



# GRAN FONDO

THE MOST EXCITING CYCLING MAGAZINE

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## INVITATION: GRAN FONDO #017 ROAD BIKE GROUP TEST

We're looking for the best road bike of 2021.

The bike boom has arrived and a doubling of our readership means we've been welcoming many beginners to the magazine. We want to reflect that in our road bike group test, offering orientation in the diverse road bike market and helping to define the segment with all its facets, so that we cater to beginners and experts alike. Pro-racing isn't a sensible point of reference for everyone because the best road bike is the one that best combines pleasure and safety across the widest variety of conditions and surfaces. As a result, this group test isn't about the best bike for the peloton but the best bike for our readers and their lifestyle, whether it be for fun rides, social rides, coffee rides or even Zwift rides. The era of super-specialised niches is over. Technical developments have spawned a new generation of bikes that combine seemingly contradictory characteristics in one concept. Is this an endurance, all-road, road plus or backroad bike? Does the category even matter? In our group test we want to ignore preconceptions and prejudices, instead focussing on finding the best all-round road bike overall.

### THE TEST TRACK

We test the bikes predominantly on smooth asphalt as well as rough, broken up and ill-maintained roads. However, short detours onto compacted gravel/hardpack will also count towards our evaluations. Given the current situation, we're not yet sure where our testing will take place.

### THE TEST CRITERIA

To cater to as wide an audience as possible with a correspondingly diverse range of applications, we feel that the best road bike has to be an all-rounder that is just as suitable for an experienced rider as it is for beginners and leisure riders. Our dream bike combines balanced, lively handling and delivers maximum amounts of fun – uphill, downhill and on the flats. It can generate speed when required, delivers a high level of (long-distance) comfort and imparts a sense of trust and security on poor surfaces. We don't measure the price/performance ratio based on Excel spreadsheets, theoretical stiffness measurements or the price tag of components. Instead, we look at the real-world performance and quality of the complete package.

### THE TEST BIKE

- **Frame size:** On average, our test crew is 180 cm tall with an inseam of 87.5 to 89.5 cm. Size 56/57 frames are generally ideal.
- **Price:** We're looking for the best bike, which means that price is irrelevant. Ultimately, the price/performance ratio will be more important.
- **Tire size:** All tires should be 700C. The width? Your choice!
- **Components:** For this group test you have the opportunity to customise your series bike and deviate from a factory build. We want to find out what you think is the perfect fit for the criteria listed on the left.
- **Tuning:** All things possible, nothing a must. Conversion to tubeless is strongly desired! No prototype parts, only components that are available to purchase.
- **Spare parts:** Please provide a spare derailleur hanger.

Please send your test bike until

**January 18<sup>th</sup> 2021**

to our HQ:

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*A copy of this invitation will be included in the published group test to ensure maximum transparency.*