



£1,600+ TOURING BIKE

# HEWITT CHEVIOT SE

A classic steel tourer that can be fitted to you for free. Journalist *Jack Thurston* is impressed

AN OFF-THE-PEG bike that fits perfectly is rare. Most of us approximate a good fit by trial and error; others pay for a bike fitting or a custom-built bike. Hewitt Cycles developed the Cheviot range of touring bikes to provide a custom-fit bike at a price that's competitive with production machines. The frames are made in Taiwan and though the design is not exclusive, the uniqueness comes from Paul Hewitt's methodical approach to bike fit, his reputation for listening to customers, and his pedigree as a master wheel-builder.

Thanks to sloping top tubes, Hewitt says the Cheviot's four frame sizes can give a perfect fit for 99% of riders, and a bike fitting at his Leyland shop is part of the service. I didn't take advantage of this, instead sending my own measurements by email. That was perhaps why the test bike was a bit small.

Frame strength and geometry combine to provide a stable, flex-free, shimmy-free

ride. There was no toe overlap nor rear pannier heel-strike with my size 10 feet. There is clearance for up to 37mm tyres and mudguards. The Cheviot SE frame can be painted any colour, and the pristine stove enamelling and polished stainless steel dropouts give the bike an attractive, classic look. (The test bike's seat and down tube panels add £80 to the price.)

## WELL-BUILT WHEELS

A handbuilt, properly trued and tensioned set of wheels is a worthwhile upgrade for any touring bike and comes as standard on a Cheviot; Hewitt builds all his own wheels.

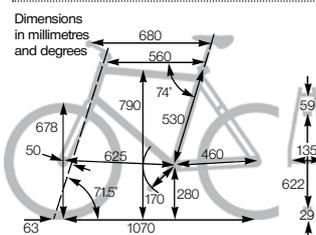
Every component can be specified individually but the bike I tested had a mountain bike drivetrain, providing the super-low gears required for fully-laden touring in hilly terrain. Hewitt is reluctant to follow the fashion for disc brakes as this would mean beefing up the fork, adding weight and reducing shock absorption when wide-profile cantilevers are powerful enough.

The Cheviot is a traditional British touring bike for loaded riding on roads and gentle off-road conditions. For credit card touring and audax, other bikes may provide a more lively ride, while for rough-stuff and bike-packing, a fatter-tyred adventure bike may be a better choice. For its intended uses – weekend camping trips, an End-to-End ride, or a tour of Europe or North America – I don't think the Cheviot SE can be beaten for quality, value and comfort. ♦



♦ Short head tube requires a stack of spacers to achieve a comfortable touring position, especially for taller riders

## Tech spec



### HEWITT CYCLES CHEVIOT SE

PRICE: £1,848.87 (from £1,599.99)

SIZES: S, M, L, XL WEIGHT: 14.3kg

FRAME & FORK: Reynolds 725, TIG-welded. Mounts for 3 bottles, front & rear racks, 'guards, pump

WHEELS: 32-622 Continental Touring Plus Reflex tyres, Ryde Sputnik 36H rims, Deore XT hubs. Spokes: DT plain gauge (f); Sapim Strong & DT double butted (r)

TRANSMISSION: Deore chainset (170mm, 44-32-22), Hollowtech II BB, SLX 11-34 cassette. Dura-Ace 9-speed bar-end shifters, Deore XT front mech, Deore XT SGS rear mech. 27 ratios, 18-108in

BRAKING: Cane Creek SCR 5 levers, Tektro 520 cantilevers

STEERING & SEATING: Deda RHM 01 bar, Deda 01 stem, Cane Creek 40 A-headset. Brooks B17 Special saddle, Kalloy 27.2mm seatpost

EQUIPMENT: SKS P45 mudguards. Tubus Logo Evo rear rack, Tubus Ergo Lowrider, 2 x Elite bottle cage

[hewittcycles.co.uk](http://hewittcycles.co.uk)

## Also available



1) **CONDOR HERITAGE £1800+**  
Steel tourer, made in Italy and sold by a London shop known for bike fitting and good service. [condorcycles.com](http://condorcycles.com)



2) **SPA CYCLES TI TOURER £1580**  
Titanium tourer at a competitive price from Harrogate touring specialists. Tested June/July '11. [spacycles.co.uk](http://spacycles.co.uk)