

Are you riding the right bike? How can you tell?



2 Headlights, 2 taillights, camera, Garmin computer, what, me, geeked out?

Many people, perhaps most, aren't riding the right bike. Know how you can tell? Could be because you're not on it right now. Do you look for reasons to ride someplace? Or do you drive because it's more convenient?

I bring this up because this morning my daughter, who works in our Redwood City store, had to drive to work today (ear infection so she's been told not to ride, and, unlike me, she's sensible and does what the doctor says). It would be super-easy to just get in the car with her and go to work, and later drive home. Avoid the 400ft climb home and having to take a shower before dinner.

Umm... no. I'd much rather ride. I feel alive on my bike. It fits great, it feels like it wants to fly with every pedal stroke. My mind is engaged as I share the road with others, whereas in a car I'd be in drone mode.

On my commute home I often tell myself that I'm going to take it easy, but after the first two stop lights you get to are green, it's inevitably all-systems-go for a fast ride home. My bike expects this. It's dark, but I'm lit up with two tail lights, two headlights. Cars see me from a distance, and I live for that sound of their tires over bumps, telling me they're moving over to give me room. A long day at work and my bike has put me in the zone.

I get home breathless (I live at the end of that 400ft climb) and I'm still breathing hard when I enter the house. My wife asks if I'm OK, and I'm thinking, day after day, this is what I am, this is what my bike and I do, I'm not only OK but I'm alive.

So what is the "right bike?" It's the bike that you can't walk past without wanting to get out and ride. It's the bike that you go out on a 70 mile ride earlier in the day and then later you might be running errands in a car, seeing other bikes on the road, and asking yourself why you're not out riding. What makes such a bike so special? It's the way it just seems to become a part of you when you're on it. The feeling that IronMan gets when he puts on his suit. Maybe it's super-light, maybe it's got a custom paint job, maybe you live for that perfectly-shifting gear change you get with electric Di2 shifting.

It doesn't have to be a fast high-end road bike. It might be a hybrid commuter, or a beautifully-styled cruiser. It could be a kid's first

bike. But I'd be really happy if it's a Trek (or an Electra if a cruiser) from Chain Reaction, because that means we didn't just sell a bike... we helped create a happier, healthier bike-person.

So where should you buy your next bike? From us, of course, because this is the dream we live for. If you just want to buy a bike because it's the thing to do and everyone else has one, and it's just going to sit around like so many other short-term "seemed like a good idea at the time" things, well, there's lots of places for that. It would be a failure on my part for that to happen. But if you want to risk a life-changing experience, come to us. That's what we live for. --Mike Jacoubowsky, Partner, Chain Reaction Bicycles