



**M**udguard-equipped bikes have been a staple of road cycling for decades, with winter club rides likely to insist on covered tyres as there's little worse than sitting in a chaingang with a constant spray of muck being delivered into your face. Like all chaingangs, my quartet of bikes on test covers the fiscal range, from just over a grand to top-level titanium at three times that price.

The first comes by way of Italian-infused Tifosi via Leighton Buzzard, home of the UK's oldest cycle distribution company, Chicken Cycles. The Tifosi CK7 is the brand's closest thing to a classic British winter trainer. It's a racy frameset built to take 'guards and running Campagnolo's Centaur group.

Next up, it's a thoroughly modern take on the winter bike from Kinesis. The Tripster AT is its

do-it-all gravel-cum-road machine designed in partnership with the much-missed ultra-endurance rider Mike Hall, who died in a cycling accident in 2017. So it's a gravel bike equipped for big winter miles that combines huge all-road tyres and even bigger Fend-Off 'guards.

Third on the agenda is another classic-inspired mudguard machine – the latest incarnation of Condor's long-running endurance bike, the Fratello, which is disc-brake equipped. Like Tifosi there's a strong Italian connection as Condor's frames are built in Italy using Columbus tubes, and it's finished with Campagnolo Centaur. Its rain-shedding prowess comes from (German) SKS Bluemells' guards.

Finally, we have Ribble's titanium Endurance Ti disc. This all-new frame uses butted tubes and is built with attention to detail and matched to a full carbon fork. Ribble's

Cyclists! Be on 'guard this winter and keep riding through the rain

legendary value for money shines through thanks to a full Ultegra disc group, quality finishing kit and a set of 'guards designed by Ribble, all for a price that some titanium rivals would charge for a frameset.

YOUR TESTER



**WARREN ROSSITER**  
SENIOR TECHNICAL EDITOR

≡ In the past, Warren's been sceptical of mudguards, preferring to get wet rather than ride along with rattling, tyre-rubbing fenders. With a raft of new mudguard-ready rides, however, he thought it time to revisit some classic accessory-equipped rides.

# THE BIKES ON TEST...

## TIFOSI CK7 CENTAUR

**£1138.99 (£1099 + £39.99)**

▤ This new build for 2021 uses the classic CK7 alloy frameset and carbon fork combined with a Campagnolo Centaur drivetrain and Campagnolo wheels. The CK7 has been a huge seller for Tifosi in the past. Can this classic rim-braked bike still keep up with the fierce competition? The full-length Flinger Guards are a £39.99 option, which still adds up to a potentially great bargain winter ride.



## KINESIS TRIPSTER AT

**£1910 (£1850 + £60)**

▤ The AT is a bike with practicality and comfort at its core. Kinesis thinks this winter build will see you through the dark, damp months and during your greatest adventures for years to come. For me, it's a first to see big-volume gravel tyres covered with equally big fenders. The price comprises the Kinesis AT frameset (£750), Upgrade Apex Hydraulic Build Kit (£1100) and Kinesis Fend-Off wide alloy 'guards (£60).



## CONDOR FRATELLO DISC

**£2499.99**

▤ London's Condor has been building bikes, such as the Fratello, for longer than most of us have been around. After more than 70 years of experience designing bikes to cope with inclement weather, this company knows a thing or two about wet winter riding. The steel Fratello mixes classic material with up-to-date specs, such as disc brakes and thru-axles. It keeps you dry thanks to SKS Bluemels 'guards.



## RIBBLE ENDURANCE TI

**£3324 (£3299 + £25)**

▤ Ribble's Endurance follows the design lead of its latest road machines with its dropped stays and sporty lines, though it's built from top-grade seamless-butt titanium, rather than carbon. Ribble hasn't forgotten about the British weather, though, with discreet mudguard fittings and specially in-house designed full-coverage 'guards an option with its clever online bike builder.



## THE RATINGS EXPLAINED

★★★★★  
**EXCEPTIONAL**  
A GENUINE CLASS LEADER

★★★★  
**VERY GOOD**  
ONE OF THE BEST YOU CAN BUY

★★★  
**GOOD**  
IT'LL DO THE JOB VERY WELL

★★  
**BELOW AVERAGE**  
FLAWED IN SOME WAY

★  
**POOR**  
SIMPLY PUT, DON'T BOTHER





# KINESIS TRIPSTER AT

£1910 (£1850 + £60 for 'guards) » Gravel gets set for winter

**WE SAY...**  
*This alloy number  
has taken its lead from  
its acclaimed titanium  
big brother*

**T**he AT stands for all-terrain and stems from Kinesis's original titanium ATR (all-terrain race), the company's first foray into versatile all-landers. Kinesis has forged a reputation for offering great-value and quality alloy bikes using its own Kinesium tubing, so it's only natural that the titanium superbike has received an alloy reimagining for a wider audience.

The frame bears the name of Mike Hall, the ultra-riding legend who was tragically killed while competing in the 2017 Indian Pacific race. Mike had input into the design, including the two-position down-tube bottle mounts (1), so you can lower the bottle to more easily fit a frame bag; the underside of the top tube, which is flattened to make said bag more secure; and a third cage mount under the down tube for extra water capacity.

The versatile nature of the chassis heavily derives from its generous frame clearances (2); it will fit up to huge 52mm-wide tyres (in 650b)



**TOP** The shiny surface of the Selle Italia X3 is not rain compatible  
**ABOVE** SRAM Apex 1 drivetrain: aimed at the adventure rider

and 45mm rubber in 700c. Aside from choosing wheel and tyre size, you can also play with the steering geometry, thanks to

the Futura Cross carbon fork (3) that comes with a tool and two 5mm spacers. With a degree of tool dexterity, you can switch between endurance/gravel-friendly steering or a racier alternative. It's a nice option if you intend to run slimmer road tyres rather than the 38c gravel ones fitted.

The £750 frame weighs 1.91kg (57cm). Add a 436g fork and you can see it's built tough rather than light – not surprising as part of its remit is to carry luggage. Mind you, at 11kg with 38c tyres and the Apex build kit (£1100), it's not that bad and, more importantly, whatever surface you ride on, it doesn't feel like an

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Weight** 11kg (L)

**Frame** 7046

Kinesium alloy

**Fork** Columbus

Futura Cross

carbon

**Gears** SRAM

Apex

(40, 11-42)

**Brakes** SRAM

Apex 1

hydraulic disc

**Wheels** Alex

GD26 rims on

Novatec hubs

**Finishing kit**

Schwalbe

G-One All-road

RG 38c clincher

tyres, Selle

Italia X3 saddle,

Fend-Off Wide

mudguards

The Fend-Off mudguards' full length is complemented by flaps front and rear that extend within a couple of centimetres of the road



**ABOVE** Satisfying stops with SRAM Apex 1 hydraulic disc brakes

**LEFT** Dynamic duo: Alex GC26 rim/Novatec hub tubeless-ready wheelset

**BELOW** Kinesis has gained a good reputation for its Kinesium tubing



11kg bike. That's because the frame's stiffness delivers an incredibly responsive feel, while the Alex GD26 rim/Novatec hub tubeless-ready wheelset and excellent Schwalbe G-Ones (non-tubeless) tyres ensure a comfortable yet lively ride.

The Apex 1 drivetrain is very much aimed at 'adventure' riders with a 40t chainring and 11-42 cassette. The 40/42 bottom gear means you can climb most inclines – on or off-road. At the other end of the scale, you can easily maintain good high speeds, whether you're eating up gravel or flying along on tarmac.

The Fend-Off Wide mudguards are designed specifically for big tyres. Their full length is complemented by large flaps front and rear that extend to within a couple of centimetres of the road. I came away astonished by just how clean I remained. More impressed were the riders behind me! These are well worth the £60 top-up, though we'd like to see safety fittings on the front guard like its rivals on other bikes in this test.

The AT's build is all solid stuff. The alloy bar has just enough flare, is comfortably oversized on the tops and comes clad with quality tape. The brakes are power-laden and easy to control. SRAM's Apex 1 shifts well, with just the occasional hiccup stepping up the block when it's muddy and the chain's not quite sitting in the teeth. My only other niggle is the X3 saddle.

#### HIGHS

Wonderfully thought-out frame design; great handling; good 'guards; big fun

#### LOWS

Occasional gear change hiccup; slippery saddle

#### BUY IF...

You want a bike to see out the winter and take you anywhere come the better weather

Typically Selle Italia, it's well shaped and comfortable, but the glossy surface isn't compatible with wet weather and wearing Lycra. Too many times I ended up sliding around, longing for some texture to grip the seat of my bibs. The Selle Italias on the Condor and Tifosi do a better job.

If the AT sounds like a sensible bike with lots of reliable fittings and components, well it is. But – and this is a major 'but' – it's definitely not boring. The handling is sorted and confidence-inspiring, while the chassis responds with race-bike vigour to sprints. The big

textured tyres mean you can take this machine anywhere and, thanks to the brilliant Fend-Off 'guards, it keeps you as dry as possible. Frankly, I'm pretty much smitten with its charms and hugely impressed with its performance.

## THE VERDICT

A superbly versatile bike that's as fun as it is practical

★★★★★

#### ALSO CONSIDER...



#### A LITTLE LESS KINESIS TRIPSTER AT FRAMESET £750

Like the idea of the versatile Tripster but want to put together your own version? Then you can always opt for the frame kit that comes with the Futura fork at £750 and decide on your own dream spec.



#### A LOT MORE KINESIS TRIPSTER ATR V3 £9300

This uses the same build kit as our test bike but switches up the frameset to Kinesis's brilliant third-generation version of the legendary Titanium Tripster chassis that scored an impressive 4.5 out of 5 in our recent test.



Adding a huge slab of fun into the mix and making it available for under £2000 is a hell of an achievement

## AND THE WINNER IS... KINESIS TRIPSTER AT

This is a bike that will excel in all four seasons

**E**ach of our four bikes will serve you well throughout the wettest seasons. Tifosi's new Campagnolo build of its evergreen CK7 is a great slice of old-school aluminium that personifies the fast winter trainer. It's well priced and equipped; that said, I'd step up to Tifosi's soon-to-arrive disc version of the CK7, but if you're a rim-brake fan, then this CK7 is a fine option.

It's easy to understand why the Fratello is Condor's most popular bike. The slender steel tubing is quality stuff and gives it a good dose of classic cool, yet it has modern geometry and all mod-cons when it comes to fixtures and fittings. With a bit more value in the package, it'd be a surefire winner.

Next is Ribble's gloriously smooth yet fast titanium Endurance. The usual Ribble value-

for-money traits are here, and all that great kit adorns a lovely frame in both appearance and experience. This certainly isn't 'just' a winter ride - this is a true year-round companion of the highest order.

Our winner by the smallest of margins, however, is the Kinesis Tripster AT. It's a bike that's well priced and incredibly versatile. The AT works brilliantly as a road bike with spot-on handling, but it could be anything from a sportive steed to a long-distance commuter, or a world-beating Transcontinental race machine. Head off the tarmac and it's a capable gravel companion or adventurous bike-packing machine. Building in all the versatility is one thing, but adding a huge slab of fun into the mix and still making it available as a £750 frameset or sub-£2000 bike is one hell of an achievement. Congratulations to Kinesis.

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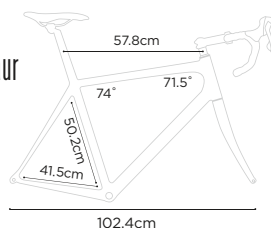
	TIFOSI CK7 CENTAUR £11138.99 ★★★★★	KINESIS TRIPSTER AT £1910 ★★★★★	CONDOR FRATELLO DISC £2499.99 ★★★★★	RIBBLE ENDURANCE TI £3324 ★★★★★
SIZE TESTED	L	L (57cm)	55cm (L)	L
SIZES AVAILABLE	S/M/L/XL	S/M/L/XL	46/49/52/55/58/61/64	XS/S/M/L/XL
WEIGHT	11.0kg	11.0kg	10.01kg	9.53kg
FRAME	6061 aluminium	7046 Kinesis alloy	Columbus Spirit steel	3AL/2.5v Titanium, double-butted, seamless welded
FORK	UD carbon with alloy steerer	Columbus Futura Cross carbon	Condor Pioggia Disc carbon	Full carbon
FRAME ALIGNMENT	Perfect	Perfect	Perfect	Perfect
TRANSMISSION				
CHAINSET	FSA Omega 50/34	SRAM Apex 1 Xsync 40t	Campagnolo Centaur 52/36	Shimano Ultegra 50/34
BOTTOM BRACKET	Campagnolo threaded BSA	Shimano threaded BSA	Campagnolo threaded BSA	Shimano BBR60 68mm
CASSETTE	Campagnolo 11-32	SRAM PG-1130 Powerglide 11-42	Campagnolo Centaur 11-32	Shimano Ultegra 11-32
CHAIN	KMC	SRAM PC-1110 with powerlock	Campagnolo	Shimano HG701
DERAILLEURS	Campagnolo Centaur front & rear	SRAM Apex 1 long cage	Campagnolo Centaur front & rear	Shimano Ultegra front & rear
GEAR LEVERS	Campagnolo Centaur	SRAM Apex 1	Campagnolo Centaur	Shimano Ultegra
WHEELS				
FRONT AND REAR	Campagnolo Calima C17	Alex GD26 tubeless rims on Novatec sealed-cartridge hubs	Campagnolo Zonda disc	Level 35 alloy disc
TYRES	Impac RacePac 28c	Schwalbe G-One All-road RG 38c clincher	Continental Grand Prix GT 28c	Continental Grand Prix GT 28c
WHEEL WEIGHT	1.5 (f); 2.06 (r)	1.64 (f); 2.3 (r)	1.37 (f); 1.83 (r)	1.35 (f); 1.77 (r)
COMPONENTS				
STEM	Deda Zero 100mm	Alloy 6061 90mm	Deda Zero 1	Level 2 6061 alloy 100mm
HANDLEBAR	Deda Zero 44cm	Alloy 6061 44cm	Deda Zero 2	Level 2 alloy 44cm
HEADSET	Columbus	Kinesis with ACB bearings	Condor	Level 44
SADDLE	Selle Italia Boost	Selle Italia X3	Selle Italia Flite Manganese	Fizik Aliante R5 Kium rail
SEATPOST	Tifosi alloy 27.2mm	6061 alloy 27.2mm	Condor alloy 27.2mm	Level 2 carbon
BRAKES	Tektro R559 long-reach rim calliper	SRAM Apex hydraulic disc, 160mm rotors	TRP Spyre cable disc	Shimano Ultegra hydraulic disc, 160mm IceTech rotors
MUDGUARDS	Flinger F25 Deluxe	Fend-Off Wide	SKS Bluemels Longboard	Ribble

## SPECIFICATIONS & MEASUREMENTS

Geometry is probably the most important factor when buying a bike but, as you can see from these tables, even bikes nominally the same size can vary considerably. All reputable bike retailers – high street and online – should ensure the bike fits you.

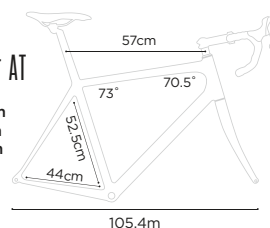
### Tifosi CK7 Centaur

Cockpit **68.5cm**  
Standover **81cm**  
BB height **28.4cm**  
Fork offset **41mm**  
Trail **72mm**



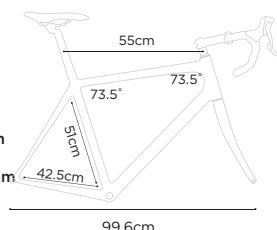
### Kinesis Tripster AT

Cockpit **66.8cm**  
Standover **78.5cm**  
BB height **28.3cm**  
Fork offset **49mm**  
Trail **57mm**



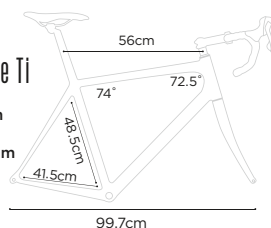
### Condor Fratello Disc

Cockpit **68.3cm**  
Standover **80.5cm**  
BB height **26.5cm**  
Fork offset **44.5mm**  
Trail **55mm**



### Ribble Endurance Ti

Cockpit **67.7cm**  
Standover **78.5cm**  
BB height **28.3cm**  
Fork offset **44.5mm**  
Trail **61mm**



### NEXT ISSUE

## SUB-£1500 GRAVEL BIKES

You don't need to spend a fortune to get your gravel kicks. We're looking at the latest raft of sub-£1500 gravel machines that are built to take the knocks, with new machines from BiViBIKES, Genesis, Ragley and Felt.