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# Crisp

THE LONGER YOU RIDE IT,  
THE MORE IT REVEALS

Pegoretti, and who is a one-time blacksmith and sculptor's apprentice and architect who created, just for instance, the elevator for the Prada Guggenheim store (the largest noncargo elevator in the world, made with about \$500,000 worth of glass) before getting disenchanted and deciding to devote himself to something he inescapably loved, which was bikes. My Crisp is more direct than any of that.

It is, simply, a great ride.

Some of the ride comes from Darren's ability and acumen: He uses an inconvenient two-pass welding technique that lets him join tubes directly to each other without filler (it would mask torching flaws) at lower temperatures, and he translated my measurements and stylistic preferences into a bike that out of the box fit like favorite old jeans after three days on. Some of the ride comes from the marriage of material and design philosophy: Darren believes the cold-worked, nonshaped, seamless, straight-gauge 3AL/2.5V tubes, combined with his two-pass welds, plus big Breezer dropouts and oversize, tapered head tube allow the forces and sensations that occur during a ride to travel or be absorbed in the most natural and efficient manner—there are no butts, crimps, epoxy, or crossed fibers to interrupt what is happening within the frame.

As with any great bike, though, no explanation accounts for what happens while riding. My Crisp is robust in a way that reminds me of an Eddy Merckx EMX-5, snarls a bit like a Gaulzetti Corsa, floats like an Independent Fabrication XS, finds its own way when necessary like a horse with a tired rider in a manner I first experienced on a Look 381i—the characteristics of some of my all-time favorite bikes. But the most remarkable quality is that it is beguiling. The longer I ride it, the more it reveals—and the more I want to ride it. This is not a bike you will know everything about in a few weeks or, I anticipate, a few seasons or, perhaps, even a lifetime. It is a bike that with revelations of its capabilities keeps delighting its rider—the quintessence, maybe, of what cycling is.—*Bill Strickland*

QUINTESSENCE BEING THE PUREST AND MOST concentrated aspect of a thing's essence, which itself is the real and enduring nature of being (as opposed the mere facade of appearance), it is with a mighty big hunk of dismay that I find myself attaching such an overwrought term to such a simple object as a bicycle. But this is what it has come to with the Crisp, after the riding, after the poring over of dimensions, after the e-mailing, and the shooting of breezes with Darren Crisp: My test bike is the quintessence.

I just don't know of what.

It is not the quintessence of ti, which is, as any worthwhile frame mystic knows, springy like steel but better, and firm like aluminum but more resilient, and just as good as carbon but more durable, and otherwise numinously supple yet stiff in a manner that would have baffled speechless even the all-knowing seers at the Oracle of Delphi (had Darren been around to build them bikes in 25 CE). My Crisp is superior to all that.

It is not the quintessence of Darren himself, one of cycling's true mad outlier artisans, an American living in Italy, hand-building custom-fit bicycles from a material decades out of date, who is informed somewhat by the steady hand, leaping mind, and creatively cursing mouth of the master builder Dario

PRICE \$4,800, frame, fork, and headset WEIGHT 16.5 lb. (with cages and pedals) SIZES Custom FRAME 3AL/2.5V titanium FORK Enve Composites Road 2.0 tapered COMPONENT HIGHLIGHTS Campagnolo Record EPS group, Shamal wheelset; Enve stem, handlebar, seatpost; Vittoria Open Corsa EVO CX 25mm tires; Selle Italia SLR saddle; King titanium bottle cages; Chris King Inset 7 headset INFO [crisptitanium.com](http://crisptitanium.com)

