

CYCLING  
ROAD  
TESTED  
BY BEN & EATER



The aero top, anatomic drop bar split testers' opinions



The huge down-tube changes from a round to a squarer cross-section at the BB



Using a press-fit bottom bracket makes for a super rigid structure

## BASSO LAGUNA ULTEGRA

£2599.99 > Basso has a lower profile than other brands but is that about to change?

**B**asso frames are nothing to do with current Italian favourite men. They're the work of Alcide Basso, brother of 1972 World Champion and multiple Grand Tour stage winner Marino Basso.

There are no elaborate acronyms on the carbon monocoque frame to hint at the Basso's ride, but it wears its character very clearly on its sleeve as soon as you clip in. A buoyant ride feel is obvious immediately as it surges forwards on the pedals like you're surfing down the front of a wave.

The frame and wheels feel very light, with hard and sharp feedback through the pedals but surprising amounts of comfort in the saddle. One tester accurately but slightly inconspicuously described it as like a meringue: light and fluffy in the centre with just the right amount of crispiness around the outside. The Ultegra-based

### WE SAY...

▲ **HIGHS** Lightweight frame and fork with a distinctively buoyant yet responsive ride. Comparatively decent spec for the money.

▼ **LOWS** The flow, duck and dive front end undermines the enjoyable confidence of the rest of the bike. Several of our testers would change the bar straight away.

► **BUY IF...** You're a relaxed rather than aggressive rider looking for a light and enjoyably flexed frame and fork carrying a decent component spec.

transmission makes the Laguna one of the better specced bikes here too.

Unfortunately the tall, straight-steerer front end isn't as sorted and sweet in feel. It soaks up bigger, more rounded lumps and bumps very well, to the point where we only knew we were going over some speed bumps because of the painted lines, but the bar and fork chatter badly over harsh, frost-damaged surfaces, and lights mounted on the bar shank noticeably on fast descents during nocturnal testing sessions.

Flex in the fork legs and front end of the frame combined with the long stem make the steering remote and nevy, too. The tall front end reduces weight on the front tyre, making traction feedback much more vague than at the rear, despite the grippy Michelin Pro 3s, so it took us a while to build up the nerve to unzip jackets and fish food out of pockets in less than

perfect wind conditions. It ducks and dives a lot out of the saddle too, which can create a really disconcerting weave at slow climbing speeds.

While carbon fibre is a bonus in the cockpit compared with the other bikes here, the pronounced aero top/anatomic drop handlebar was definitely a love/hate item for our test team – stem length and bar shape are something you can change very easily though. This means that if you can sort out the front end, the splendid frame feel of the Laguna is certainly something worth working with as the basis for a sharp-accelerating but smooth-cruising all-rounder.

### WORKSHOP VIEW...

Replacing a rear brake cable? Break out the keyhole surgery tools, as no internal guide or access ports have been provided.

**VERDICT** Great potential but the front end doesn't deliver as well as the rest of the frame

**CYCLING RATING** ★★☆☆

**SPECIFICATION** WEIGHT 7.8kg **FRAME** Carbon monocoque **FORK** Carbon **GEARS** Shimano Ultegra **BRAKES** Sh. Ut. **WHEELS** Mavic Ksyrium Equipe **HIGHLIGHTS** Microtech bar, stem & seatpost



# BASSO



The frame and wheels feel very light, with sharp feedback through the pedals but surprising amounts of comfort

**Brand:** Basso

**Product:** Laguna

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