



The 27.2mm carbon seatpost helps to soak up road buzz



Classy details include a carbon fork and reinforcement rings on the head-tube

ENIGMA ETHOS

£1760 > Classy Campagnolo kit on a Blighty-built bike

As with Condor's Fratello there's a definite Italian flavour to the Enigma, even though the frame is made in Sussex. The frame material is a triple-butted steel alloy from Italian company Columbus, with similar strength and properties to Reynolds 853. It can be formed into tubes with very thin walls – right down to 0.38mm – and the result here is a 9.3kg (20.5lb) all-in weight, pretty much identical to the Condor when you factor in the mudguards.

The Enigma features some distinctive and classy frame details such as the reinforcement rings on the head-tube for a more secure headset cup interface, neat rear dropouts and a replaceable gear hanger, unusual for a steel bike. A tidy 27.2mm diameter Enigma-branded carbon seatpost soaks up road shock very

WE SAY...

▲ **HIGHS** High quality frame offering a highly refined ride.

▼ **LOWS** The Fulcrum Racing 7 wheels just don't do justice to the frame.

► **BUY IF...** You're looking for something that's fast and fun for the long run.

effectively, and when combined with the supple frame tubing, this machine strikes just the right note between comfort and responsiveness over long distances. Enigma's own curved carbon fork – with mudguard eyelets – keeps the handling sharp while providing a healthy amount of shock absorption.

The Italian character extends to more than just the frame, with Campagnolo and Fulcrum providing the groupset and wheels. Campag's 10-speed compact Veloce offers good ergonomics, crisp and reassuringly firm shifting and excellent braking without breaking the bank. Fulcrum's Racing 7s are a decent set of training wheels and they keep the pace high, but the non-adjustable cartridge bearing front hub developed a little play after just a couple of hundred miles. We'd recommend saving a bit longer and getting some lighter hoops that do the

ride justice. Handbuilt wheels featuring Ambrosio Evolution rims and the same company's hubs add just over £100 to the price but reduce weight by a very healthy 350g.

WORKSHOP VIEW...

Sealed cartridge hubs can't be adjusted, but should stay put. Campag Power-Torque cranks will require tooling-up for home mechanic

Even taking the higher price and these wheels into account, we found it impossible not to fall for the Ethos. Stylish, nimble and fleet of foot, it's light enough to ride just for the love of riding, yet practical enough to load up for a bit of credit card touring. It would even do the job of winter trainer. As for the name, there's no mystery when it comes to deciding what the Enigma's intended purpose is: riding fast and fun for the long run.

VERDICT Beautiful frame, beautiful bike and an absolute joy to ride

CYCLING RATING ★★★★★

SPECIFICATION WEIGHT 9.3kg **FRAME** Columbus Life steel **FORK** Enigma carbon **GEARS** Campagnolo Veloce **BRAKES** Campag Veloce **WHEELS** Fulcrum Racing 7 **HIGHLIGHTS** Enigma carbon seatpost