

THIS MONTH'S BIKE WE LIKE

The Light Blue Robinson V2

A bike for riding on the road, or just about anywhere else you might fancy



WEIGHT:

9.9kg

FRAME:

Reynolds 725 Steel

GROUPSET:

Shimano 105
R7000 11-speed

BRAKES:

TRP Spyre

CHAINSET:

105 R7000 50/34t

CASSETTE:

Shimano
R7000 11-28t

BAR:

Genetic Flare

STEM:

Genetic STV

SADDLE:

Genetic STV

SEATPOST:

Genetic
Syngenic 27.2

WHEELS:

Halo Whiteline Disc

TYRES:

Schwalbe
Durano 700x32c

COST:

£1,550

CONTACT:

thelightblue.co.uk

What is it?

The Light Blue describes its Robinson model as an 'all-round road sports bike'. Taking a Reynolds steel frame as its starting point, it comes with disc brakes and wide but slick 32c tyres. Giving it the ability to roll easily over a range of surfaces, it's not a gnarly adventure rig, yet is far more capable than a standard road bike. Quick to get going, and with the space to fit racks and guards, you could certainly use it for touring, but the label of 'touring bike' doesn't quite fit it either. Instead, it shifts expectations slightly to create something prioritising both versatility and speed over distance. Now on to its second iteration, as denoted by the V2 suffix, this latest version sees the bike's finishing kit and paint job updated.

Doesn't the steel frame weigh it down?

Helping keep things comfortable as the road breaks up, while also allowing it to survive decades of rough and tumble use, we reckon the Robinson's kilo and a bit of extra weight is worth lugging around. Made from Birmingham-based metallurgists Reynolds' mid-range 725 steel, it's not the heaviest of frames anyway. Still, if you're hung up on weight, this might not be the bike for you. However, if instead, you're after durability, comfort, and versatility, plus the ability to cut down the collection of machines in your shed, then the Robinson could well be your new best mate. Given all this, we reckon steel suits its personality down to a T. It even means you can have modifications made to the frame later. Suddenly find yourself roped into an

expedition across some arid bit of the globe? Braze on an extra set of bottle mounts. Need to cram the bike aboard your recently purchased yacht? Chop it in half and weld in some S&S couplings. Either way, it's unlikely to leave you stuck for company on your next escapade.

So The Light Blue is selling this as a road bike?

Yep. Backed up by its slick tyres, fast, light wheels, and stiff, racey chassis, we've no reason to debate its classification either. With a low front end, standard road bike gearing, and parallel 73° head and seat tube angles that'd be at home on a carbon racer, it's no slouch. Made to be fun for simply blasting about on, but with wide tyres and ➔

THE LIGHT BLUE ROBINSON V2

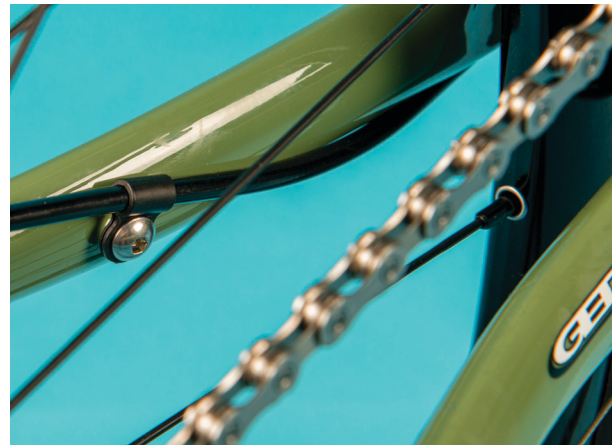
Price: £1,550

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> It's only a switch of tyres away from accomplishing the kind of gravel-going antics that are currently very fashionable...



weather. With a nippy but not overly aggressive geometry, space for mudguards, a forward-facing seatpost slot that shrugs off incoming dirt, and steel made by famous UK tube-maker Reynolds, it's not a bike that could have been designed anywhere other than Blighty.

What's going on with the frame?

A mix of new tech wrapped up in a classic-looking package. While the Robinson's tubes may look skinny, its bi-oval down tube supposedly reduces lateral flex in the bottom bracket area for better power transfer. The sloping top tube also comes out of a modern design manual, as do the interchangeable dropouts that can take either 130 or 135mm wide hubs. Also capable of being adapted to the 142 thru-axle standard if required, beardy-weirdos will be happy to find it can even be set up single speed. Neat-looking and with a great paint job, what the Robinson's simple external cabling costs the poseur in looks, the home mechanic will gain back several-fold in terms of ease of servicing.

How about the rest of the bits?

Done up with finishing kit from distributor Ison, the most remarkable of these is the Genetic Flare handlebars. Splaying apart at the drops, these provide a broad and comfy spot to hang out when you want to get low or cover the brakes. Reminiscent of current trendy gravel-grinding models, they'll also be familiar to old-school touring cyclists. The callipers that come as standard are TRP's Spyres. Operated via standard cables, they can be upgraded to Shimano 105 models to match the shifters for an additional £330. Finally, the whole lot rolls on quality Halo Whiteline Disc wheels and tough but speedy Schwalbe Durano tyres.

So who's it for?

Anyone who fancies growing old with a single, long-lasting, road-going bicycle, and isn't too fussed about a little bit of extra weight. 🚲

clearance for mudguards, it'll do for audax-style riding or just getting from A to B quickly. That said, it's only a switch of tyres away from accomplishing the kind of gravel-going antics that are currently very fashionable. Still, if you're honest with yourself, we think most users are more likely to enjoy this degree of off-road ability by taking it down canal towpaths and through parks, than by riding it across some lonesome prairie.

Who's behind The Light Blue Bicycle brand?

Cambridge is often thought of as a cycling city. Set up there in 1895 by John Albert Townsend, his Light Blue Bicycle Company was soon making everything from stately roadsters for dons wanting to nip between lectures, to racing bikes for the University's

sportier types, all of which came done up in the institution's light blue livery. Initially put out of business by The Great War, the Townsend family nevertheless remained in the bike trade, with John's great-grandson Lloyd eventually setting up Ison Distribution. Having resurrected the Light Blue brand in 2006, a chance meeting between him and the director of tube-maker Reynolds led to a collaboration, along with the current range of retro-modern racing bikes.

So how's the Robinson tailored to UK conditions?

We could flatter ourselves and say it's because it embodies supposed British values by being practical, tough, and unfussy. However, it's mostly because it's capable of surviving our diabolical roads and dreadful