

Electric Bikes, Wave of the Future

As temperatures rise and the days get longer, sunny days beckon us to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. What's a better way to do that than cruising the streets on an electric bike? Yes, you read that correctly, an electric bike! Electric bikes are becoming popular for their ability to help riders go further faster. They're also helpful in navigating hills more efficiently and can be a great alternative for those who aren't as athletically inclined.

Electric bikes come in two basic types: pedal assist or throttle. Pedal assist, which is also referred to as pedelec, only provides power when the rider is pedaling and typically provides more range than compared to throttle mode. Throttle mode is similar to how a motorcycle operates and, when engaged, helps propel the bike forward. In this mode, the rider is not required to pedal for the bike to operate as long as the battery is charged. The average electric bike has a 20-25 mile range on a full charge and can be plugged directly into a typical outlet. Electric bikes can cost \$1,000+ for a good bike, which is comparable to a typical bicycle.

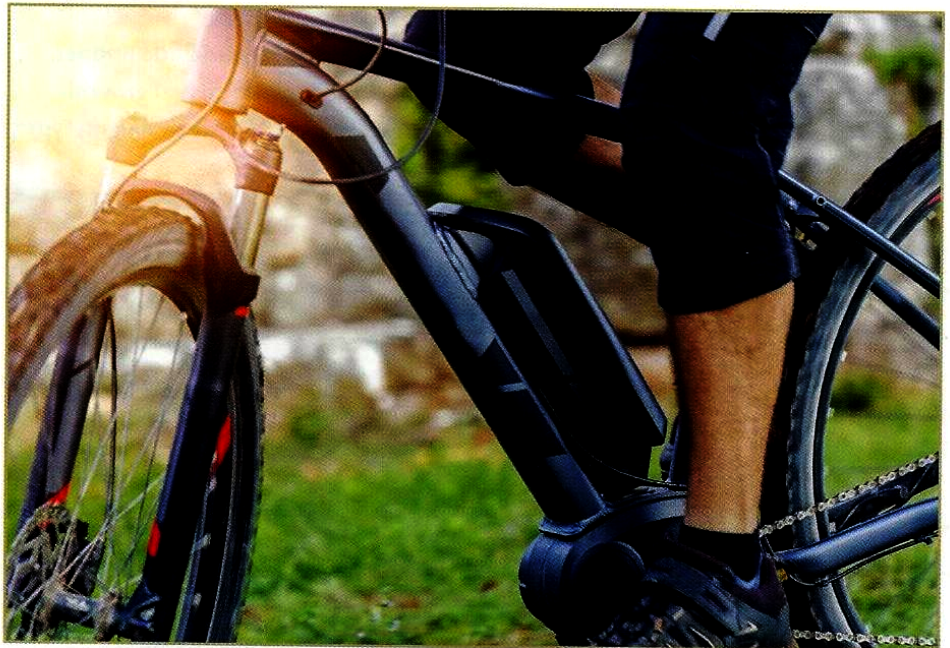
Edward Guzman, owner of GForce Electric Bike & Scooter in Chamblee, has been an electric bike retailer since 2006. He is only one of about three electric bicycle dealers in the Atlanta area. When asked about how to select the perfect electric bike, Guzman said he would ask a range of questions to help narrow down the selection and tailor the bike to fit the needs of the rider. He even added

that if he didn't have the perfect bike in stock, he's happy to order it. Currently, Guzman's bike of choice is a Magnum bike. He says Magnum is a new brand of electric bikes that are great quality for a lower price point. They're also quite stylish!

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Keep in mind, whether you're riding an electric bike or your old manually operated bike, the rules of the road for all bikes are the same. Here are a few safety tips to remember as you hit the open road this season.

1. **Be predictable.** Other vehicles need to be able to navigate around bicyclists. Using your turn signal and avoiding swerving are two ways to ensure predictability.
2. **Ride with traffic.** Bikers have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Obey all traffic signals and stop signs and remember to use the lane closest to the curb.
3. **Stand out.** Wear conspicuous clothing and make sure your front and rear lights are operational.
4. **Be prepared.** Before embarking on your ride, give your bike a quick inspection to make sure the tires are sufficiently inflated, the brakes are working and the chains are running smoothly.
5. **Wear a helmet.** Your noggin needs protecting in case of an accident. Remember to replace your helmet after any collision as it may be damaged.
6. **Enjoy the ride!**



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