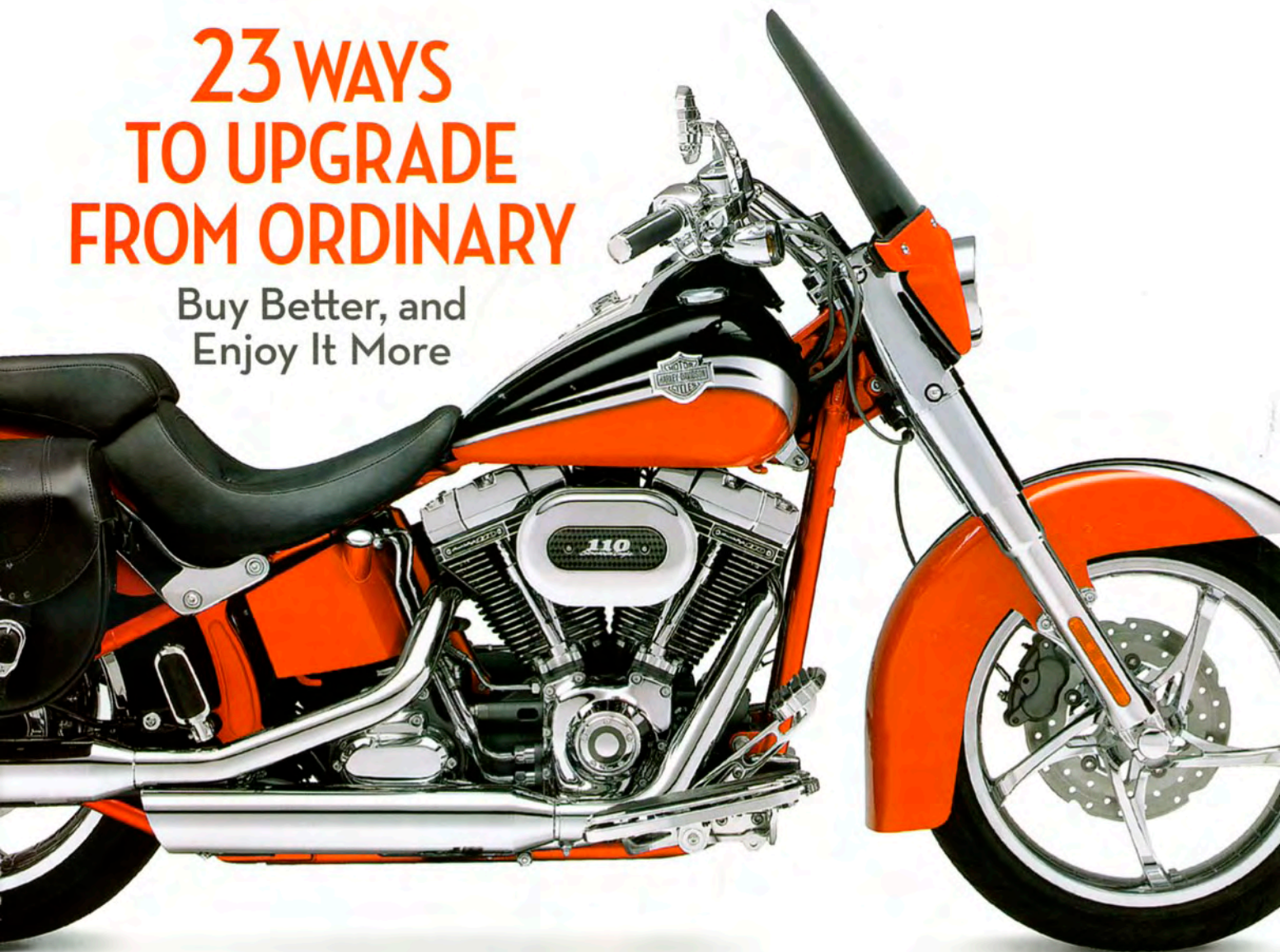


# COLLECTION™

A BUYER'S GUIDE FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF ROBB REPORT

## 23 WAYS TO UPGRADE FROM ORDINARY

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A Normandy  
Guitars V guitar

in nearby Dow, Ill., where he cuts the wood, dries it, and then usually only minimally alters it while making it into furniture. Because Stine leaves the wood in such a natural state, no two pieces of his furniture are the same.

### LIGHT METAL

The aluminum bodies of Jim Normandy's guitars are intended to do more than just look cool. According to Normandy, who initially moonlighted as a guitar maker while working as a bank executive earlier this decade, the aluminum allows notes to ring longer and clearer.

Normandy, who is 45, made his first aluminum guitar for himself, in the 1990s, when he was in a punk band and couldn't afford the bass guitar he wanted. Intent on playing an instrument that looked unique, he made his guitar's body out of aluminum. In the process, he discovered the metal's musical benefits. Normandy went into guitar making full time and established Normandy Guitars in 2007, in Salem, Ore., after cutbacks at HSBC cost him his job as a regional vice president for the bank.

Normandy now offers six-string electric guitars and bass guitars with archtop or V-shaped bodies—all made of aluminum and attached to a maple neck. The guitars are available in nine different colors and three different finishes and cost from \$2,000 to \$3,000. ☐