

First look

As much a rigid MTB as an adventure bike, especially if you fit even wider tyres



“The Bridge Club’s price in sterling feels out of proportion to its dollar price, and it has a relatively basic ride for that money”

Tech spec**SURLY BRIDGE CLUB 27.5 WHIPPED BUTTER**

Price: £1,599.

Sizes: XS, S, M (tested), L, XL.

Weight: 14.3kg (31.5lb).

Frame & fork:

Double-buttressed chrome-moly frame and fork with fittings for disc brakes, mudguards, front and rear racks, three bottles, two fork cages.

Wheels: 61-584 (27.5×2.4in) WTB

Trail Boss wire-bead, tubeless-ready tyres, WTB ST i29 TCS rims on Novatec quick-release hubs, 32 spokes.

Transmission: No pedals supplied. Shimano Cues

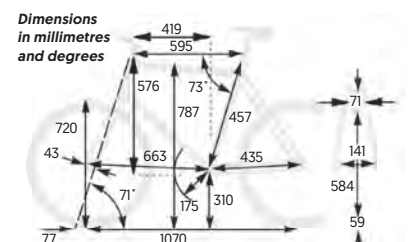
chainset with 32t chainring, Shimano MT501 bottom bracket, KMC chain, Shimano Cues 11-52 LinkGlide cassette. Shimano Cues shifter and rear derailleur. 11 ratios, 18-82in.

Braking: Tektro hydraulic levers and callipers, Tektro 160mm 6-bolt rotors.

Steering & seating:

Velo Black grips, 740mm Salsa Bend alloy handlebar, 90mm Promax alloy stem. WTB Volt saddle, 27.2mm Promax alloy seatpost.

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ons: front and rear rack mounts, mudguard mounts, three pairs of bottle mounts and fork luggage mounts (angled on the Rove, parallel to the wheel on the Bridge Club). The Rove also has mounts for a small top-tube bag, while the Bridge Club has a mount for a kickstand.

The Bridge Club was noticeably 800g heavier than the steel-forked Rove, but this was mostly down to the wheels, tubes and tyres, not the frameset. The optional carbon fork for the Rove can really seal the difference, however, saving a further kilogram and giving a smoother ride.

There are other significant differences. In terms of fit, the Rove is shorter and taller. The reach (the horizontal distance between the bottom bracket and the head tube) is 16mm less than the Bridge Club's, while the stack (the height of the top of the head tube above the bottom bracket) is 52mm higher. It also has a higher standover height.

Both bikes come with significantly wider tyres than most gravel bikes. The Rove is based around 29er mountain bike



Top: Quick-release wheels and fairly budget disc brakes

Bottom: Fatties do indeed fit fine: you can fit 27.5×2.8in tyres in the frame and fork

wheels (ISO 622), except for the smallest XS size which uses 27.5in wheels (ISO 584). The Bridge Club 27.5 comes with 27.5in wheels in all sizes, as the name says, but will run 622 wheels with narrower (47mm) tyres if you prefer. If you stick with 27.5in wheels, however, it lives up to the 'Fatties Fit Fine' label on the chainstays: tyres up to 2.8in wide will fit. The Rove has clearance for 2.6in tyres.

In general, the Rove has a more contemporary frameset. It takes thru-axle wheels, whereas the Bridge

Club has quick-release ones. Its 44mm head tube accommodates a tapered steerer, so you can swap in a suspension fork; the geometry is fine with a 100-120mm travel fork as the rigid fork has 490mm axle-to-crown height. The Rove also has adjustable dropouts, making it singlespeed compatible.

Components

Both bikes have sensible, practical components, and both are available with different build options. The Bridge Club boasts Shimano's new Cues 1x11