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Out of the Wood: Sojourn Cyclery

Jay H. Kinsinger

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Jay Kinsinger

Sojourn Cyclery

Jay Kinsinger built bike frames from steel for years until he decided to try his hand at building a wood frame. It took 400 hours using mostly hand power tools, but he was smitten with the process—and the results. “It was such a neat experience, and you can’t be shy when you’re riding a wood bicycle,” he says. “Everyone notices it and wants to talk to you about it.”

While riding his first wood bike, Kinsinger discovered there’s more to the material than just its stunning appearance. “Wood is a great material for bike frames because it absorbs all of the road vibrations and delivers a smooth ride,” he says. “Wood is more than just a pretty face.”

Kinsinger is a mechanical engineer who teaches at Cedarville University in Ohio, but he was born into woodworking. His father was a wood shop teacher, and



Kinsinger has been making furniture and sculptures as a hobby for most of his adult life. The wood bike frame combined his passions for cycling, woodworking and engineering, so he started crafting high-end custom bikes for clients under the banner of Sojourn Cyclery seven years ago. He says a lot of his clients want gravel grinders right now, but he’s made everything from 29er mountain bikes to tandem road bikes. The wood he uses, sustainable black walnut, has an exceptionally good strength-to-weight

ratio, so his bikes are as strong and light as a metal-framed bike, plus almost all vibrations are absorbed by the walnut. And wood allows him to be more creative when he’s designing frames.

“I’m not limited to straight lines. I can do steam bending and create curves. Wood lends itself to a very elegant frame,” Kinsinger says. “And people have a real connection with wood that’s hard to describe. It has a nice, organic feel to it that makes you want to touch it and caress it.” sojourn-cyclery.com

