



First look
A well-made titanium gravel bike with a warranty and price to match, plus a nice range of à la carte options



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At its best on some kind of road – gravel, dirt or tarmac
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Tech Spec
REILLY GRADIENT

Price: £4,368.99 as tested (from £4,249; frameset £2,499).
Sizes: XXS, XS, S, M, L (tested), XL, XXL.
Weight: 8.85kg (no pedals or mudguards).
Frame & fork: Hydroformed 3AL-2.5V titanium frame with 68mm threaded bottom bracket, 44mm head tube, 142x12mm rear dropouts and fittings for rear rack, mudguard, three bottles and top tube 'bento box'. UDM carbon fork with tapered carbon steerer, 100x12mm axle and fittings for two cargo cages, mudguard and dynamo cable.
Wheels: 32-622 Continental GP5000S TR tyres with tubes, Strada All Road Plus Disc wheelset (622x22 aluminium rims, Miche R-DX Centre Lock hubs, 24x2 spokes).
Transmission: no pedals, 165mm Shimano 105 FC-R7100 chainset with 50-34 chainrings, Shimano SM-BBR60 bottom bracket, Shimano CN-M7100 chain, Shimano CS-HG710-12 11-36 12-speed cassette. Shimano 105 ST-R7120 shifters and R7100 front & rear derailleurs. 24 ratios: 26-123in.
Braking: Shimano R7120 hydraulic levers and R7170 callipers, 160/140mm front/rear rotors.
Steering & seating: EVA bar tape, '400'x31.8mm Deda Zero 1 aluminium handlebar (38cm c-c), 80mmx6° Reilly aluminium stem, Reilly aluminium 1 1/8in/1.5in threadless headset. Reilly titanium/aluminium Airform saddle, 31.6x350mm Reilly UD carbon seatpost with titanium bolts, 34.9mm Reilly seatpost clamp.
Equipment: 45mm Portland Design Works Full Metal Fenders (£119.99). reillycyclegworks.com

The wheels are one of Reilly's budget options. That means heavier aluminium rather than carbon rims and non-boutique hubs. But there's nothing to complain about. They're true, spin smoothly and, like the tyres, are tubeless ready.

There's a range of drivetrain options from Shimano, SRAM and Campagnolo, some of them electronic. Here it's 12-speed Shimano 105 with mechanical shifting. This works as well as Shimano invariably does, and the wider-range 11-36 cassette I asked for usefully lowers the gearing.

The flat-mount disc brakes are from the same groupset. They're hydraulic not mechanical. Once I'd adjusted the front brake to avoid rubbing and chirruping on the rotor, these too worked flawlessly, with plenty of easily modulated power.

The ride

Whether or not a titanium frame's famed compliance is felt more in the head than the hands, backside and feet, the Gradient glides comfortably over tarmac roads thanks to its less racy riding position and excellent 32mm tyres.

I like the way it handles. This didn't surprise me. The geometry is very similar to that of my Sonder Colibri road bike (also a Large). Half a degree here, a few



Top: Room for a mudguard or a bigger tyre. The fork crown port is for a dynamo cable
Bottom: Welding as neat as I've seen on a titanium bike

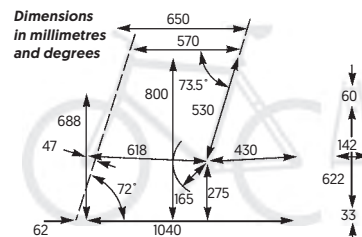
millimetres there, an extra headset spacer... The bikes also have the same tyres and the same sized bars and cranks. I have slightly less weight on my hands on my own bike, which has a 10mm shorter stem and a seatpost with more layback. And the Reilly is a little lighter.

Overall, though, it's a very similar ride – a point I'm labouring to quash the idea that nice bikes have a magic ingredient. They don't. It's physics – geometry, components and, yes, materials. I like the Gradient best on road because it rides like my road bike!

It will go off road – and well enough with gravel tyres. But even with 43mm GravelKings, I'd favour forest fire roads and well-groomed tracks. Anything beyond that I'd want a drop-bar 29er like the Mason InSearchOf – or just a hardtail mountain bike. ●

Verdict

The Reilly Gradient is at its best on some kind of road – gravel, dirt or tarmac. As a do-it-all road bike, its handling is on point and the facility to fit mudguards, plusher tyres and luggage will come in handy. There's a weight penalty compared to a carbon equivalent and a price premium over budget titanium. But it's well made, good looking and has an excellent warranty. If four grand doesn't make you blink, it's worth a closer look.



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