

REVIEWS

» Arai CORSAIR X

HELMET

Arai's Corsair X represents the Japanese manufacturer's top of the line offering, and it's quite a lid! Its Peripheral Belting & Structural Net Composite 2 (PB-SNC2) shell is hand-built from Arai's latest generation of proprietary synthetic fibers and resins, with a continuous curve radius of 75mm. The Variable Axis System (VAS) allows for easy visor swaps—something riders don't normally associate with Arai.

The standard clear shield exceeds ANSI Z87.1/VESC-8 standards and features a Pinlock anti-fog insert, as well as a robust locking mechanism to keep it shut at high speeds. A tinted shield is also included. Ventilation is plentiful, with three 3-position intake scoops on the crown, two eyebrow vents on the shield, and one large 3-position chin port all working in concert to keep air flowing through to the multiple exhausts on the rear of the helmet.

The interior features Arai's "Intermediate Oval" shape, a favorite among American riders. A multidensity EPS liner with fully removable "Eco-Pure" anti-microbial fabric liner feels luxurious and, as usual for Arai, the various internal foam pads are replaceable with different sizes for a truly customizable fit. The removable chin curtain is substantial, effectively reducing air intake in that area.

The Corsair X is Arai's torchbearer for the company's well-deserved reputation for quality, with exquisite fit and finish. At this price, riders have high expectations, but they will be most likely be exceeded. Our test helmet's intricate multi-color paint work was deep and rich, with a glossy finish that held up flawlessly over our 12-month commuting regimen.

The faceshield and vents actuated with a smooth precision, and the internal liner was positively plush. In short, everything the rider feels and sees radiates world-class design and construction.

Out on the road, the Corsair X was superb in every measure. The interior's Eco-Pure liner was comfortable after many hundreds of miles in the saddle, and there was plenty of room for my comm's speakers in the shell recesses. Air circulation was fantastic in hotter weather, although I did wish for slightly larger vent toggles for winter glove actuation. Weighing in at a svelte 3.6 pounds for my size L test model, this helmet's light weight reduced fatigue on high mileage days, and its aerodynamic shape kept wind noise and buffeting to a minimum. I had a Corsair V as my personal helmet for years, and the Corsair X is an evolutionary improvement that is superior in every way to its legendary predecessor.

Arai's Corsair X is DOT FMVSS 218 and Snell M2015 certified and is available in XS-XXL sizes. Solid color MSRP starts at \$849.95, with racer-replica paint schemes commanding higher premiums.

—Moshe K. Levy



Arai Helmet, araiamericas.com

» Jack Riepe 'MOTORCYCLES SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS' BOOK

My first literary taste of Jack Riepe was in 2015, when I devoured his seminal tome, "Conversations With A Motorcycle." Conversations introduced us to a slew of colorful characters from 1970s-era northern New Jersey, in a chronicle that read like the unholy baby of Philip Roth's "Portnoy's Complaint" and Melissa Holbrook Pierson's "The Perfect Vehicle." Undoubtedly autobiographical and endearingly honest, Riepe detailed his shocking transformation from fumbling Jersey City virgin to "hard ridin', whiskey swillin', brunette stealin' biker," with a unique style all his own.

Jack's evolution came courtesy of his cantankerous two-stroke Kawasaki H2, which acts as his moto-conscience throughout the story. The bike, infamously nicknamed "The Widomaker," transports the reader on a

series of smoke-filled, Jameson-drenched adventures that had me constantly laughing out loud, to the point of tears. I was hooked on Riepe!

So, it was with great expectations that I opened his newest book, "Motorcycles Speak Louder Than Words." This book is not so much a sequel to Conversations as it is a much deeper dive into the characters and tales that made that book so entertaining. Jack is the protagonist, a struggling 20-something writer endeavoring to find his own voice, while indulging in all the pleasures that young males routinely fanaticize about.

Steamy romance comes courtesy of a bevy of girlfriends, including The Equestrian, The Dark Secret and finally, Alex. Each of these women puts Jack through the ringer in various comedic ways, but it is Alex who truly