



VAN NICHOLAS BOREAS

Original price £1529 (frameset)
€ 5352 (as built)

AS BUILT WEIGHT 8kg (56cm) **FRAME** Titanium **FORK** Carbon **GEARS** Shimano Ultegra 50/34, 11-28 **BRAKES** Shimano Ultegra **WHEELS** FFWD F4R Black Edition carbon clinchers **FINISHING KIT** VNT Elements saddle, alloy bar and stem, and titanium seatpost, 25mm Schwalbe One tyres

Titanium bikes invariably look the dog's what'sits but the Boreas pulls off the trick of turning heads everywhere I've taken it, which is all well and good so long as it has the performance to match. And it does.

Brands tend to separate their race bikes from their sportive bikes. However, with the Boreas, Van Nicholas wanted it to straddle both, producing a bike that's race-bike stiff (check) with something you'd want to ride all day (double check). Comfort is partly down to the longer chainstays and **custom fork [1]**, which gives clearance for 28mm tyres, but even with the fitted 25mm Schwalbe Ones it's hardly a super-firm ride. With 28s, it eats up terrain.



HIGHS
Catwalk looks, smooth ride

LOWS
Flattered a little by the wheels

The supplied **FFWD carbon clincher wheels [2]** (F4R Black Edition, £1970) make the Boreas pop and the jet-black look is the perfect accompaniment to the polished silver frame. Better performers in the wet than most full carbon clinchers I've tried, and unyielding to crosswinds, they're

nevertheless wheels for best and for half the time I've had it I've been running the more modest yet hardy Mavic Aksium Elite (£220), which added just 150g in weight but saw the Boreas lose both plenty of nip and admirers.

Giving the Boreas the racing tag is a bit of a misnomer; while it's not comparatively heavy for a titanium bike of this size, in a carbon hungry world, you're unlikely to enter it into anything other than flat criterium races.

TESTER'S CHOICE



SPECIALIZED S-WORKS SUB6 SHOES £250

These stiff 'aero' shoes are perhaps best for short time trials because they get uncomfortable over longer rides. The laces on my pair also come loose and the lace cover is a pain to get on and off.



GARMIN EDGE 820 £329.99

Its touch screen isn't as sharp or responsive as I would like, but a new feature on the 820, Group Track, which allows you to keep tabs on what your ride buddies are up to, is excellent.

And while it's something that's going to get you through a century ride without death by road buzz through the **VNT Elements bar and stem [3]**, with its low front end, you're not in as comfortable a position as say, Van Nicholas's own Zephyr.

My upgrades

WHEELS Mavic Aksium Elite £220
SADDLE Fizik Aliante Gamma £99.99

Upgrade spend **£319.99**

