



# ANTIDOTE CARBONJACK 29

€7,999 / 29in / [antidotebikes.com](http://antidotebikes.com)

## NEED TO KNOW

- New 29in version of the Carbonjack, handmade in Poland from high-end Vectran carbon-fibre
- Uses Antidote's FDS floating suspension where the shock is driven by upper and lower links to give 150mm travel
- Öhlins RXF36 170mm fork and TTX shock come as frame and shock package, or there's a full build with Fox Factory suspension
- Build kit includes Shimano XTR drivetrain, DT Swiss E1700 wheelset with Maxxis tyres, 800mm Antidote carbon bar and OneUp V2 210mm dropper

**Antidote's new 29er looks like a work of art but will form translate into function?**

**P**olish brand Antidote's first bike was called the Darkmatter. Built for downhill with 210mm travel, it used an inventive new suspension design that blended a four-bar linkage with a high-pivot idler and the whole thing was made from an exotic type of carbon called Vectran.

It's hard to make a living selling downhill bikes alone though, so along came the Carbonjack in 2017. Built for enduro, it dispensed with the high-pivot idler, dropped the travel to 160mm, but kept the four-bar suspension and floating shock mount design – albeit in a different configuration. And now, to align Antidote's offerings more closely with the needs of most riders, we have the Carbonjack 29. It's got 150mm travel, bigger wheels, and you can get it as a complete bike rather than frame-only – put that all together and it adds up to a very exclusive bike in a very accessible package.

Just like its previous bikes, the front triangle of the Carbonjack 29 is made from something called Vectran. It's a type of carbon-fibre that Antidote says is rigid without being fragile, and also offers better protection than regular carbon from impacts like rock strikes. Ideal for gravity bikes then. Unfortunately for me, I put the material to test on my first ride out by laying the bike down in a dusty corner. The bar spun round and the stem took a hefty chunk out of the top tube. I should point out that it's not a fault with the frame design, it's just that the OneUp stem cannot be slammed on this frame. Closer inspection revealed it was just

the lacquer that had been annihilated, while the Vectran underneath remained undamaged – this despite the fact I'd wedged the stem into the bike so hard I had to remove it to untangle the mess.

It's also the addition of Vectran fibres that lets the Carbonjack 29 achieve its striking frame design, characterised by the use of cutaways and thin tubing profiles. According to Antidote, the letterbox-shaped slit at the bottom of the down tube is only made possible because it retains its strength better in slimmer-profiled tubes. I'm sure I've seen other bikes with similarly intricate design elements, but it is easily the most beautiful bike I've ever ridden. More a sculpted Adonis than an enduro workhorse.

There are structural differences to the old Carbonjack too. The upper shock link has moved and now wraps around the front of the seat tube, rather than sitting just behind it. This has freed up space for a longer dropper post, and probably helped Antidote keep the chainstay length in check now that the bike has 29in wheels. And Antidote uses this new-found freedom to the fullest by spec'ing a 210mm OneUp dropper on the size large.

Fundamentally the suspension has

## Vectran carbon allows for a striking design



150mm-travel Öhlins TTX coil shock perfectly tracks the trail



New design anchors shock between upper and lower links



170mm-travel Öhlins fork slackens head angle



XTR brakes and 203mm rotors scrub off speed in an instant

## SPECIFICATION

**Frame** Vectran carbon, 150mm travel  
**Shock** Öhlins TTX22M  
**Fork** Öhlins RFX 36 M2, 170mm travel  
**Wheels** DT Swiss E1700, Maxxis Minion DHF/DHRII 29x2.5/2.4in tyres  
**Drivetrain** Race Face Next R crankset, Shimano XTR 12-speed r-mech and shifter  
**Brakes** Shimano XTR four-piston, 203mm

**Components**  
 Antidote carbon 800mm bar, OneUp 35mm stem, OneUp V2 post 210mm, WTB Volt saddle  
**Sizes** S, M, L, XL  
**Weight** 14.42kg (31.79lb)

## GEOMETRY

**Size ridden** L  
**Rider height** 6ft 1in  
**Head angle** 63.9°  
**Seat angle** 67.5°  
**Effective seat angle** 74.1°  
**BB height** 344mm  
**Chainstay** 451mm  
**Front centre** 821mm  
**Wheelbase** 1,272mm  
**Down tube** 747mm  
**Top tube** 641mm  
**Reach** 480mm

## mbr 1ST IMPRESSION

**HIGHS**  
 Super-fast on the descents, with a smooth ride feel that still manages to keep you connected with the trail. Beautifully sculpted frame and superb components. Pedals well too.

**LOWS**  
 The price. You can't slam the OneUp stem to its lowest position either, as it hits the top tube.

Jamie Darlow



The Carbonjack 29 is a work of art and a joy to ride



State-of-the-art Vectran carbon frame is sure to turn heads

remained the same though; called FDS, there are no shock mounts on the front triangle or swingarm to minimise stress points, instead the shock is anchored between – and driven by – the upper and lower links. Why? In theory this lets Antidote develop a more precise leverage rate for the bike, because it can manipulate the interaction of the shock with both of the links.

This kind of technology does not come cheap, however. The bikes are handbuilt in Poland in very limited numbers. There's just one build option, at €7,199 with XT components and Fox Factory-level suspension. You can also buy a frame and shock for €4,149, or upgrade to the Öhlins TTX coil for an extra €250. The model here gets the TTX coil and XTR components for €7,999.

## HOW IT RIDES

We've said it before, but getting the right size on a bike is vital to your riding experience. The Carbonjack 29 comes in four sizes and I tested the size large – the range goes from S-XL. I'm explaining this because the bike I rode didn't quite match up with Antidote's own geometry charts and detailed sizing advice, instead it sat nearly halfway between large and XL. Taking a close look at the numbers shows the head angle of my test bike is significantly slacker too, thanks to the longer axle-to-crown height of the 170mm-travel Öhlins fork. This also contributes to the extra wheelbase length.

After all that, the size large with Öhlins suspension was ideal for me at 6ft 1in. Backing up the generous sizing is great detailing too; its own beautifully crafted carbon bar is a good shape, and the steep seat tube angle put me in a good position for climbing. The cockpit is a welcoming place to be.

I was struck by just how light the Carbonjack 29 is too – 14.4kg with coil shock and burly Öhlins fork is really impressive. I don't just mean on the scales either; this bike climbs well and I never felt like I was fighting a wallowy rear suspension design uphill. Of course, the coil shock is plusher and more sensitive than an air shock, but

on the short climbs I tackled, it wasn't a problem. At 451mm, this bike has pretty long chainstays and a steep seat angle, and taken together this puts you in a great position even on the steepest ascents. That's important for a 29er with 150mm travel that's probably going to get pedalled up the climbs more than it's driven up.

Going downhill on the Antidote made me question why we ever bother with air shocks. There's such a smooth and composed feeling to the Carbonjack that it just seems to purr over rough terrain – this bike rushes down the trail without stopping for anything, the sensation of speed is incredible. I felt noticeably faster on trails I know like the back of my hand, but not because the bike deadens the trail in some way. Quite the opposite, you still feel connected with the ground, but more than ever you can react to the terrain – the Carbonjack remains predictable and stable and you get to choose where to go.

How much of this is down to the Öhlins TTX shock? Hard to say, I'd really like to try the bike again with a Fox Float X2 to compare, but the Fox-equipped bike wasn't available this time around.

So the Carbonjack's frame and geometry is firmly in the enduro category. It's everything a race bike should be: long, low and – in this bike's