Brompton T-Line One

Bromptons have always been super compact but never especially light. Until now, Dan Joyce tests one of the new titanium models.

The Brompton T-Line is much lighter than the part-titanium Superlight, now called the P-Line. That has a steel main frame; the T-Line’s is titanium. With a carbon fork and lightweight bits, it weighs as little as 7.5kg.

This makes a palpable difference when you pick it up – which you do a lot with a folded Brompton, as you carry it one-handed onto trains, into buildings, and so on. While it also feels a bit peppier to ride, the main benefit is portability.

There are two versions of the T-Line: the Urban (£4,415, 7.95kg), which has a four-speed derailleur, mudguards, and a front luggage block; and the spartan, singlespeed One. I’d have preferred to test the Urban for Brompton T-line geometry, right down to the overly low trail figure that gives the bike its characteristic nippy/nervous (delete to taste) handling.

It folds in the familiar Brompton way. The hinge catches have stops on the ends of their bolts (finally!) so can’t unscrew and fall out. The left-hand pedal doesn’t fold but quick-releases, presumably to save weight. The Advance chain tensioner is simpler than the double-jockey-wheel model, so rear wheel removal and fitting is easier.

Riding performance is like any Brompton, just sportier. Much of that is down to the Schwalbe One tyres, whose rolling performance eclipses Marathons and even Kojaks. Small wheels benefit more obviously than big ones from good rubber as their rolling resistance is higher to begin with.

Verdict

Four grand is a huge sum but, unlike a Sunday-best bike, a T-Line might be used daily and (judging by other Bromptons) last longer. If you have deep pockets and want the improved portability a titanium Brompton offers, why not?