

GIANT DEFY 1

Usually a bike manufacturer plasters their name on every available tube on the frame. Giant is a little subtle in their branding, which I like. The head tube has the Giant emblem and the seat, post and stem has Giant visible in white, however the Giant name is a shade lighter than the frame color. The Giant Defy 1 is constructed from Giant's proprietary aluminum called Alux. Giant doesn't just go out and outsource their aluminum, they smelt their own aluminum from Taiwan in order to maintain quality control. They have been working in aluminum for 30 years so they know a thing or two about working with this material. The tubes are hydro-formed, butted and are optimized to increase stiffness in the head tube, bottom bracket and seat tube junctions. The top tube is slightly bowed as is the seat tubes and the chain stays, instead of terminating at the top tube, are welded into the seat tube just below the top tube. This construction style is becoming more prevalent in bike frames because it shortens the tube, which makes the rear end stiffer. The fork blades are a composite and the steerer tube is an alloy. The seat post is also made from a composite material to help dampen road vibrations. One feature of the frame is the addition of rack braze-ons located at the fork tips, top of the seat tubes and rear drop-outs. The rear drop out is replaceable in the case of a crash. The groupo is the Shimano 105 with the FSA Gossamer triple chaining crank. A touch that I haven't seen before is the addition of pedals with the bike. In this case it is the Crank Brothers Smarty pedals.

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

The Defy 1 is a departure from the usual race-orientated bikes I usually test. It is designed for the person looking to enter the road riding scene or someone participating in a century. The geometry is what Giant calls, Endurance Positioning. This is Giant-speak for a more relaxed geometry with a taller head tube. It translates into a ride that is obviously more comfortable and upright. Sure this isn't aerodynamic, but the Defy 1 isn't about speed, but more about enjoying the experience, which I'll be the first to admit, I sometimes forget about. Riding the Defy 1 reminded me of why I got into cycling. It wasn't always about trying to be the first across the line or beating my buddies to the top of a climb, it was about the sense of freedom it allowed me. The Defy 1 was very comfortable and encourages the rider to enjoy the ride. Just because the frame geometry is designed for comfort doesn't mean that it isn't responsive. The Alux aluminum is stiff enough for the rider that is looking to log in miles at a relaxed speed. With the FSA Gossamer triple chaining crank, there is no excuse to say you are over-geared for any climb. The smallest front ring is a 30 and the rear cog tops out at 27 teeth. Anything bigger than that and you might as well get off and walk up the climb. The Smarty pedals are a good choice for this bike, as they have a very short learning curve and are not so tough to get into and out of. The pedal platform is wide enough to let the rider take a couple of attempts at clipping in. The

ANGLES

Measurements in centimeters (TT= top tube; SA= seat angle; HA= head angle)

SIZE	XS	S	M	L	XL
TT	51.5	53	54.5	57.5	59.5
SA	74°	73°	73°	73°	72.5°
HA	71°	72°	72.5°	72.5°	72.5°

fact that you have the double-entry opportunity translates into easier re-entry after a stop. On top of that, the tension is a bit more loose eliminating that embarrassing scenario of falling over at a stop light.

LAST CALL

If you are trying to get someone into the sport, the Defy 1 is a great introductory bike. The triple chaining makes any climb ridable, the relaxed geometry won't be hard on the body and at \$1400 it is not too painful of a monetary commitment. The color scheme of the Defy 1 is subtle, which I can appreciate, with just enough Giant logos without being obnoxious. ☺



THE LOW DOWN

PRICE: \$1400
 WEIGHT: 20.8lbs. (with Crank Brothers Smarty pedals)
 SIZES: XS, S, M, L, XL
 COLOR: Charcoal, silver, black
 CONTACT: giant-bicycles.com

CHASSIS

FRAME: Alux SL-Grade aluminum
 FORK: Advanced-grade composite, alloy steerer

WHEELS

WHEELSET: Mavic CXP22
 TIRES: Kenda Kriterium

COCKPIT

BRAKE LEVERS: Shimano 105
 BRAKES: Shimano 105
 HANDLEBAR: Giant Alloy
 HEADSET: Cane Creek
 SADDLE: Giant Performance
 SEATPOST: Giant composite
 SHIFTERS: Shimano 105
 STEM: Giant alloy

DRIVETRAIN

BOTTOM BRACKET: FSA Mega Evo
 CASSETTE: Shimano Dura-Ace
 CHAIN: Shimano 105
 CRANKS: FSA Gossamer MegaEvo
 DERAILLEURS F/R: Shimano Dura-Ace
 PEDALS: Crank Brothers Smarty