

VITUS ENERGIE

Heading off road but want an easier ride when on it? That's the intent behind the Energie GR City. But did it achieve its multi-purpose aims...?

WORDS JAMES WITTS IMAGES THESECRETSTUDIO.NET

VITUS ENERGIE GR CITY £774.99 WWW.CHAINREACTIONCYCLES.COM





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1 The top tube is longer and the stem shorter in the 2016 model of the GR, which makes for better handling off-road 2 Shimano's 10-speed Tiagra is a wise groupset selection, covering a wide range of gears for commutes or cyclocrossers 3 The Energie GR is equipped with 32c-width tyres, a WTB wheelset and disc brakes as standard

Vitus is the in-house bike brand of Chain Reaction Cycles, which usually means good value, quality bikes. The sub-£800 price point isn't outrageous for committed triathletes: but why spend that money on a bike that's not specifically for road or trail?

According to Vitus, it's down to the GR's chameleon-like qualities: 'a purpose-built, all-weather, all-day training and commuting bike', claims backed up by impressive 2015 sales figures. After a month's solid testing across a variety of terrain, we would concur...

First up, those of you who dabble in off-season cyclocross might notice that the geometry is identical to the 2016 Energie Cross Bike. For us, that signals its primary intentions, namely to consume trails and mud with ease. The geometry of the GR is slightly tweaked compared to its 2015 incarnation however, resulting in a longer top tube and shorter stem. Improved handling is the aim and this subtle change is noticeable on and off-road. A mere shift of bodyweight and the Energie GR is heading toward your destination with confidence (and is poles apart from some tri bikes that are tanker-like at cornering).

Improving your handling is one of the key reasons to head off-road... but can the Vitus handle a traditional debilitating off-season? Our autumn test period suggests so. The beefy down tube resembles the Kammtail design Trek has incorporated into their top-end road frames for many years now. For Trek, that blunted teardrop shape aims to increase aerodynamics; here it's more about providing a solid base.

A high-modulus carbon fork dissipates more shock from rolling over jagged rocks with a 2016 27.2mm seatpost also purporting to improve comfort over the previous incarnation.

SOLID STOPPING

Disc brakes are relatively new on road bikes but in cyclocross, they've been race legal for many years. That history shines bright thanks to TRP's Spyre mechanical versions, especially with the dual-piston design, which not only means more even wear but also, when you do have to change them, it's much easier to do so.

That confidence is further inspired by the solid WTB wheelset. As triathletes, you'll be used to the

700c sizing though less accustomed to a 32c tyre width (this width increases traction but comes at a slight cost to speed).

Shimano's 2016 Tiagra 10-speed groupset is the key difference between this and the pure Energie cyclocross bike, which uses SRAM's Rival. The city version offers a wider range of gears, so covers beginners nicely. A further neat touch is the cable routing that's clamped above, rather than beneath, the top tube to make it easier to carry when cyclocrossing. Finally, mudguard and

pannier mounts complete the offering.

Sometimes trying to be a jack-of-all-trades makes you a master of none: not here. While the Energie doesn't have the kick of a roadie or the speed of a tri bike, it's great fun; and enjoyment equals a stronger bike leg come race season.

» VERDICT

88%
Superb all-rounder that actually eclipses the hyperbole of the marketing

TECH VITUS ENERGIE GR CITY

Size tested **55cm**
Overall weight **10.32kg**
(without pedals)



FRAME AND FORKS

Sizes 50, 52, 55, 58cm
Frame 6061-T6 alloy
Fork Torayca T700 HM-UD carbon/alloy steerer
TRANSMISSION
Chainset Shimano Tiagra 4700 (50/34t)
Bottom bracket Shimano BSA 68mm
Cassette Shimano HG-500
Chain KMC X10
Derailleurs Shimano Tiagra 4700
Shifters Shimano Tiagra 4700

WHEELS

Front WTB SX17
Rear WTB SX17
Tyres Kenda Happy Medium, 700c x 32c
COMPONENTS
Stem 6061-T6 alloy
Bars Vitus compact 6061 alloy
Headset Token A38M
Saddle Vitus cro-mo rails
Seatpost Vitus 6061 alloy
Brakes Shimano Tiagra 4700

DIMENSIONS

1 **Head angle** 71.5°
2 **Seat angle** 74°
3 **Effective top tube** 57cm
4 **Seat tube** 53cm
5 **Standover** 80cm
6 **Chainstay** 42.5cm
7 **Bottom bracket** 30cm
8 **Wheelbase** 105cm
9 **Head tube** 15.5cm