

THREE THINGS WE LOVE ABOUT THE...

J.GUILLEM FORMENTOR

£4995 ★★★★★

Quality finish

J.Guillem founder Jan has worked with titanium for over 17 years, starting with Airborne before founding Van Nicholas (Jan's full name is Jan-Willem Sintnicolaas). After selling Van Nic he relocated to Majorca to enjoy riding and family life but the bike-designing bug wouldn't be suppressed. The Formentor frame is stunningly finished with clean welds and lovely details such as the sculpted dropouts with beautiful brass inserts. Even the logo oozes Dutch design, as it's inspired by the modernist works of the De Stijl school from the early 20th century.

Quality ride

When a titanium brand tells us it has built a racer's machine, that can fill us with dread – it often means that things have been stiffened up so much the lively character of titanium tubes can be neutralised. Thankfully, the Formentor gets it just right; the geometry is aggressive and the handling quick but it is wonderfully balanced with a smooth-yet-stiff ride that's perfect for so-so British roads.

Quality components

Highlights are the excellent £2000 Umbrial carbon clinchers from Swiss company Edco, which are solid and free of flex with smooth hubs and impressive braking. Match those to an Ultegra drivetrain – with hill-friendly gearing – and you've got a bike that's pretty much all you'd ever need. The own-brand alloy components are competent and the titanium seatpost rides as well as it looks.

ONE THING WE'D CHANGE

A bit more carbon please

The Formentor is pricey (the frameset alone would set you back €2499) so for a few quid short of five grand we'd like a carbon-railed saddle and a lighter carbon bar instead of the alloy one. With those tweaks this would be one of the best all-round titanium bikes we've had the pleasure of riding.



SPECIFICATION

WEIGHT 8.4kg
(57cm)

FRAME Seamless
hydroformed
3Al/2.5V titanium

FORK Carbon

GEARS Shimano
Ultegra 50/34,
11-28

BRAKES
Shimano Ultegra

WHEELS
Edco Umbrial

FINISHING KIT
J.Guillem alloy bar,
stem and saddle,
titanium seatpost,
25mm Vredestein
Fortezza Senso
tyres