Bicycling

GET A COOL BUZZ

Novara, REI's house brand, represents with the Buzz, a go-anywhere bike for urban warriors. by Ben Hewitt

NOVARA BUZZ

BEST THING: *Unapologetic urban-assault spec and style* **BUT:** *Single front chainring paired with a 9-speed cassette puts the hurt on hill dwellers* **OUR VERDICT:** *Though designed for city use, the Buzz's upright riding position and fast-rolling rubber deliver great fun wherever you live* **PRICE:** *$599* **WEIGHT:** *25.5 lb. (15 in.)* **SIZES:** *15, 17, 19 (tested), 21 in.* **COMPONENT HIGHLIGHTS:** *Hayes MX2 mechanical disc brakes; SRAM X7 rear shifter, 5.0 rear derailleur; Titec Hell-Bent riser handlebar; BMX platform pedals; Truvativ ISIS Drive bottom bracket, 5D 38-tooth crankset* **CONTACT:** *800/426-4840; novarabike.com; rei.com*



Novara wisely specs a steel fork. Sure, it's a little pudgier than an aluminum model, but it helps soak up potholes and curb drops.

The oversize 7005 aluminum tubes are stiff and responsive, just the thing for dodging cabs and sprinting through traffic lights—green ones, of course.

Hayes's MX2 mechanical discs are stupid-simple to set up and provide gobs of power.

Leave your bike shoes at home: The Buzz's fat platform pedals beg a pair of Converse All Stars. And they're just the ticket for perfecting your stoplight trackstands.

What's missing from this picture? The Buzz is two chainrings short of a full deck. The single lever and derailleur give the bike a clean, uncluttered look, but lack the versatility a trio of front chainrings provides.

Like what you see? Outdoor gear cooperative REI is the only place you can get a Buzz.

A Truvativ ISIS Drive bottom bracket and 5D crank ensure that every precious bit of pedaling energy goes straight to the pavement.

COURTESY