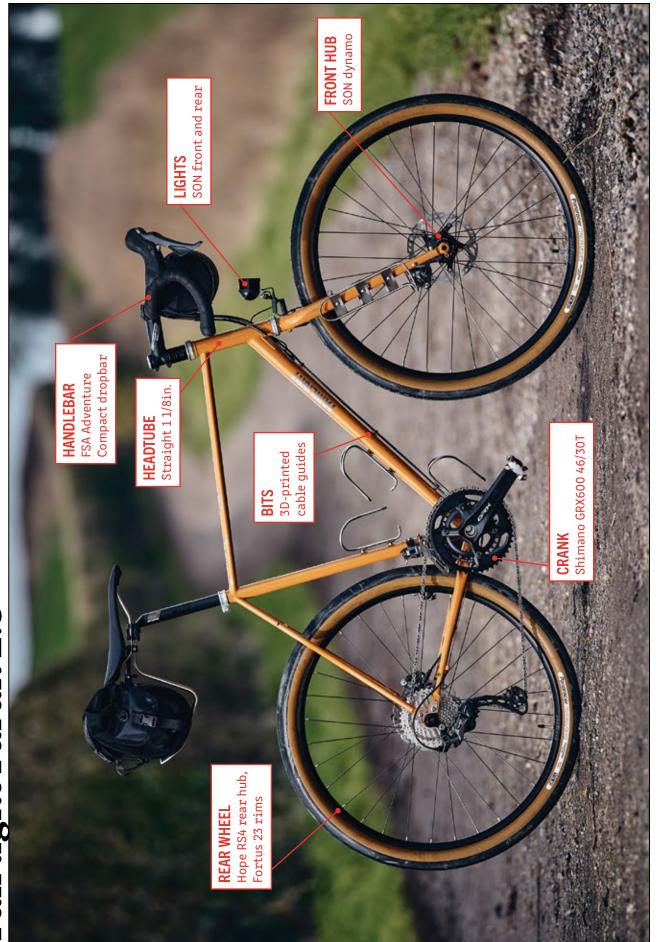
Fairlight Faran 2.5

ROAD TEST



FAIRLIGHT FARAN 2.5

rack and fender mounts, internal dynamo light routing, Di2 routing • FRAME: Fairlight Faran 2.5, Reynolds 631 steel, three bottle mounts,

• FORK: Fairlight Faran 2.0 steel, rack and fender mounts, triple mounts, internal dynamo light routing COMPONENTS

• TIRES: Panaracer GravelKing SK, 650b x 48mm

• AVAILABLE SIZES: 51cm, 54cm, 56cm, 58cm, 61cm; (Regular or Tall)

• CONTACT: fairlightcycles.com

SIZE TESTED: 56R

• WEIGHT: 24.8 lbs. (without pedals) shipping, taxes, and duty fees

PRICE: £2,416 (\$3,100 at current exchange rate), not including

• BEST USES: Fully loaded touring, gravel, road, commuting

• DERAILERS: Shimano GRX810 • SHIFTERS: Shimano GRX600

COLOR: Winter Bracken

2x with fenders: 650b x 48mm or 700c x 42mm

TIRE CLEARANCE: 1x: 650b x 60mm or 700c x 50mm;

BRAKES: Shimano GRX400 hydraulic disc

2x: 650b x 57mm or 700c x 47mm; 1x with

fenders: 650b x 55mm or 700c x 45mm;

based in London. They offer only a few models Designed for transport, recreation, exploration, central Europe, and the prices are reasonable. and deal only in steel frames. Fairlight isn't a though, and its bikes aren't meant for display website: "Our bicycles are tools, not trophies. → Fairlight is a small British bike company and enjoyment. They should be ridden hard, used, and cherished." That's a brand ethos I custom builder with an 18-month lead time, cases. The frames are built in Taiwan and Fairlight makes its intentions clear on its — road, gravel, touring, and mountain – can get behind.

without needing to share braze-ons. If you like the rear light on the driveside or non-driveside The Faran 2.5 is Fairlight's do-it-all touring example, the bottle cage mounts on the undernot interfere with the brake and cable routing. steel frame, a steel fork, a smattering of brazeto see at night, the Faran has internal dynamo side of the down tube include spacers so as to depending on which side of the road you ride. nice-looking paint. But look more closely, and ons for racks and bottle cages, and some very bike, and at first glance it doesn't look much you'll see the brand's attention to detail. For cages without interference. You can install a light routing front and rear and can mount different from other touring bikes. It has a low-rider front rack and full-length fenders that you can mount a rando rack and cargo The braze-ons on the fork are arranged so

If that's not enough, navigate your way to clearance (there's a lot of it)

And that's not even getting into things like tire

pictures of wheels and tires mounted to show machined Bentley dropouts. There's a section clearance (including a digital caliper readout), which guides to use for which setup — 1x, 2x, and several paragraphs about the lovely CNGwireless, dropper post — to have the cleanest routing possible. Want to know the diameter 58T? Want to know whether the rear triangle document, you'll get a close look behind the is heat treated and why? Want to know what Design Notes for the Faran. Inside this PDF ing but not limited to the exact tubing spec, about the modular cable guides explaining and wall thickness for the top tube of a size scenes at every aspect of the Faran, includ-Fairlight's website and peruse the Detailed inspired the graphics design? It's all there and more.

quick engagement, not too much noise, and is up front powered the lights and did so without The Faran 2.5 I tested came equipped with strong, reliable stopping. For wheels, Fairlight easy to work on. The Fortus rims were new to me, and they were invisible, which I mean as I requested for the Faran, but you can also go a high compliment. I'm a big fan of the 650b and 11-34T cassette for low gearing, GRX810 Road Plus" wheel/tire spec, and that's what GRX spec, and it's a good one: 46/30T crank with 700c. Of course, the SON dynamo hub derailers, and GRX400 hydraulic brakes for Fairlight's Shimano GRX600 build kit with he optional dynamo and lighting upgrade. makes good stuff. The RS4 rear hub offers The drivetrain is a familiar mishmash of stuck with a local brand: UK-based Hope

lights were charged. Assuming you're willing to riding a bike with dynamo lighting, and I loved out having to stop and think about whether my shell out for the upcharge (£666, or about \$860 the ability to wheel the bike out for a ride withat the time of writing), dynamo lighting is well fail. Believe it or not, this was my first time worth it.

thing. That said, let's look at a couple of figures: ortable), and alloy stem and seatpost, also from some lights included in there, is remarkable for along with, but that's saddles for you. Note that bike at a little under 25 pounds without pedals, 3,100 American dollars. You'll still have to shell The rest of the build kit included Panaracer GravelKing SK 48mm tires, an FSA Adventure a non-custom bike with a steel frame and fork. out for shipping, taxes, and duty fees, but even there's nothing particularly fancy in this build: very expensive or lightweight. It's a workhorse which, considering there's a dynamo hub and Compact handlebar (which I found very combuild cost you? A mere 2,400 pounds sterling, FSA. Oh, and a Fabric saddle that I didn't get about no carbon, no titanium? I weighed this there's no carbon fiber, no titanium, nothing the price and the weight. Remember that bit And what does a light steel bike with a great build, and saddle aside, I wouldn't change a which at the time of writing comes to about so, I think the Faran is a bargain.

enough — all you need is legal tender and an Regular or Tall (Tall sizes have longer head internet connection. It's available in 51cm, 54cm, 56cm, 58cm, and 61cm, all in either Getting your hands on a Faran is easy

and enjoyment. They should be "Our bicycles Designed for not trophies. exploration, ridden hard, recreation, cherished." transport, are tools, used, and



tubes and higher stack heights). Upon inquiring, Fairlight will ask you nicely to provide some sizing data. You can either fill out their online fit guide, input figures from a professional bike fit, or take measurements from a current bike of yours that fits well. From there, they'll give you a couple of options for the best fit and make recommendations for things like handlebar width and stem length. Then you'll pick which build kit you want (you can also buy a frameset) and select from options like dynamo lighting, wheels, and headset upgrades. As soon as you put down your deposit, it's off to the races. Fairlight ships via DHL, which may as well be the Millennium Falcon for parcel shipping. The Faran I tested only took a few days to get from the UK to my home office in Salt Lake City. Upon arrival, the bike was prebuilt (with some disassembly for shipping) with nary a loose bolt.

During my time with the Faran 2.5, I treated it like my daily, do-everything bike: I pedaled it on local paved roads and singletrack, group social rides around town, to pubs and restaurants, and up and down the canyon roads of the Wasatch Front. I even rode the Faran on my seasonal pilgrimage up Big Cottonwood Canyon to Brighton Ski Resort. It's a big early season ride with an unending climb followed by a ripping descent that, because of vehicles and rockfall, require you to be on your toes. Even with the efficiency losses of flat pedals and knobby tires, I felt fresh on the climb, and on the descent the Faran was both stable at speed and nimble when I needed to dart



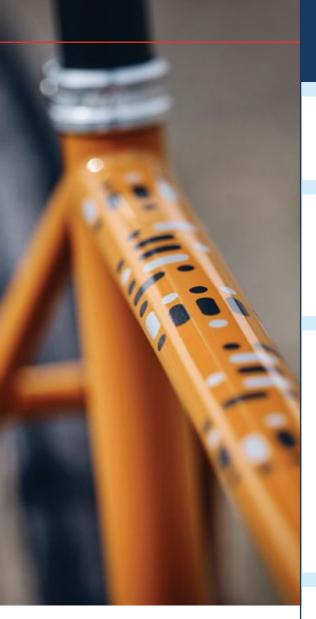
around surprise detritus. Similarly, I had a blast riding the Fairlight on some of the mellower local singletrack trails in the foothills. Charging down a rocky trail is a great way to test for frame compliance!

Up to this point, I was enjoying my time on the Faran, but it wasn't quite

blowing my mind. In fact, it felt very, very similar to my personal do-everything steel bike, albeit with some nicer touches in terms of fender and rack fitment. Then I loaded it up for an overnight with friends and discovered what really sets this bike apart. Unloaded, the Faran felt fast, springy, and comfortable, exactly what you want from a nice steel bike, but nothing you can't get from a lot of other brands (including my personal bike). But with a full camping load? Simply put, the Faran exhibited unmatched ride quality. It still felt fast and springy, but the level of compliance and comfort I experienced was nothing short of remarkable. Not only that, it felt even more stable at speed and in corners. With the weight biased to the front, I could take my hands off the bar and confidently cruise along without even thinking about making micro-adjustments. Speeding down the canyon road, there wasn't a hint of wobble or wiggle. It's as if Fairlight created the perfect touring frame.

To what can we attribute this magical ride quality? Fairlight claims a certain amount of compliance from the ovalized top tube, which is something I've seen from a few other British bike brands. Surely the bike's geometry plays a role as





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well, especially the fork trail. If you're familiar with randonneuring bikes, you've likely heard the term "low trail." Without going too far into the weeds, low-trail forks tend to feel twitchy unloaded. Fairlight designed the Faran with "mid-low trail," meaning the steering feels sharp and nimble unloaded but, like a rando bike, settles down when you've got some weight on the fork. It's a good balance, and I think it has a lot to do with the Faran's stability when loaded up with camping gear. I also think Fairlight found some sorcery in its carefully chosen tubing diameters and wall thicknesses. On its website and in its documents, Fairlight places a lot of emphasis on the tubing it sources from UK-based Reynolds. Whether it's the tubing or the geometry or all of the above, the Faran's ride quality is pure witchcraft. 🙆

Dan Meyer is the Managing Editor of Adventure Cyclist.