easily done while wearing gloves. Holding the button in for two seconds turns the unit off and longer than three seconds engages the flashing mode. This sole button also indicates battery life: glowing blue the battery is fine, red running low, and alternating flashes of blue and red indicate the reserve is being used.

The 7.2V/4.5 Ah Li-Ion battery is really small, measuring 2.75"x1.5"x1.4", and is held in a Cordura soft case that wraps around your frame and secures with a hook-and-loop closure. The battery is so compact that I just fastened it on top of my stem (when the headlamp was mounted on my handlebar) and connected the battery to the lamp. A rubber strap secured the cord against the stem. This provided a clean look without extra cable wrapped all over my bike. For helmet mounting the battery stores easily in a jersey pocket and the 4' cord bridges the connectors. All connections engaged firmly and disengaged smoothly.

The microprocessor-controlled charger completely recharges an exhausted battery in the claimed five hours or less. One thing that bothered me though is that the LED on the charging unit only lights up green if the battery needs, and is accepting, a charge. If it doesn't need to be charged nothing lights up, nothing happens, and you stand there wondering if something is broken or if the outlet's bad. It's possible to ride many days using just the flash mode and have the battery not need a charge, so I'd like to at least have a light come on for reassurance.

In the woods I primarily used the helmet mount, saving the bar mount for the streets. The center spot of the Tesla 4's beam is a bright-blueish concentrated circle that engulfs a central viewing area. A slightly duller but wide corona surrounds the focal point and exposed plenty of trail for my peripheral vision. In the city, invading light from autos and streetlamps didn't drown out the Tesla, and the flash mode made me feel safer during grey overcast commutes or rain showers.

Lupine's Tesla 4 has been 100% trouble-free. It always turns on, and hasn't turned itself unexpectedly off when encountering rough streets, bumpy trails, or railroad tracks, like other systems I've used. The headlamp stays put and doesn't rotate downward with gravity. The $488 price tag is steep, but the light is worth it and should provide years of service—time will tell. This is a do-it-all light system without failures and all components are waterproof and replaceable. Comes with a two-year warranty. **www.lupinenorthamerica.com** –Shannon Mominee

PHOTO: ERIC MCKEEGAN

# CARVER MYTI HANDLEBAR

Carver Bikes has added another handlebar to the growing list of big-sweep alt-bars on the market. The MyTi is made from 3/2.5 titanium, with a 29º bend falling betwixt the most acute (45º Jones bar) and the least (15º-17º Salsa, Surly etc.). The 680mm width includes 200mm of grip area, plenty of room for separate brake and shift levers and full-length grips.

With no center markings and a pair of shims for 25.4mm (no 31.8mm diameter is available), bar set-up will require some patience and a tape measure, although I was impressed with the calibration of my eyeball. The forward bend of the bar puts the grip area slightly ahead of the center of the clamp, which required a shorter stem for a similar reach to an average flat or riser bar. The forward sweep reduces leverage on the handlebar clamp by effectively reducing the length of the lever created by the sweep, helping to prevent slippage when the bars are wrenched hard while climbing or during impacts.

Three versions of this bar are available, differing only in wall thickness: 0.9mm (220g) for touring and road use only; 1.2mm (260g) for mountain biking (with a 160lb. weight limit), and 1.55mm (320g) with no restrictions. Being 5lbs. shy of the weight limit I've been riding the 1.55mm bar—better safe than sorry when it comes to handlebars. All three share a $180 price tag and a country of origin, China. Price-wise these are in the middle of the alt-bar universe, more expensive than the aluminum offerings, and less so than a Ti Jones bar.

Ti bars have a reputation of being flexy, something I wasn't really looking forward to with these bars. While flex can take the edge off rough terrain, I've found flexy bars to be a detriment to feedback and control of the front end of my bike; I prefer suspension and/or tires to handle bump absorption, leaving the bars free to transmit my wishes to the front wheel and the contact patch to transmit its level of traction back to my hands. Fortunately the MyTi is plenty stiff for my tastes.

The 29º bend should be a great option for those who find other bars to be too extreme one way or the other. I'm used to bars with more sweep, but lately have been spending more time on traditional bars, and found these very easy to adjust to. The width was spot on for me, wide enough for control, narrow enough that I wasn't barking my knuckles on every tree. Predictably they split the difference of the elbows-out stance of a lightly swept bar and the elbows-in stance of a Jones bar. The best of both worlds? Perhaps, but similar to saddles, handlebar choice is becoming a very personal matter, based on a complex grouping of factors including riding position and style, physiology and terrain. As of this writing the MyTi wasn't on Carver's website yet, but they're available through Bikeman at **www.bikeman.com**. –Eric McKeegan