

Look utilizes tried-and-true technology to make the bike more comfortable, building in flattened chainstays, seatstays, and top tubes. The seat tube also extends a few inches above the sloping top tube. That extension, paired with a small-diameter 27.2mm seatpost, offers a fair amount of fore-aft flex to create even more comfort. The result is a fairly smooth ride—especially from the rear end. The front end is mismatched, though, transferring more shock than we're used to in bikes of this type. I was surprised that Look didn't take the oldest, and perhaps most effective, path to a smooth ride: thick bar tape and high-volume tires. The good news is that both are inexpensive upgrades, should a prospective buyer see the need for additional comfort.

In another departure for Look, the frame is molded in Asia. Manufacturing abroad keeps costs down, providing a fair value.—Ron Koch

FELT F5

The scenery, as I pedaled the F5 around potholes and past old stone farmhouses and livestock in rural New England, was almost enough to distract me from the roads: Years of use by heavy farm machinery had scarred the pavement—where there was pavement.

The F5 is race-ready (Felt's Z-series is designed for longer rides or rougher roads), with fast, responsive geometry and a package that will attract a cyclist transitioning to road riding from mountain bikes or even hybrids. With that in mind, Felt's priority was to make the bike as stiff and light as possible to deliver performance, while still hitting a comfortable price point for customers who may be buying their first carbon bike.

On my first ride I immediately noticed the precise response to steering



Felt F5 PRICE \$2,099 > WEIGHT 17.75 lb. (54cm as tested) > SIZES 48, 51, 54 (tested), 56, 58, 61cm **FRAME** Felt Road UHC Performance MMC carbon fiber w/ 3KP Weave > **COMPONENT HIGHLIGHTS** FSA Gossamer Pro compact crank BB30; Shimano 105 10-speed drivetrain; Felt VS 6061 aluminum handlebar; Mavic CXP-22 wheels > **INFO** feltbicycles.com > **BUY IT IF** You're looking for affordable performance in an understated package > **FORGET IT IF** You want other cyclists to envy your bike on group rides

FELT PRIORITIZED STIFFNESS AND LOW WEIGHT IN THE F5.

input. Neither uncomfortably fast nor annoyingly slow, the bike let me confidently put the wheels exactly where I wanted them as I navigated rough roads. The frame is stiffer than I

expected at this price, with a bottom bracket that resisted flexing when I pedaled hard. The rigidity also paid off when I got out of the saddle and snapped up short climbs, where the frame shot me over the crest.

To keep the weight (and price) low, the F5 comes with lower-end Mavic CXP-22 wheels, which weren't as rigid as the race-level wheels I'm used to riding. With a frame that's stiff enough for racing duty, an upgrade to more robust wheels would turbo-charge the F5. More importantly, the harsh pavement sent the wheels out of true quickly.

A Shimano 105 drivetrain, FSA Gossamer crank, and understated frame graphics mean that this Felt doesn't immediately grab your attention. However, a few pedal strokes show you how a quality frame built with midlevel components can combine to become a fairly high-performance package.—Adam Branfman

(ALSO GET)

Capo Modena jersey and bib shorts

This subtle, Italian-made kit gets its flair from its asymmetrical racing stripe. The jersey and bib shorts are comfortable, with an athletic cut and lightweight fabric that isn't too warm for summer, but also won't leave you shivering in knee-warmer weather. The white jersey is slightly translucent, showing off bib straps and your undershirt. For more modest riders, the jersey also comes in black.—M.A.

PRICE \$80, jersey; \$140, shorts > INFO capocycling.com

