

Over to you Bikefinder

Which bike should I buy?

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AUDAX-STYLE LIGHT TOURER



← **For:** David Shannon, 54, from Kelso.

Bike needs: It's for audax-style light touring and fast road cycling over our less-than-perfect roads in southern Scotland. It needs to be practical,

light, responsive and enjoyable, but with more relaxed geometry. **Must have:** Easily replaceable components. Reliable but fast enough wheels. Disc brakes. Take mudguards over 28mm+ tyres. Handle 95% road, 5% off road. **Must not have:** Complex or high-end groupsets. Be too fragile.

Budget: £2,000–£3,500

SIMON WITHERS

If I were going down this route, I'd open my wallet for the Spa Cycles Elan Ti Mk2 105 12-speed Hydraulic (£2,605 at time of writing, spacycles.co.uk). This fulfils all your criteria apart from perhaps the low weight – it'll be about 10kg including mudguards. Though personally, I value fit and comfort over lightness.

Tyre clearance is 40mm with mudguards, 45mm without. Shimano's hydraulic 105 groupset is excellent and it includes a threaded Shimano bottom bracket, so no problems with spares. You can choose from a 105 or GRX chainset and specify crank length, which is always a boon.

Another plus is that Spa gives you have a choice of saddles, flared or non-flared FSA bars, and different Schwalbe tyres. You can also choose from a number of handmade wheels with Bitex or Hope hubs. From my own experience (I bought a rim-braked Spa Audax), I can vouch for the construction quality of Spa's wheels.

It'll cope with road and unsurfaced routes, you can fit a rack, and the titanium frame and carbon (or chrome-moly steel) fork will deliver your longed-for all-day comfort.

There are carbon options from mainstream brands that will be a kilo or so lighter, if lower weight is crucial. The £3,000 Specialized Diverge Sport 105 (specialized.com) comes with Shimano 105, 47mm tyre clearances and Specialized's bump-smoothing Future Shock 1.5 front suspension. Giant's £3,199 Defy Advance 1 (giant-bicycles.com) has the same groupset and will accommodate 38mm rubber. Each of these 9kg (ish) bikes will take a rear rack if you use a seatpost clamp with integral eyelets.

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**Spa Cycles Elan Ti Mk2 105
12-speed Hydraulic £2,605**



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**Spa Cycles Elan Ti
Mk2 105 11-speed
Hydraulic – Hope
Edition £2,965**

DAN JOYCE

Various endurance road and all-roads bikes will tick those boxes. Of the two tested this issue – both of which take 32mm tyres, mudguards and a rear rack – the Mason Resolution matches your needs better. Its shallower head angle and longer wheelbase will offer more control on the off-road sections. Prices start at £3,300. While it's light for a steel bike, its aluminium stablemate, the Definition, is both lighter and cheaper (from £2,900).

Two other aluminium endurance road bikes with relatively relaxed geometry and modest off-road capability include the Cannondale Synapse 1 (£1,900, cannondale.com) and Sonder Colibri AI (from £1,349, alpkit.com). Given your budget, however, the Colibri Ti 105 (£2,649) is the better pick from Sonder. The titanium version is a nicer bike and just as practical.

Ultimately, like Simon (whose recommendations I read after writing mine) I think the best option is a different titanium all-rounder: the Spa Cycles Elan Ti Mk2 105 11-speed Hydraulic (£2,965, spacycles.co.uk). Its geometry is even more relaxed, with a shallower seat angle and a taller head tube that I think you'll appreciate more and more as the years pass. It comes with excellent handbuilt wheels with Hope Pro 5 hubs and Kinlin XR-26RTS rims; I have a near identical set on my Colibri AI and recommend them.

You can pick and mix with the bike's spec. I'd suggest an 11-40 cassette with a derailleur hanger extender (+£40), a full-carbon fork (+£40–£140), a Tubus Airy rack (+£260) and your choice of fast-rolling tyres in 32, 35 or 38mm.