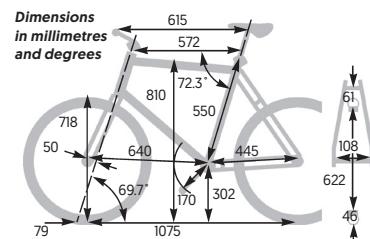




Biketest



Tech Spec EXCELSIOR TOURING

- **Price:** €289.95
- **Sizes:** 55cm diamond, 45cm or 53cm step-through
- **Weight:** 16.9kg (37.2lb) as shown
- **Frame & fork:** Hi-ten steel frame and fork with fittings for mudguards, rear rack, frame lock, and dynamo.
- **Wheels:** 47-622 Mitas Flash tyres (47-559 for 45cm step-through), 662×20 aluminium rims, 36×3 zinc-plated spokes, 100mm solid-axle Joytech front hub, 108mm solid-axle Velosteel singlespeed coaster-brake rear.
- **Transmission:** Plastic pedals, 170mm alu' chainset with 38t chainring, square-taper BB, KMC Z 3/32in chain, 18t sprocket. One ratio: 60in.
- **Braking:** Velosteel coaster brake, Promax V-brake.
- **Steering & seating:** Herrmans grips, 640×25.4mm City Cruiser steel handlebar, 25.4mm Zoom aluminium quill stem, VP threaded headset. Selle Royal Moody saddle, 28.6×300mm steel plain seatpost. excelsior-fahrrad.de/en/

Excelsior Touring

Not a tourer but a smart singlespeed city bike with all the transport trimmings for less than £300. **Dan Joyce** tested it

Unpright roadsters are ideal bikes for urban areas. Yet they're rare in the UK, especially at the prices post-pandemic newbies might stretch to. Not so Germany...

This entry-level Excelsior has everything you need for everyday travel – comfortable riding position, mudguards, rack, chainguard, kickstand, dynamo lighting – for just €289.95 (approx £263). Bargain!

Assuming you can find one; it's not sold on British high streets. I spotted it online at hollandbikesshop.com, where it cost a mere £223.52 at time of writing. Sadly the delivery charge was £180! You could hop on a ferry to one of Excelsior's



Above: A coaster brake provides reliable braking that doesn't wear rims or depend on grip strength.

Dutch dealers for less. It was also listed on amazon.co.uk (search for 'Excelsior Touring') for £300, plus £20 delivery. Not bad.

Like most roadsters it's heavy. The well-made frame is steel of unknown provenance, probably hi-ten, and most of the bits are also steel. Yet on the right terrain – flat roads and cycle tracks – it cruises along easily enough. The riding position provides a commanding view of the traffic and is very comfortable for short trips. It forces you to relax. There's little I'd change, except to have a lower bottom bracket to make it easier to get a foot down at the lights.

At 60in, the Excelsior's single gear

is about right if you steer clear of hills, where it's exhausting. The rear hub incorporates a coaster brake, which works well but complicates setting off as you can't spin the cranks into position. For sudden stops there's a front V-brake.

What defines the Excelsior Touring, other than its stately ride, is its equipment. I'd probably upgrade the 7mm-rail rear rack but the shiny steel mudguards might last forever, the kickstand is strong, and the chainguard is okay. The Axa Duo sidewall dynamo is decent and powers a smart front LED lamp with a switch and a rear one with a standlight. There's even a pump! ●

Other options

ELEPHANT BIKE

£280+

Bag yourself a refurbished Pashley Mailstar with drum brakes and 3-speed gearing. Your purchase donates another to Africa. cycleofgood.com



PINNACLE CALIFORNIA 1

£350

Sidepull brakes and 1x7 gearing but it does have guards, a basket, and a sensible riding position. evanscycles.com



Verdict

A comfy urban dreadnought that's difficult to get hold of in the UK. New cyclists need access to affordable, practical transport like this; existing ones might find it changes the way they think about cycling. Recommended.