



Get started: Snow Biking

Fat-tire bikes in winter are all the thing. Hop on a saddle and roll through the snow to see what the buzz is about.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY DANIEL SHEPLER

February typically serves up winter's best conditions for fat-tire biking.

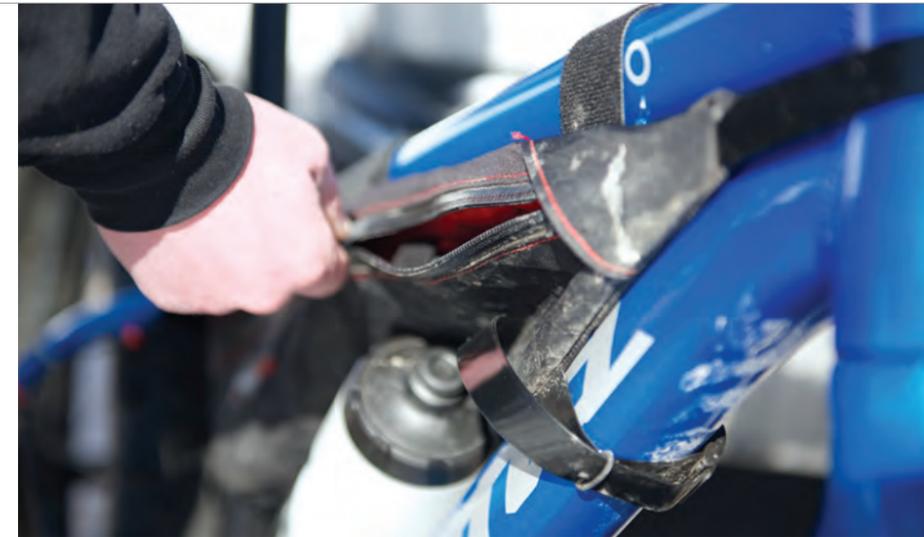
The snow is consistently good, and there is enough of it for groomers to lay down perfect trails. The better the snow conditions the better the experience can be, and the easier it is for beginners to get started snow-biking. If you have been resisting Old Man Winter and staying cooped up inside, then it's time to get out and start a new kind of fun.

Cody Sovis, of Einstein Cycles, was kind enough to show me the ropes of fat-tire snow-biking. We rendezvoused at Timber Ridge in Traverse City for a crash course in the sport.

Cody explained the basics and the gear involved. He also went over the importance of having the tire pressure set at 3 psi for optimal control. I was always under the impression that one could just pick up a fat-tire bike and make your own way through the snowy woods, but that is not the case. The bikes are designed to be ridden on groomed trails, much like mountain biking or cross-country skiing.

We checked the tire pressure and headed out to ride the well-managed trails of Timber Ridge. This was my first experience fat-tire biking. I couldn't believe how easily the bike handled the

snow, and the control I had. I could stop quickly, turn sharply, and had great traction going up hills and around corners. It was relaxing while offering a respectable workout. There was something special about riding a bike around in the winter woods. Medicine for the soul, and it was just adventurous enough to keep things interesting. The group I rode with was made up of seasoned riders, so they knew the trails well, which made things a lot easier for me. They were eager to share their passion for the sport, and went out of their way to ensure the experience was pleasant. ▶



Gear Tip!

One of the most convenient things you can purchase for fat-tire snow biking is a frame bag. Frame bags are perfect for carrying snacks, pressure gauges, keys, cell phones and wallets. Larger bags even have enough room to stuff extra clothes for when the temperature starts to drop. Cody likes the Tangle Frame bag from Revelate Designs as his go-to. Bonus: The design allows him to transfer the bag to his road bike or mountain bike. ■

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