

# Vitus Vitesse Evo

## £1,900

Carbon all-rounder is almost entirely Ultegra-equipped



### About the bike

The Vitesse Evo uses the same frame as the Evo Team model used by Irish pro outfit An-Post Chain Reaction. You may have seen it in action at September's World Road Race Championship in Richmond, Virginia, where man-mountain Conor Dunne spent considerable time in the break.

UCI-approved, and with geometry that screams 'hard and fast', the frame is real top-end stuff. But rather than the 'Team' version's mixture of Dura-Ace and FSA components, this Vitesse Evo runs Ultegra almost exclusively throughout the build.



### SPEC

**FRAME**  
T700 high-modulus, uni-directional carbon frame and fork, PF30 bottom bracket

**GROUPSET**  
Shimano Ultegra

**BRAKES**  
Shimano Ultegra

**CHAINSET**  
Shimano Ultegra, 50/34

**CASSETTE**  
Shimano 105, 11-25

**BARS**  
Vitus compact, 6061 alloy

**STEM**  
Vitus 6061 alloy

**SADDLE**  
Prologo Scratch Pro II

**SEATPOST**  
Vitus 6061 alloy

**WHEELS**  
Mavic Ksyrium 25

**TYRES**  
Mavic Yksion Elite, 25c

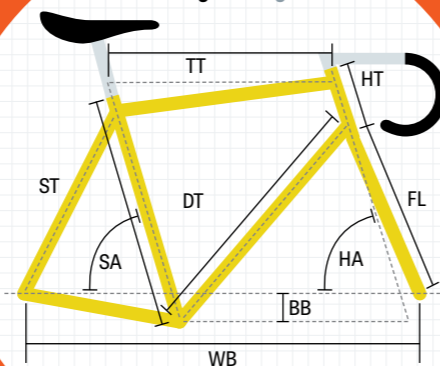
**CONTACT**  
chainreactioncycles.com



### GEOMETRY

|                         | Claimed | Measured |                        | 140mm   | 140mm |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|------------------------|---------|-------|
| <b>Top tube (TT)</b>    | 545mm   | 545mm    | <b>Head tube (HT)</b>  | 140mm   | 140mm |
| <b>Seat tube (ST)</b>   | 500mm   | 502mm    | <b>Head angle (HA)</b> | 73°     | 73.5° |
| <b>Down tube (DT)</b>   | N/A     | 615mm    | <b>Seat angle (SA)</b> | 73.5°   | 73.1° |
| <b>Fork length (FL)</b> | N/A     | 374mm    | <b>Wheelbase (WB)</b>  | 974.6mm | 975mm |
|                         |         |          | <b>BB drop (BB)</b>    | 69mm    | 71mm  |

Size tested 54  
Weight 7.74kg



### The ride

**Riding position:** First things first – this feels more like a pukka race bike than any of the other three bikes we tested. This is a good thing in many ways, but if a 100-mile Sunday group ride is your bread and butter, the level of comfort on offer from the Vitesse Evo might not be adequate. However, the 25c tyres are a definite plus in the comfort stakes. The relatively short (140mm) head tube is as solid as anything we've tested, jarring occasionally on

what we'll call 'your average UK B-road', when combined with a stiff frameset for maximum pedalling efficiency whether on the flat or climbing. **On the road:** With a biggest gear of 50x11, we never felt it was lacking anything when hammering flat roads or downhill stretches of our 80km test route, and although the lowest ratio of 34-25 wasn't needed on the punchier local climbs, it will do you for proper mountain territory.

The overall stiffness proves to offer exceptional handling prowess, especially in rapid downhill corners. The 73° head angle gives a responsive ride without any twitchiness when changing direction quickly. After only an hour on the bike, we were throwing it into corners with abandon, confident not only in holding a line but also in the grip from the Mavic tyres. Push them in the wet, however, and you'll be praying for Continental GP4000s. ➔



Ultegra shifters with matching front and rear mechs make for smooth gear shifting

In fact, the wheels and tyres are pretty much the limiting factor of this bike – it would be capable of much more with a lighter wheelset and grippier rubber. That said, even in this guise it's enough to put a maniacal grin on the face.

**Handling:** Point it at a typical short UK climb and this bike really punches upwards. Booting it uphill on the drops isn't the most efficient way to climb, owing to the flex in the bars, but on the hoods the Vitesse makes mincemeat of short, sharp ascents. At 7.74kg, it's no featherweight, but the rigidity gives it a responsiveness that's an easy trade-off.

Shifting is smooth, even under load. The engagement of cogs is always positive, and the front mech especially works perfectly with the left-hand lever. The Ultegra brakes are easily metered, and offer reliable performance. Are they worth the extra money for the sake of saving 16g per calliper over 105 kit? That's debatable. What's undeniable, however, is that performance for a £1,900 bike is astonishing. The Vitesse Evo could handle a sportive or a road race with equal aplomb, as long as a magic carpet ride isn't top of your list of priorities. On smoother tarmac, especially on rolling terrain, none of the other bikes come close to the pin-sharp cornering ability and efficiently stiff ride the Vitus gives.

### The spec

**Frameset:** The Vitus Vitesse Evo's frame is made from high-modulus (ie stiff) T700 carbon fibre. The tapered head tube should further improve stiffness and aid quicker direction changes, while the massively oversize, square-profiled down tube allied to a tapered seat tube that flares as it joins the BB386EVO bottom bracket creates a super-stiff platform from which to get every watt to the ground.

At 975mm on our size 54, the Vitesse has the shortest wheelbase of any of the bikes on test. Add to that a 73° head angle and this has all the makings of a quick-turning, aggressive road bike. Cables are routed internally, adding to the elegant overall look of the bike.

**Groupset:** The Vitus has the most comprehensive array of Ultegra components of any of our test bikes, the only concessions to cost-cutting being a KMC 11-speed chain and Shimano 105 11-25 cassette. It's no surprise to find a compact chainset here, even on a race-spec machine. With the right combination of ratios on the cassette it's arguable



that many riders could benefit from a compact for everyday road riding and climbing.

**Finishing kit:** We encountered Vitus's own-brand finishing kit on the aluminium Zenium SL in last month's test, and know the alloy stem and swept-back bars to be a comfortable set-up. Fitted to the Vitesse Evo's carbon frame, they should have less vibration to dampen. There's an adequate amount of flex at the extent of the handlebar drops, but nothing that will stop you levering the bike up a mountain with maximum efficiency.

**The Wheels:** At this price, the quality of the wheelset will generally improve from stock training hoops, and while the Mavic Ksyriums are not what we'd use for racing, for a £320 wheelset, they're strong all-rounders. The Yksion Elite tyres aren't the lightest or quickest tyres but in the 25mm size used here, should provide a comfortable ride. 🚲

## RATING

### FRAME

Stiffness is the watchword here, with racy geometry

### COMPONENTS

The most complete Ultegra groupset on test

### WHEELS

Good value, solid wheels but could be lighter

### THE RIDE

Not the most comfy but wonderfully fast and agile

## OVERALL



An oversized down tube, flared seat tube and BB386EVO bottom bracket (above) provide a stiff platform for efficient power transfer; Ultegra brakes (right) are easily metered and reliable



Astonishing performance for a £1,900 bike – it'll put a maniacal grin on your face!



**BikesEtc**

**BEST IN TEST**



# Vitus Vitesse Evo

Rapid, responsive, cohesive and comfortable – the Vitesse rocks our world!



**O**n the face of it, awarding the victory to the most Ultegra-complete bike of the bunch looks like an obvious choice. Potential buyers should automatically plump for the one that has the most high-tech bits and bobs on it, right? Well, not quite... Things are never quite as obvious as they seem where similarly specced bikes are involved, and beyond the way in which the Vitus Vitesse Evo's groupset works so harmoniously, the other two deciding factors that helped the Evo beat all comers were its frameset and price.

You could race this bike either as a fourth-cat newbie or if you're chasing points for your first-cat licence. The level of feel and responsiveness in this package makes it a potential race winner, while its reasonable level of compliance also make it a very good bike for longer, more gentle rides. Full Ultegra, race and sportive-ready, for £1,900? It's a steal. A new set of wheels and some carefully chosen Dura-Ace upgrades would get it under the magical 7kg barrier, too.

As for the other bikes, let's tackle Norco's Valence SL and Bianchi's Intrepida together, since they're both aimed at the same kind of rider. The Norco gets the nod over the Bianchi on three counts: its matched Ultegra shifters and chainset are a joy to use, it's £100 cheaper, and – thanks in part to its very good wheelset – 860g lighter. Throw a set of higher-spec wheels into the Bianchi's mix, plus a better set of handlebars, and you'd have a bike that's as good as the Norco, albeit at the same price as the Merida. Talking of which...

Merida's Reacto 5000 surprised us with its comfort levels, and demonstrated composure combined with agile handling. Perhaps it isn't quite versatile enough to be the bike we'd choose for everyday riding if we were lucky enough to have all four of these in our garage, but if your focus is on hard, fast rides, it's a great choice. Otherwise, you'd be a fool not to take the Vitus Vitesse Evo for a test ride. 🚲

## HOW THEY STACK UP...

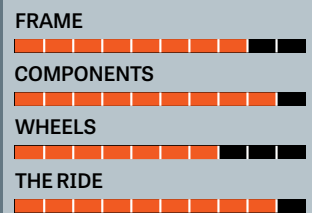
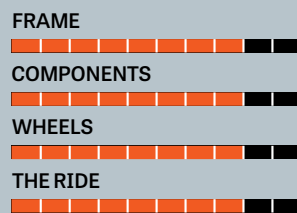
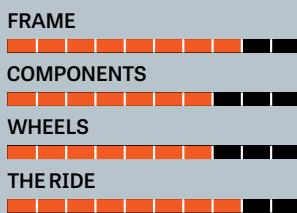
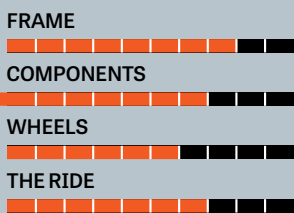


BIANCHI INTREPIDA  
£1,700

MERIDA REACTO 5000  
£2,000

NORCO VALENCE SL  
£1,600

VITUS VITESSE EVO  
£1,900



### OVERALL

7.4

7.8

7.9

8.3