



A £2000 bike that combines brilliant kit, a great frame and arguably the best value high performance groupset on the market

ROSE XEON RS 3100

Great kit and a light aluminium frame, at an internet-only price point **£1996.65**

Rose is a German internet-only distributor taking advantage of reduced overheads to offer a lightweight aluminium race bike with Shimano's electronic shifting and quality finishing kit. With the build offering no compromises at the price, the Xeon has the potential to be one hell of a package, and for the most part doesn't disappoint.

The chassis has a lively feel – none of the harsh stiffness that aluminium bikes have been criticised for in the past. The multi-butted frame features a tapered head-tube mated to an oversized down-tube and press-fit bottom bracket along with deep chainstays and super skinny, shaped seatstays. It's no heavier than a carbon frame at the same price and with high level kit the all-in weight is just over 7.6kg.

There's a rock solid response to pedal input, with no flex or chatter, and a

carbon seatpost helps soften vibrations of uneven road surfaces. The overall low weight combined with light wheels and a compact-equipped Ultegra Di2 groupset makes the Rose a very accomplished climber. Hit the hills and the Xeon's responsive nature make long, in-the-saddle grinds achievable rather than a slog. On fast blasts downhill it's generally assured, though we did have a moment on a fast descent where the Ksyriums' bladed aero spokes were being chopped about by a sidewind, making us back off as the front fork shimmied and the bike became a little unbalanced. The comfort level is fine but its edged out of a top five placing by bikes with a smoother ride.

The high-quality tyre combination – Continental's front-specific 22mm Attack and rear-specific 24mm Force – is fast-rolling, with good grip and a siped tread that copes with wet weather and greasy surfaces. Rose has fitted thin lightweight

SPEC

WEIGHT 7.64kg (58cm)

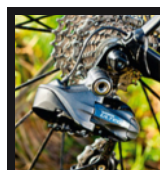
FRAME Aluminium

FORK Carbon

GROUPSET Shimano Ultegra Di2

WHEELS Mavic Ksyrium Elite

FINISHING KIT Ritchey WCS Evo Curve bar and WCS stem, Continental Force/Attack tyres, Prologo Kappa Zero saddle, Rose RS carbon seatpost



HIGHS Incredible value, great frame and great ride
LOWS Lightweight tubes are a little fragile

inner tubes and we suffered a couple of punctures from flints on our test rides – we'd take the hit on a couple of extras grams for something more substantial. But if our only gripe with a £2000 bike that combines brilliant kit with arguably the best value high performance groupset on the market right now is a couple of butyl tubes, then that's quite an achievement.

Rose also offers an upgrade over the standard Xeon: for around £250 more you can have a set of colour-coded Mavic Cosmic Carbone clinchers, complete with colour coordinated Schwalbe Ultremo ZX tyres. That's amazing value – you'd pay £1000 for that wheelset in a bike shop. If your budget can stretch then give it serious consideration.

www.rosebikes.co.uk

VERDICT Superb level of equipment on a lively and responsive aluminium frame

CYCLING RATING

