



BikesEtc
BEST IN TEST

Thompson Capella Disc

Belgian dark horse gallops ahead of the pack



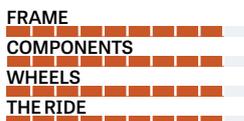
All three bikes impressed with performance and ride quality that demonstrate how spending a little more can be rewarding and picking a winner was a difficult task.

The Bianchi Oltre is designed as a race bike and it certainly delivers a fast and balanced ride. The frame is a stand-out feature and while the Campagnolo groupset may divide opinion, fans of Italian bikes will love it.

The Wilier feels equally competent as a racer, albeit one that would excel more on the climbs rather than flatter roads. It ascends well and covers ground with ease, making it a fantastic bike for those who enjoy the challenge of longer rides. It is fast and edgy and may take time for some riders to get used to, but racers will love the lightning-fast reactions.

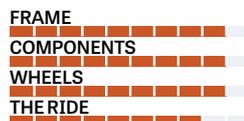
The Thompson Capella was the dark horse of the test, from a brand that few will have heard of, but we were impressed. It gives a fast and comfortable ride, with downhill being a highlight. While not all riders are convinced by disc brakes, they do offer powerful, well modulated braking with no discernible downsides. The ability to create a customised paint finish might seem like a novelty feature, but is a tempting bonus. But it is on performance alone that the Thompson Capella Disc edged ahead of the rest on test. 🚴

**THOMPSON
CAPELLA
CARBON DISC**
£2,879



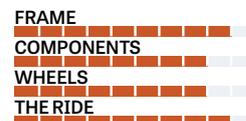
OVERALL
9.1
10

**WILIER GTR
SL ULTEGRA**
£3,499



OVERALL
8.9
10

**BIANCHI OLTRE
XR1 POTENZA**
£2,999



OVERALL
8.7
10



THOMPSON Capella Carbon disc

£2,879

Belgian brand looking to make a mark in the UK

We would be willing to bet that most people, even hardcore cyclists will not have heard of Thompson bikes – not to be confused with American company Thomson (no P) which makes finishing kit. But while the Belgian family-run business isn't well known in Britain, it has a history that stretches back to 1921 and is now spreading its wings.

The Capella is available as either a disc or rim brake frameset, with our test bike fitted with discs. While they are fast becoming the norm on road bikes, it is still relatively rare to see a bike with race-inspired geometry, such as this one, fitted with them.

First impressions are positive, with a much more comfortable ride than we expected. The rear end is especially smooth while also being very responsive to sprints or high-power efforts. The Novatec wheels are decent all-rounders and perfect for year-round use but at 1,900g for the pair, there is certainly room to upgrade and drop some weight. The rims are also tubeless-ready, so it was a little disappointing not to have our test bike supplied with tubeless tyres. That said, the supplied Schwalbe One tyres are fast and light, even if they lack a little grip on typically grimy winter roads.

While the Capella does carry a little more weight than the others on test, it doesn't feel any slower on the climbs, with a comfortable cockpit and sensible gearing. As the gradient flips from climb to descent, it turns into a bike that makes it very easy to go fast, helped by stable, confidence-inspiring handling. The Shimano disc brakes are fantastic, adding to that feeling.

One of the big selling points for Thompson is the option to choose your frame colours – included as standard in the pricing. With thousands of combinations, it would be easy to create something unique or simply dress it in your favourite colours.

There are a few small issues, such as a bit of toe overlap experienced by our tester when his toe hit the front wheel, on tight turns at slower speeds. The beefy carbon chainstays also cause the chain to rattle on rougher roads. But, these don't really affect the overall performance. This is a joy to ride.



We appreciated the disc brakes – still a rare sight on such a race-focused bike



GOOD

- **Speed & Control** Stable, fast and easy to ride, up or downhill.
- **Customisation** Let your imagination run wild and create a truly unique colour scheme!
- **Comfort** Rear end comfort is fantastic, giving a smooth ride.



NOT SO GOOD

- **Tyres** A little sketchy on grime-covered roads.
- **Harsh fork** A little rough compared to the smoothness of the back end.
- **Toe overlap** A minor problem our testers encountered.



CONCLUSION

The Thompson Capella is a revelation. Offering a fast and comfortable back end and geometry that makes it both very fast but also stable through the fastest of bends. With customisable colour frame hand-painted in Belgium, it offers the chance to own something truly unique. 🚴

PRICE: £2,879

WEIGHT: 8.6kg (size 54cm)

FRAME: Monocoque HM Carbon 3K, full carbon disc fork

GROUPSET: Shimano Ultegra 6800

BRAKES: Shimano Ultegra 6800

CHAINSET: Shimano Ultegra 6800, 50/34

CASSETTE: Shimano Ultegra, 11-28

BAR: TRC Evo

STEM: TRC Evo

SADDLE: Fizik Arione

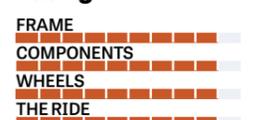
SEATPOST: TRC Evo

WHEELS: Novatec Thirty

TYRES: Schwalbe One, 25cc

CONTACT: For details see thompson.be

Rating



OVERALL
91
10