

PRICE
£1,350

M E R I D A

Ride Disc 3000

The Merida Ride Disc 3000 offer road riders the rare chance to taste disc brakes on a carbon frame for less than £1,500

Merida's Ride range features frames with built-in flex points to offer comfort for leisure riders and pro athletes alike. The 3000 is the littlest brother in Merida's three-strong disc road bike line-up; the other two are based on the same Ride frame but have Ultegra gears and better brakes.

But forget the disc brakes — the frame is what this bike is all about. It's the same carbon item that is at the heart of its more expensive siblings, and Merida has clearly put a lot of thought and development into it. At the back, super-slim 10mm seatstays with built-in flax fibres help smooth out the ride, along with the slender 27.2mm seatpost. They have also been developed to accommodate 28c tyres — another nod in the direction of comfort.

The themes of comfort and innovation continue at the fork. Pared-down material offers more vibration-damping flex, while a mountain-bike-mimicking 15mm through-axle at the front hub makes for sharper, stiffer steering. This is accentuated by the tapered steerer tube with its 1.5in crown race. All in all, it's a very well thought-through piece of kit.

Taking one for the team

In the budget meeting for this bike, having specified such an impressive frame, something had to give. And it's the groupset that has definitely taken one for the team. The gearset is a relatively lowly Shimano Tiagra 10-speed, supplemented by a workaday FSA Gossamer chainset. However, on the Merida, the Tiagra kit came set up perfectly and gave us no problems at all during the testing period. What's more, unlike the frame, you can always upgrade the gearset at a later date — which may well be worth it with a great frame like this.

The Tektro Mira cable disc brakes offer dual-pad adjustment and automatic pad-angle adjustment. They're purpose-

designed for road use and reasonably sophisticated for cable discs, but they're not up to the standard of hydraulics.

Pure exhilaration

As with the groupset, the wheels have been chosen to meet a price point. The non-branded hubs and Merida Comp 22 rims form a generic budget set-up that doesn't set the world alight. These are shod with respectable rubber in the form of folding 25c Maxxis Dolomites tyres. They lack some of the comfort and versatility of 28s but provide a great platform for comfortable and brisk all-day riding.

The relatively light weight of the Ride 3000 was immediately apparent; from the first accelerations, there was an exhilarating sense of liberation. This remained present in all kinds of riding, but was a particular bonus on the hills. The Tiagra gears were smooth and accurate, and while they lack a little refinement, the trade-off against the excellent frame was well worth it. While we weren't especially aware of the frame's comfort-enhancing Flex Stays, the ride was smooth and unfussy and the standard set-up provided a natural position and neutral steering feel.

Like the groupset, the Tektro Mira disc brakes were reliable, albeit unrefined. But as far as cable discs go, they offer a nice lever feel with a fair degree of modulation, plus that all-important wet-weather reliability. **END**

VERDICT

COMFORT

★★★★★

VALUE

★★★★★

HANDLING

★★★★★

BUILD QUALITY

★★★★★

OVERALL RATING...

★★★★★

The R&D folks at Merida have obviously been hard at work making sure the heart of the Ride 3000 disc — its innovative frame, layout, handling — is superb. Coupled with an exuberance that is unbridled by any extra unnecessary mass, it makes for a hugely rewarding bike to ride.

“You can always upgrade the gearset later — which may well be worth it on a frame this good”



Internal cable routing at least nods towards aero considerations



Mountain bike-like bolt-through front axle



Simple alloy parts do the job



The frame is a masterwork in carbon bike design



SPECIFICATION

Frame: Carbon
Fork: Carbon
Gears: Shimano Tiagra 10-speed, 12-30t
Chainset: FSA Gossamer compact
Brakes: Tektro Mira mechanical disc
Wheels: Merida Comp 22
Tyres: Maxxis Dolomites 25c
Bar: Merida Pro aluminium
Stem: Merida Pro aluminium
Saddle: Selle Royal Sirio
Seatpost: Merida Comp carbon
Size range: 52, 54, 56, 59cm
Size tested: 56cm
Weight: 9.1kg / 20lb
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