

BY NICK LEGAN

Salsa EXP Anything Cradle, Dry Bag, ▶ Front Pouch, \$200



**Lizard Skin
Aramus Classic Gloves, \$40**

As spring approaches (hopefully), a new pair of gloves can make riding after a winter hiatus more comfortable. Made of sheepskin leather and using gel padding, the Aramus gloves are soft out of the package and become more comfortable over time. Finger pulls help in removing the gloves, and an adjustable Velcro strap keeps them in place. Finally, a patch of soft terry-cloth material on the thumb is great for wiping sweat or dripping noses. Just don't forget to wear sunscreen on the back of your hand!

**Sidi MTB
Cape Shoes, \$300**



Sidi is a legendary Italian cycling and motorcycle footwear brand. Its MTB Cape shoe sells for a pricey \$300, but the quality of Sidi shoes and the serviceability of their buckle and dial closure mean that these shoes will last for many years to come.

The injected plastic sole has large lugs that offer reasonable traction, but if off-bike grip is a priority, there are better options. Where the Cape shines is with just the right amount of rigidity (for this reviewer). It transmits power effectively without being too stiff.

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Salsa isn't new to the bikepacking game so when they announced a line of bikepacking bags, many of us took notice. The Anything Cradle is a clever take on a handlebar harness system. It sits somewhere between a rack and a bikepacking bag, with aluminum clamps that mount to a handlebar and a plastic cradle to support a drybag. Although it's certainly heavier than many bar bags, the Anything Cradle is also extremely stable and creates space for shift cables and brake lines that typically frustrate other systems.

Each part of the system can be purchased separately, but I recommend the complete kit. Salsa's own 15-liter drybag integrates perfectly with the included Anything Straps, and the Front Pouch is a perfect spot for snacks, maps, and phones, with elastic lashing ideal for gloves or light layers. With an eight-pound maximum load, it can only carry lighter items, but that also helps preserve your bike's handling.

**Salsa EXP
Seat Pack, \$120**

Complementing the Anything Cradle is Salsa's EXP Seat Pack. With six to 14 liters of storage, this roll-type bag has only the bells and whistles you need. While it's not technically waterproof, the EXP Seat Pack does use waterproof materials and water-resistant welded construction. In a heavy rain during my testing, none of the bag's contents got wet, but I would avoid submerging the bag. The pack has a purge valve that's great for solidly packing down items, but it could be larger and easier to use.

Cam-lock buckles on the seat rail straps are great, ensuring that the bag doesn't become loose and start to sway. Stretch cord on the top of the bag is handy for strapping down a jacket or a bag of food supplies.

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