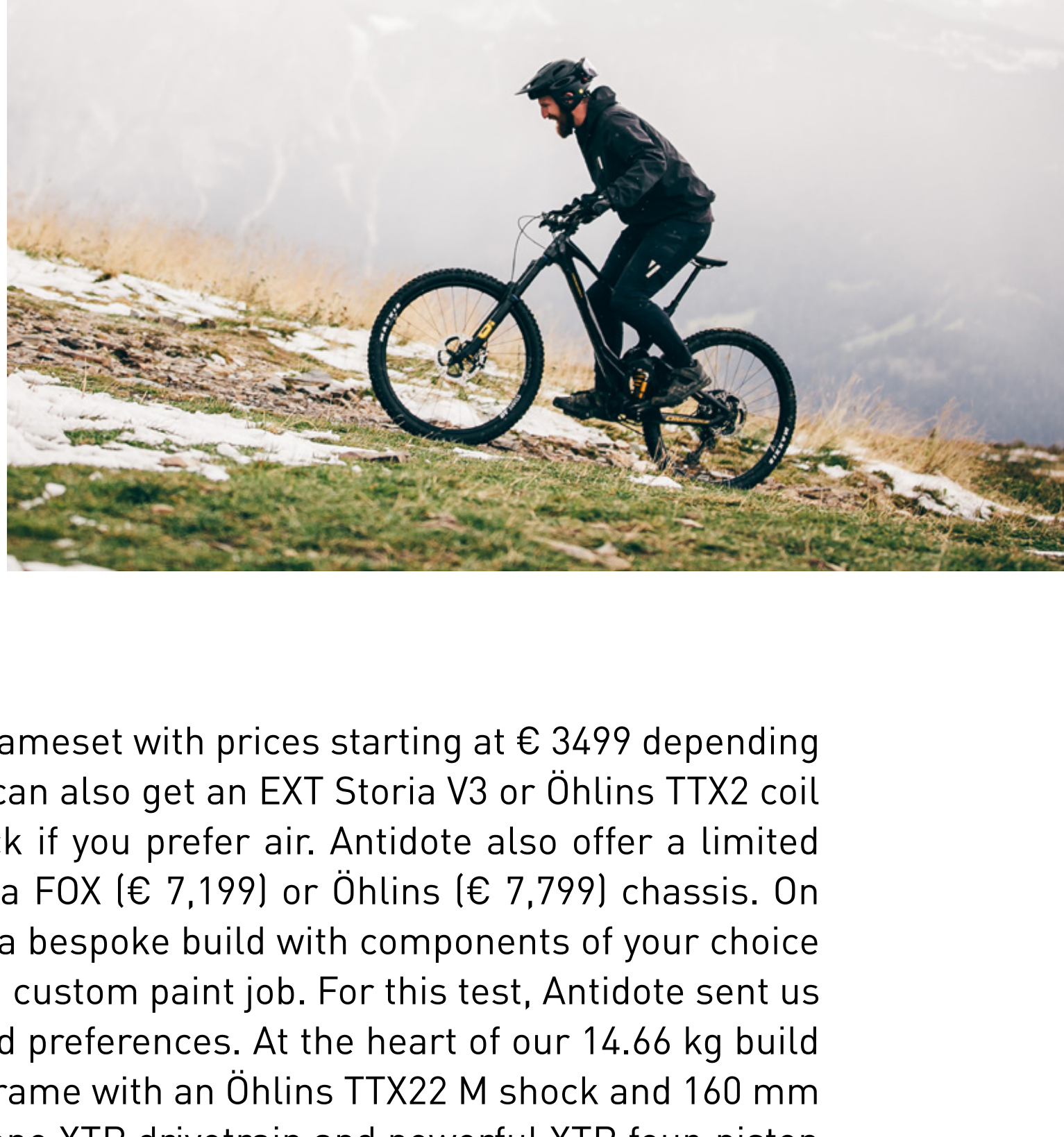
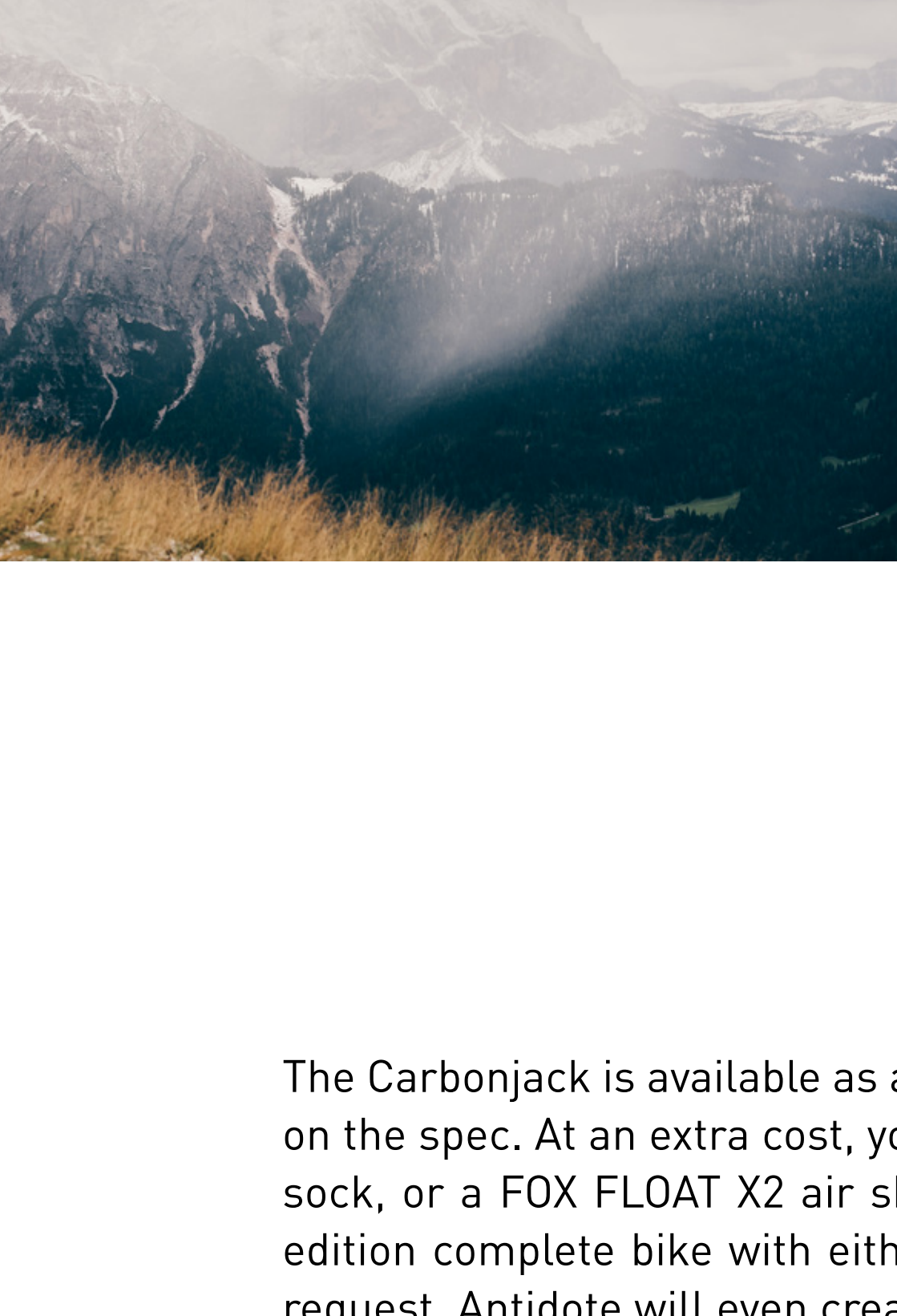
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ANTIDOTE
CARBONJACK
CUSTOM
IN REVIEW

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PHOTOS: FINLAY ANDERSON

Visible carbon as far as the eye can see: the new Antidote Carbonjack 29 enduro bike makes no secret of its frame material. But does the latest creation from the small Polish boutique brand just look extravagant or can it also deliver solid performance on the trail? One thing we know for sure – the Antidote Carbonjack is anything but boring!



When talking about small, passion-driven European boutique brands, most of us will spontaneously think of welding wizards from Northern Germany, fine British steel creations and crazy CNC bikes from Finland. The Polish boutique manufacturers Antidote embrace a very different philosophy, replacing metal with carbon fibre and revealing unconventional design language for the frame of the new 29" Carbonjack. The FDS damping platform is designed specifically for the Antidote and relies on a twin-link with a virtual pivot point that generates 150 mm rear travel. A characteristic feature of the bike is the unusual position of the floating shock, which is squeezed between the rear wheel and seat tube in a central position. Since this type of design requires relatively long chainstay, there's plenty of room for a large water bottle in the main frame, – even on a size small. The raw carbon fibre is visible across the entire frame and combined with the cutouts on the down tube and seat tube, the Carbonjack stands out from the crowd.



The Carbonjack is available as a frameset with prices starting at € 3499 depending on the spec. At an extra cost, you can also get an EXT Storia V3 or Öhlins TTX2 coil sock, or a FOX FLOAT X2 air shock if you prefer air. Antidote also offer a limited edition complete bike with either a FOX (€ 7,199) or Öhlins (€ 7,799) chassis. On request, Antidote will even create a bespoke build with components of your choice and deliver your dream bike with a custom paint job. For this test, Antidote sent us a build that reflects their ideas and preferences. At the heart of our 14.66 kg build (size L) is the carbon Carbonjack frame with an Öhlins TTX22 M shock and 160 mm RXF36 M.2 fork. A premium Shimano XTR drivetrain and powerful XTR four-piston brakes with 200 mm rotors front and rear mean the rest of the spec leaves no wishes open either. To round off the gravity-oriented package, Antidote have spec'd our test bike with a robust DT Swiss alloy E1700 wheelset. The only thing we would change is the MAXXIS Minion DHF/DHR II tires in the EX0+. These are a bit too fragile for our liking, preventing some of our test riders from enjoying the full potential of the Carbonjack. If it were up to us, we would also replace the super-wide and ultra-stiff Candy Ray carbon bars (810 mm) of our test bike with a more forgiving and narrower 780 mm handlebar.



ANTIDOTE CARBONJACK CUSTOM

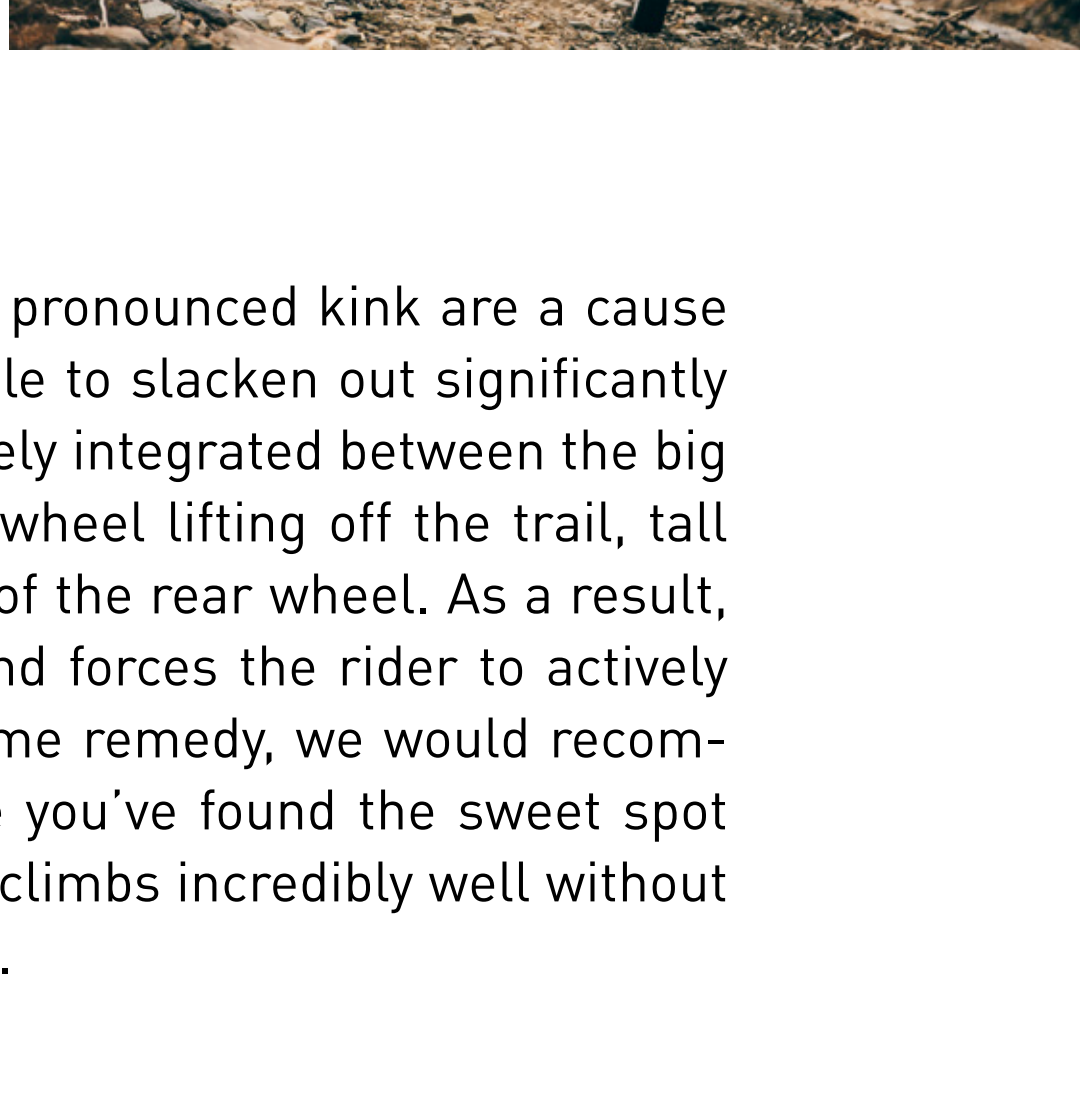
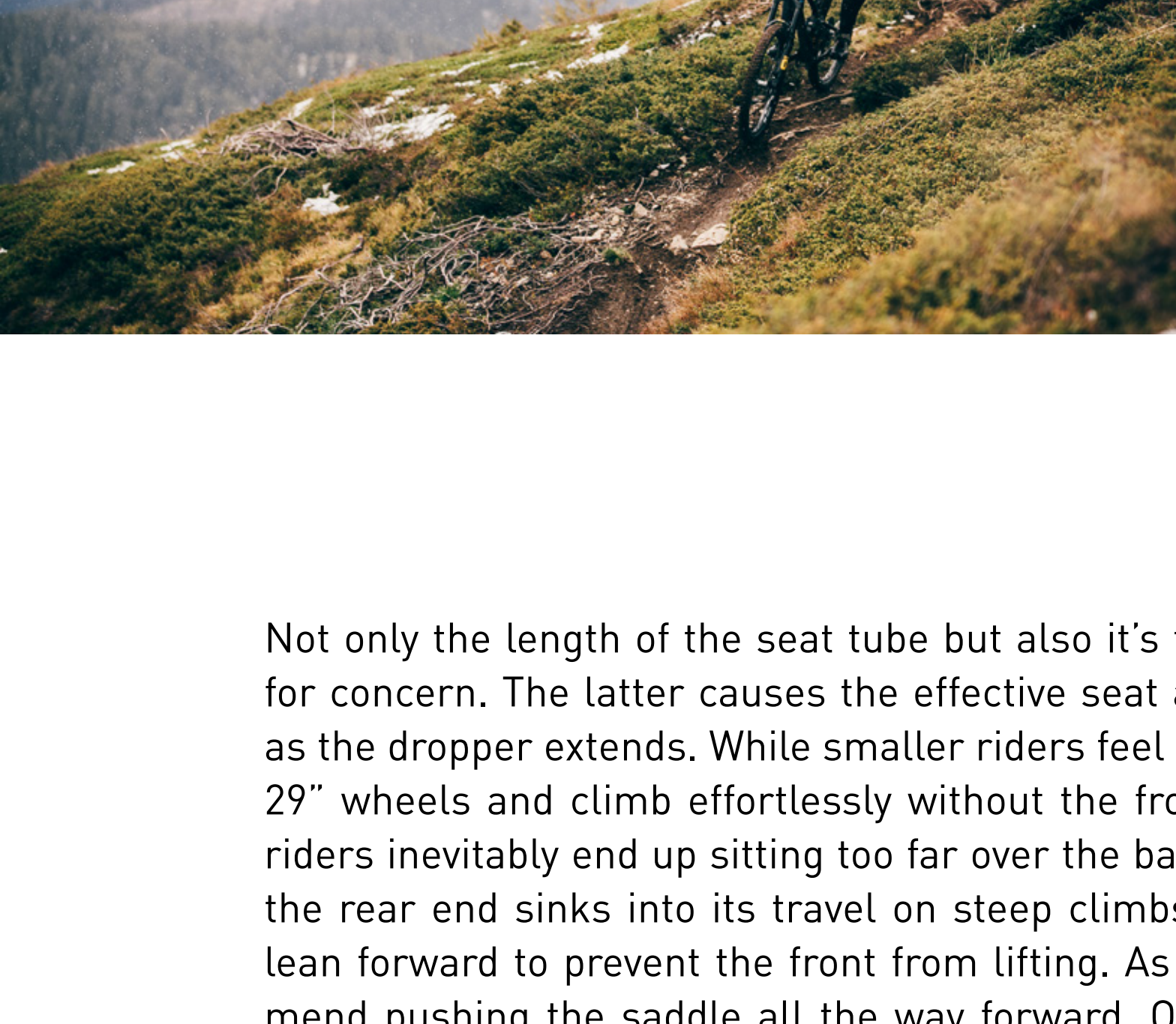
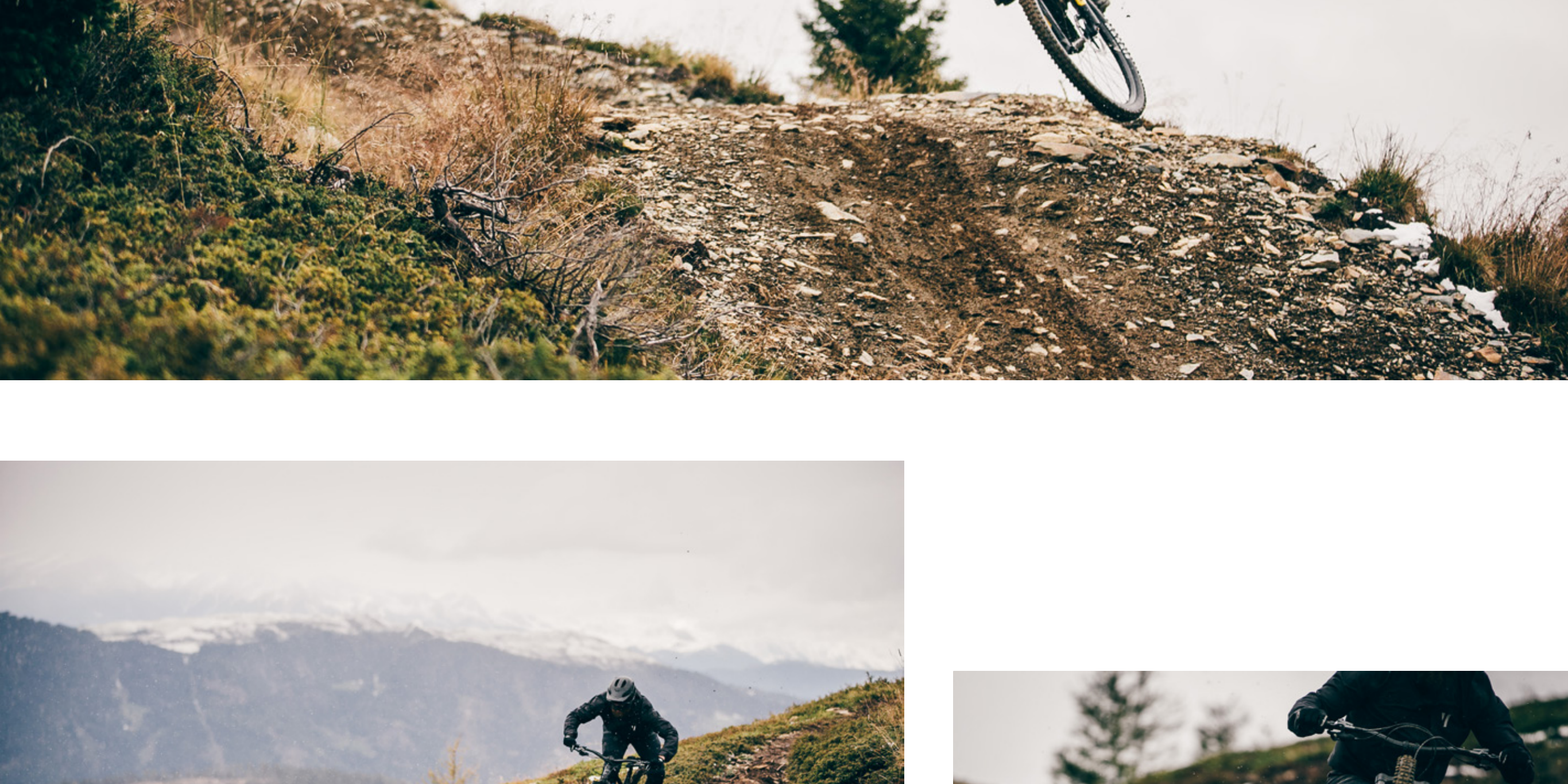
SPECIFICATIONS

- Fork Öhlins RXF36 M.2
- Rear shock Öhlins TTX 22 M Custom
- Seatpost OneUp V2 180 mm
- Brakes Shimano XTR 4-piston 200/200 mm
- Drivetrain Shimano XTR 34/10-51
- Stem OneUp Stem 50 mm
- Handlebar Antidote Candy Ray 810 mm
- Wheelset DT Swiss EX 1700
- Tires (f/r) MAXXIS Minion DHF/DHR II EX0+ 2.5"/2.4"

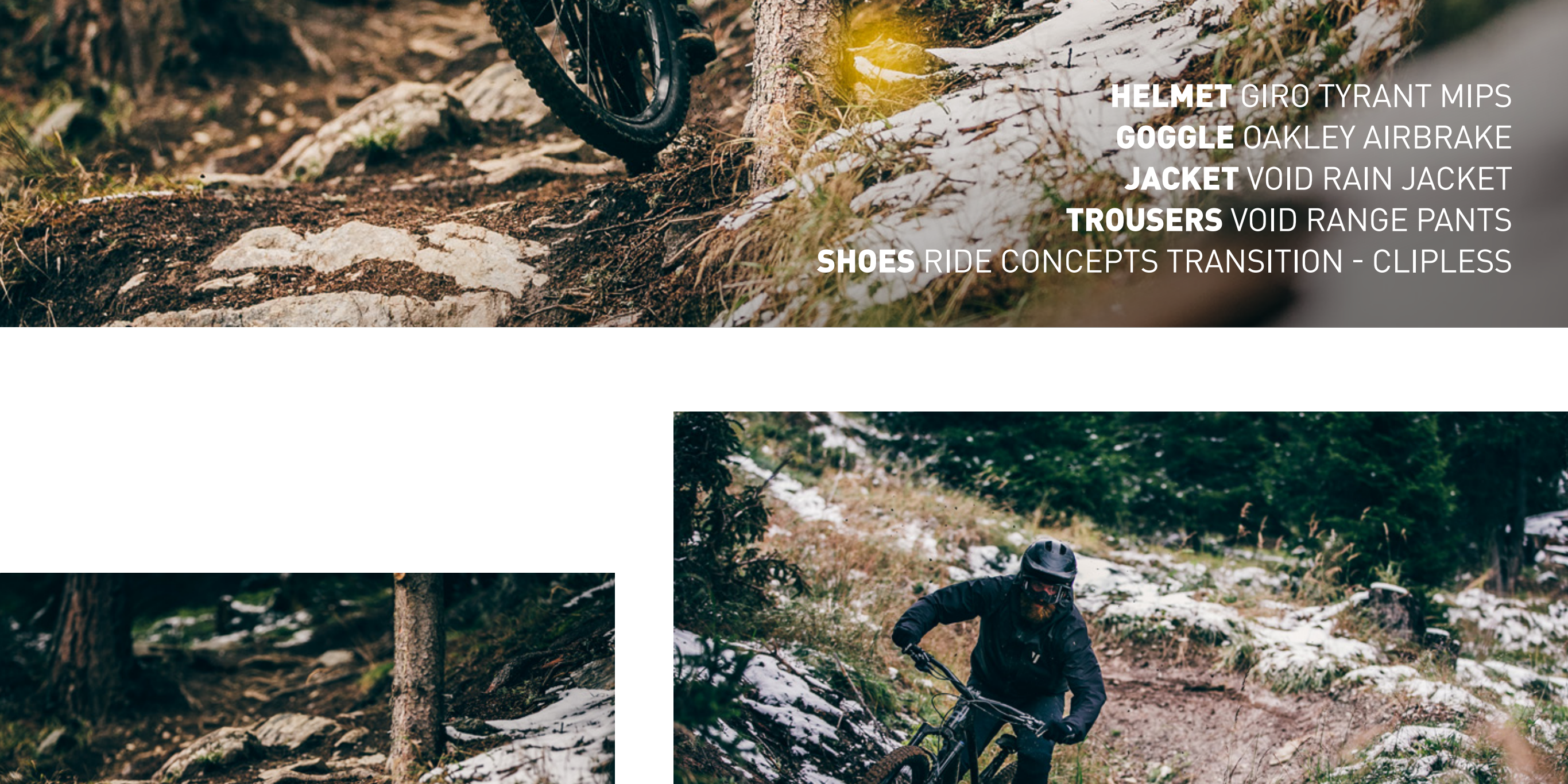
TECHNICAL DATA

- Sizes S M L XL
- Weight 14.66 kg
- Travel (f/r) 160/150 mm
- Wheel size 29"
- Price € 8,009

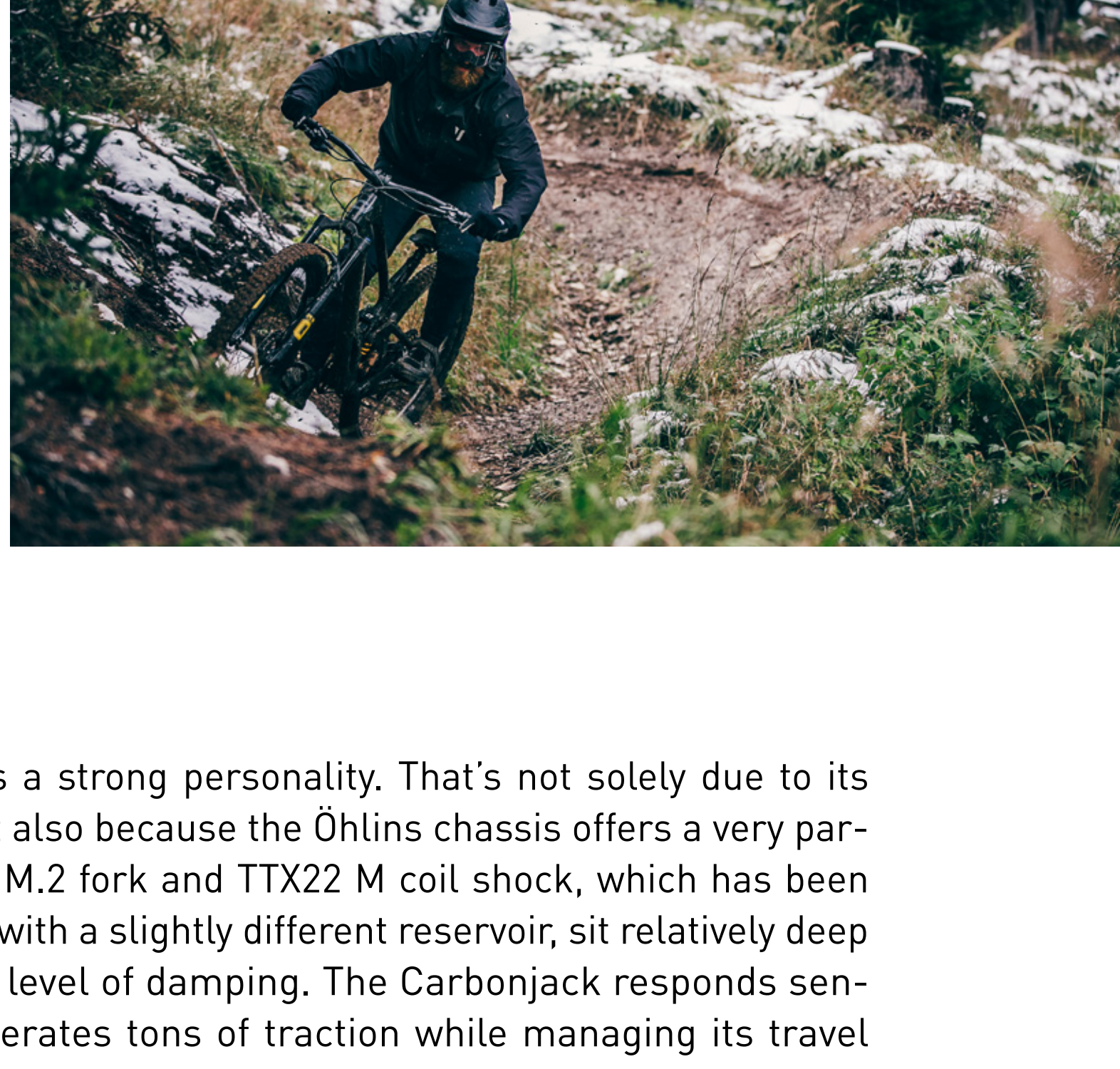
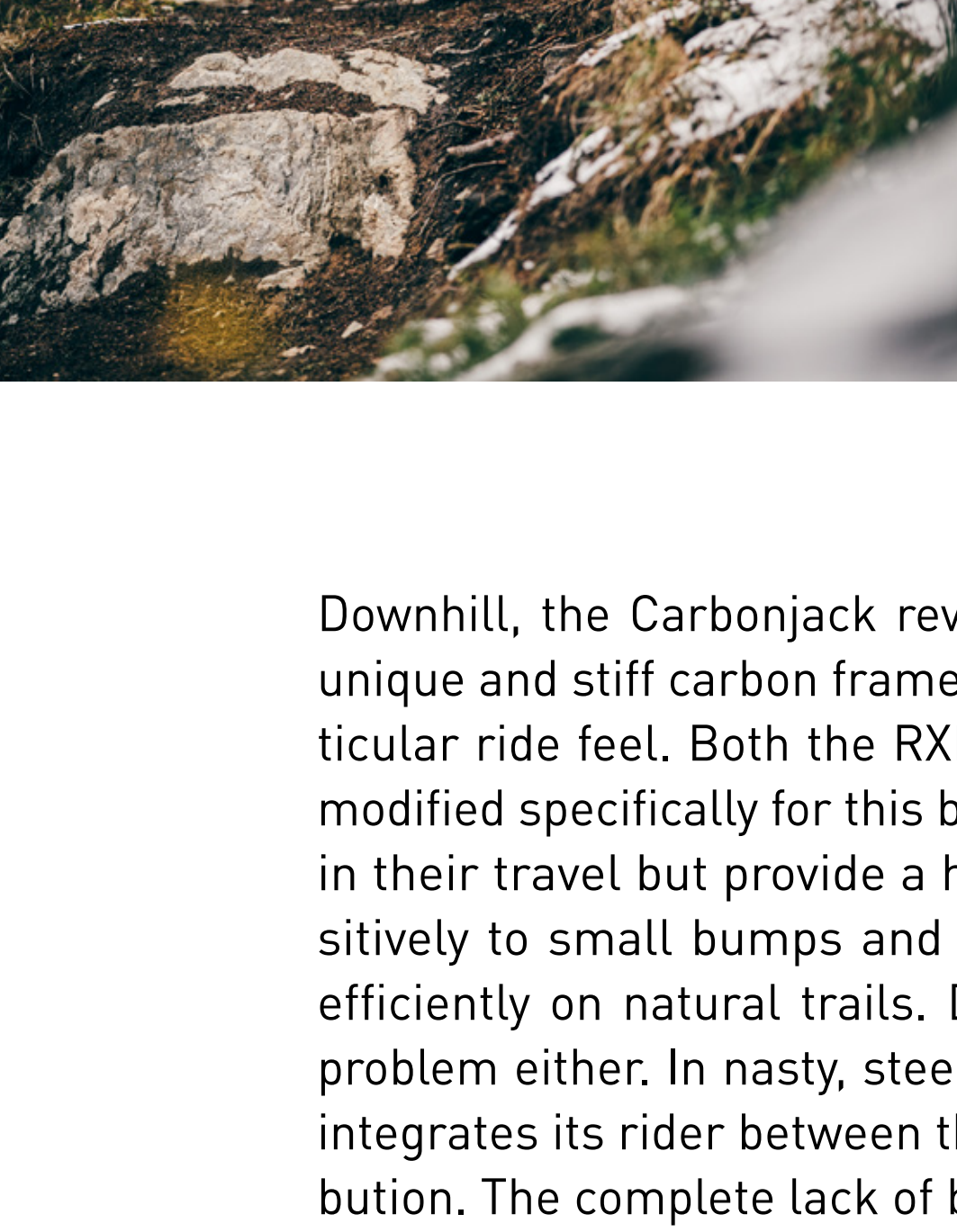
With four sizes on offer, there should be a suitable Carbonjack for anyone measuring between 162 cm and 198 cm tall. Despite its mostly modern geometry and the small dynamic brand behind the Carbonjack, upsizing to a larger size, or choosing your bike on preferred reach isn't an option. Across all sizes, the seat tube is simply too long (470 mm in L), forcing you to go for the size with a suitable seat tube length, rather than choosing based on reach. Apart from this, all of our testers (who all measure between 180 and 186 cm) felt pretty comfortable on a size L. With its 480 mm reach, the bike perfectly matches their preferences and combines a long front centre with a high front end (634 mm stack). This, together with the low bottom bracket (32 mm bottom bracket drop) and relatively long chainstays (450 mm), should make for very balanced handling, at least on the paper.



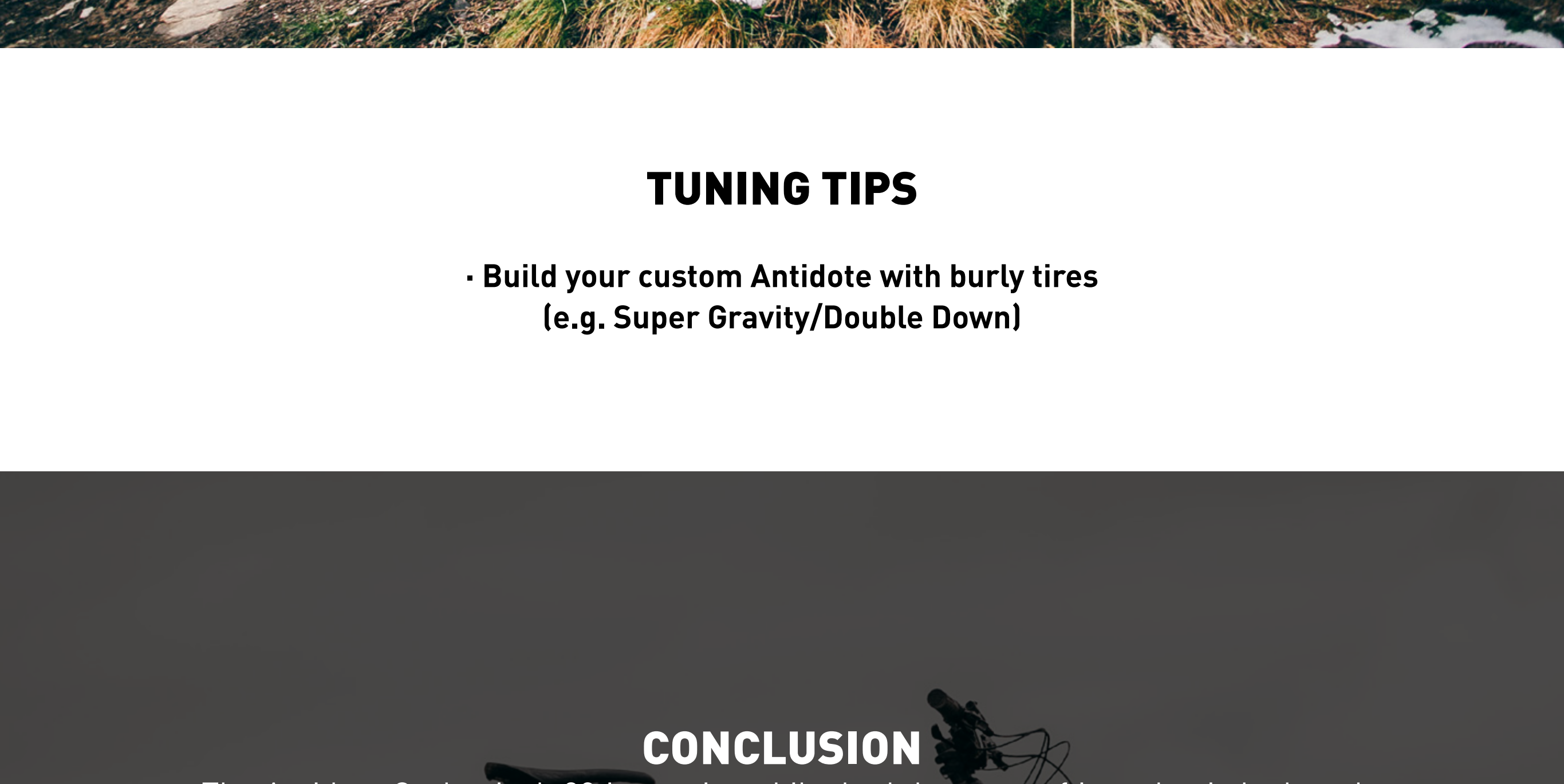
Not only the length of the seat tube but also it's the pronounced kink are a cause for concern. The latter causes the effective seat angle to slacken out significantly as the dropper extends. While smaller riders feel nicely integrated between the big 29" wheels and climb effortlessly without the front wheel lifting off the trail, tall riders inevitably end up sitting too far over the back of the rear wheel. As a result, the rear end sinks into its travel on steep climbs and forces the rider to actively lean forward to prevent the front from lifting. As some remedy, we would recommend pushing the saddle all the way forward. Once you've found the sweet spot and dialled in your ideal riding position, the Antidote climbs incredibly well without the suspension bobbing.



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TROUSERS VOID RANGE PANTS
SHOES RIDE CONCEPTS TRANSITION - CLIPLESS



Downhill, the Carbonjack reveals a strong personality. That's not solely due to its unique and stiff carbon frame but also because the Öhlins chassis offers a very particular ride feel. Both the RXF36 M.2 fork and TTX22 M coil shock, which has been modified specifically for this bike with a slightly different reservoir, sit relatively deep in their travel but provide a high level of damping. The Carbonjack responds sensitively to small bumps and generates tons of traction while managing its travel efficiently on natural trails. Despite the coil shock, larger huck-to-flats are not a problem either. In nasty, steep trail sections, as well as flat, open corners, the bike integrates its rider between the big 29" wheels for an evenly balanced weight distribution. The complete lack of background noise is striking – neither cables nor chain can be heard, letting you focus on the task at hand. And that's exactly what you'll need to do when riding narrow and blocked trail sections, where the long Carbonjack requires an active and determined riding style to pull through sharp corners. While it still provides decent amounts of pop and support, it tends to get bored on flowy and slow trails sections. Above all, the plush, smooth-running Carbonjack shines at high speed and on fast technical trails.



TUNING TIPS

- Build your custom Antidote with burly tires (e.g. Super Gravity/Double Down)

CONCLUSION

The Antidote Carbonjack 29 is a unique bike both because of its eclectic look and particular handling. While it proved to have an authentic character, this only comes to life on fast descents. The quality of workmanship and the details on the hand-made carbon frame testify to the painstaking attention to detail and perfectionism of the small brand. If you're looking for a unique and capable bike, the Carbonjack is a great option. The first scratch on the beautiful frame will hurt a lot though!

- high-quality frameset
- capable and fast
- balanced handling
- totally silent

TOPS

FLOPS

- long seat tube with distinctive kink
- puncture prone tires

MANUFACTURER WEBSITE