

First look

Versatile, good value road bike with big clearances, 12-speed 105 and à la carte options



“
The Dolan RDX is offered in four different builds, each of which can be fine-tuned using the configuration options on the Dolan website
”

Tech spec DOLAN RDX 12S 105 R7120

Price: £1,509.97 as tested (from £1,449.98, frameset £499.99).

Sizes: 49, 52, 54, 56 (tested), 58cm.

Weight: 9.95kg/21.9lb.

Frame & fork:

Triple-buttressed 7005 aluminium frame with press-fit BB, 142x12mm axle and fittings for rear rack, mudguard, three bottles. Full carbon fork with tapered steerer, 100x12mm axle and mudguard fittings.

Wheels: 32-622 Vittoria Zaffiro Pro 2.0 tyres, Mavic Allroad Disc wheels (tubeless compatible 622x22 aluminium rims, 24x2 spokes, Mavic Center Lock hubs).

Transmission:

no pedals, 170mm 105-R7100 chainset, 50-34 chainrings, Shimano BB86 bottom bracket, Shimano M6100 chain, Shimano 105 R7100 12-speed 11-36 cassette. Shimano 105 R7120 levers and R7100 derailleurs. 24 ratios, 26-124in.

Brakes: Shimano 105 R7120 levers and callipers, 160mm/140mm f/r rotors.

Steering & seating: 380x31.8mm Deda Zero RHM bar, 80mmx8° Deda Zero 1 stem, Alpina 1 1/8-1 1/2 F35 headset. Selle Italia X3 Boost Flow saddle, 27.2x350mm Alpina setback seatpost.

dolan-bikes.com

it would fit me better out of the box than the large. It did – albeit with toe overlap that the large would have avoided.

Both bikes are neatly TIG welded from butted aluminium tubes. The down tubes are biaxially ovalised – vertically at the head tube and laterally at the bottom bracket – to improve strength and stiffness where it's needed. Although the Dolan and Kinesis tube profiles differ, I didn't notice any difference in stiffness. Cables and hoses are internally routed, which is both neat and annoying. The Dolan goes further (and fiddlier) in running the rear brake hose and derailleur cable through the chainstays.

In terms of geometry and frame clearances, the Dolan and Kinesis resemble gravel bikes as much as endurance road bikes. They have: a taller front end, which is more comfortable; a head angle of 72 degrees, which gives a bit more stabilising trail than 73-74 degrees; and room for bigger tyres. The Kinesis will take 30mm tyres with mudguards (maybe 32mm) and 36mm



Top: Tubeless-compatible rims but not tyres

Bottom: These are nominally 32mm but plump up to 35mm on the wide Mavic rims

without. The Dolan is listed as taking tyres up to 32mm with guards and 35mm without, but my vernier callipers say it will run 35mm with guards and 42mm without – and perhaps wider still.

Both bikes have fittings for mudguards and a rear rack. The Kinesis has mounts for two bottle cages, the Dolan three; there's an extra set under the down tube. I prefer the 68mm threaded bottom bracket shell of the Kinesis to the Dolan's press-fit but it's not a deal breaker. I'd fit a screw-together bottom bracket from (for example) Wheels Manufacturing when the Dolan's bottom bracket needed replacing. This would keep the bearings aligned and (in theory) problem free.

Components

Like Ribble, whose Endurance SL Disc Sport I tested recently (cyclinguk.org/endurance-road-bikes), Dolan has an extensive component selection menu. I really like this, not so much because you can add accessories or upgrades – although that's nice – but because you

