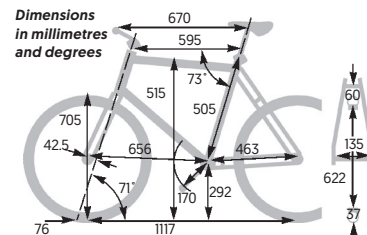




**Biketest**



**Tech Spec**  
**BRISTOL BICYCLES**  
**TOURING STEP-THROUGH**

- **Price:** £745 as tested (from £630)
- **Sizes:** 17.5", 19.5" (tested).
- **Weight:** 15.85kg (as tested)
- **Frame & fork:** Aluminium 6061 T6 frame with M5 eyelets at dropouts and seat stays and one bottle cage. Hi-ten steel fork, 1 1/8" steerer.
- **Wheels:** 37-622 Continental Ride City with puncture protection; Quando hubs – QR rear, solid spindle front; Weinmann Zac 2000 622x19, 36-hole rims; 3-cross, pg stainless spokes.
- **Transmission:** Shimano FC-TY501 chainset 48-38-28 170mm; Shimano BBUN26 square taper bottom bracket; Shimano LX HG71 chain; CS-HG41-8 speed 11-32 cassette. SL-M310 shifters (with reach adjusters) and Altus derailleurs. 24 ratios, 24-118".
- **Braking:** Shimano MT200 hydraulic, 160/160mm rotors.
- **Steering & seating:** 590mm wide 'butterfly' bar, 90mmx25° stem; 1 1/8" Aheadset with potential to raise or lower bar position.
- **Equipment:** Bristol Bicycles women's anatomic saddle, 27.2x350mm micro-adjust seatpost. À la carte, as part of the ordering process. [bristolbicycles.co.uk](http://bristolbicycles.co.uk)

# Bristol Bicycles Touring Step-through

A great value tourer with a good choice of à la carte options. **Liz Colebrook** is impressed

**A**ny colour you like, as long as it's black. Bristol Bicycles avoid colour trends with the belief that bright and shiny attracts unwanted attention. Every model is matt black with black components.

You're invited to configure your own bicycle online, starting from a selection of seven styles (City, Dutch, Touring, Expedition, etc). Next, you fine-tune details from size through to the various accessories. It's fairly easy if you're familiar with the relative merits of different components, and especially good if you want or need a step-through frame and prefer a road (dropped) handlebar – a combination that's rare



**Above:** The gear range is decent but could usefully be lower for loaded touring in hillier areas

these days. Your bike is then assembled (in Bristol).

## Components

Bristol Bicycles frames are imported from Asia, where they're well made from 6061 aluminium. This is fairly light but can feel harsh unless paired with a compliant fork and wheels. The Touring model uses raked steel fork, giving

the front end some 'springiness'. But in making the wheels comfortable, reliable and durable (all good points), the bike gains a fair amount of rotating mass.

Low gears are a necessity in hilly areas, especially so with luggage. I hardly used the Touring model's outer chainring, while the lowest gear was

just low enough. The trigger shifter requires a powerful thumb push. If you have arthritis in your thumb joint, the Expedition model could be a better bet as it comes with a dropped bar. Oh, and don't skimp on the saddle; the standard one is only okay for short journeys.

The test bike has two excellent upgrades from the Bristol Bicycles menu: a hub dynamo and hydraulic disc brakes. On a step-through bike, tight bends add friction to a cable rear brake, whereas hydraulic fluid is unaffected. ●

**Other options**

**ISLABIKES JANIS** ▶  
**£1,199.99**

A svelte step-through that's super lightweight (9.4kg) and has a low range of gears. Suitable for riders from 150-188cm. [islabikes.co.uk](http://islabikes.co.uk)



**PINNACLE CHROMIUM 2** ▶  
**£675**

Aluminium hybrid with 650x47B tyres, 5-speed hub gear, and hydraulic disc brakes. It's 12.7kg. [evanscycles.com](http://evanscycles.com)



## Verdict

A practical, value-for-money cycling solution for cycling newbies and anyone on a budget. I'd like to see more options, like a lighter wheelset and a kickstand. But this is an excellent concept.