



First look
Quite sporty for a steel tourer. Well equipped for the price but needs lower gears



“While the 11-speed cassette means few big gaps on the cassette, I’d have liked a significantly lower bottom gear”

Tech spec
SONDER SANTIAGO RIVAL 22 GRAND TOURER

Price: £1,799.
Sizes: S, M (tested), L, XL.
Weight: 12.8kg (28.2lb).
Frame & fork: Reynolds 631 steel with thru-axle, rack and mudguard mounts, three pairs of bottle bosses. Straight steel fork with thru-axle, mudguard mounts and triple bosses.
Wheels: 35-622 Goodyear County tubeless-ready tyres, Sonder Nova 700C rims, 28 14g spokes front and rear, Sonder front hub, Sonder Nova rear hub.
Transmission: FSA Vero Pro 48-32 chainset, FSA MegaEvo bottom bracket, SRAM PC1170 chain, SRAM PG-1130 11-32 cassette. SRAM Rival 22 shifters and front and rear derailleurs. 22 ratios, 27-119in.
Braking: SRAM Rival 22 levers, Tektro MD-C500 cable discs, 160mm rotors.
Steering & seating: Grepp bar tape, 400x31.8mm Sonder Spitfire bar, 100mm Sonder Storc stem, FSA Orbit MX headset 1 1/8in. Brooks B17 Standard saddle, 27.2x400mm Sonder seatpost
Equipment: 45mm SKS mudguards, Sonder Mool 18kg capacity rear rack, two bottle cages. alpkit.com

easier to recycle than those three materials, boosting both long-term value and the bikes’ eco credentials.

As tourers, both bikes come with a wide array of fittings, with bottle and luggage bosses everywhere. Down tube and seat tube bosses are complemented by bosses under the down tube, while each has a fork festooned with fittings for racks, bottles or cargo cages for touring and bikepacking. Top tube ‘bento box’ bosses are the only absentee.



Top: Budget dual-piston cable disc brakes work fine
Bottom: Brooks B17 saddle looks classy but will divide opinions as to comfort

get a lot of mileage out of the more budget-oriented Shimano components.

SRAM’s Double Tap levers take a little getting used to after Shimano’s STI but after a couple of rides they become second nature: you press the right inner lever to change down, and tap it to change up. Simple, effective and the shifting was crisp and accurate. But while the 11-speed cassette means there are few big gaps on the cassette, I’d have liked a significantly lower bottom gear than 32/32 (27in). A more

compact 46-30 chainset and/or an 11-34 cassette would help. Wolf Tooth’s nifty derailleur hanger extender would allow for an even bigger cassette.

The Surly’s 26t inner chainring pairs with a 34t sprocket for a much lower and more touring-friendly bottom gear. Old school, yes, but thanks to its 20-113in range it would be my choice for any extended tour or even a regular hilly commute.

Braking on both bikes is by cable-actuated disc brakes from the Tektro/TRP empire. The Surly gets the higher-level

Components

Touring kit can come in different forms, and there are as many similarities as there are differences with our pair. The Surly has 26in wheels, a triple chainset – the cycle-tourist’s friend – and a drivetrain that mixes an FSA chainset with Shimano’s 9-speed Sora and Alivio.

The Sonder comes with 700C wheels, with a lower spoke count than the Surly’s, and an 11-speed SRAM Rival setup with an FSA sub-compact chainset. While Rival nominally sits above Sora and Alivio, my experience is that you’ll still

