

ENGINEERED GEZEL {£1,600 (frameset)}

Engineered Bikes are from Bristol, just a few minutes ride from the *Urban Cyclist* office, in fact, and they make bespoke bikes in steel and aluminium. Like every bespoke builder, their focus is on delivering your dream bike, perfectly fit for purpose and precisely custom fitted. Where Engineered Bikes differ is in their high performance soul and their crisp aesthetic, thanks to frame designer David and graphic artist Adrian. The frames are designed in the UK and built in Italy.

The Gezel is their 'road endurance' platform, a premium steel frame built for all weathers and routes. Disc brakes are the default but cantis are offered and you can go with standard sizing or either of two levels of custom geometry at extra cost. Since this demo bike was built, stiffness-boosting thru-axles are now available front and rear.

The tubeset is custom drawn Dedacciai Zero XL steel (Columbus XCR stainless is an option) and it's built into a frameset that can do pretty much anything. This test bike weighs just 8.2kg so it's very happy on big climbs or being ridden fast, yet it has the toughness, stability and clearances to take on gravel roads, cobbles or a city's back streets.

Engineered tell us that its name means 'journeyman or companion' in old Dutch and, indeed, the 1,028mm wheelbase and 72° head angle are fairly relaxed. However, it only takes a few pedal strokes to appreciate that the Gezel is a companion that's keen to set a brisk pace rather than stroll for hours. The frame is stiff and responsive, accelerating eagerly and rewarding your efforts uphill. The steering is lively and engaging, and the Gezel will whip around corners

with vigour. It isn't quite a race bike but you can certainly feel that influence. Engineered say they designed the Gezel for people who also ride race bikes and want to keep some of that spark in their more versatile bike. We think they nailed it - this bike is fun.

All this, yet it also has the stability and comfort to feel relaxed when you want to cruise. Our test bike came with venerable Continental 4 Seasons tyres in 28mm width. There's room for 32s but it's already so smooth on 28s at 90psi, while still rolling quickly, that we only think it would be necessary if you're planning to hit some unsealed roads.

The build is, of course, entirely up to you so we won't dwell on it long. The Sram Force drivetrain suits the Gezel - light, modern, crisp - and the hydraulic disc brakes are by far the best we've used. The Halo wheels ride well but graphics like these belong on a mountain bike and spoil the looks a bit.

The Gezel is the most fun and engaging bike of such versatility that I've ridden, and it combines that admirable skill set with bespoke handmade craft and just the right kind of exclusivity.

{9} *Desirable, capable and engaging in equal measure*



Words: Jamie Wilkins
Photography: Jonny Ashelford



Frame Dedacciai Zero XL steel / **Fork** Full carbon, optional thru-axle / **Wheels** Halo Carbaura RDX rims /
Transmission Sram Force, 50/34, 11-28 / **Brakes** Sram Force hydraulic discs www.engineeredbikes.co.uk