

DEAN ANIMAS CTI

The Animas CTI utilizes what's known as 3/2 titanium, which consists of 3% aluminum, 2.5% vanadium and 94.5% pure titanium. What sets Dean apart from other titanium builders is their exclusive "R" grade processing. The "R" is code word for radically aligned crystals or RAC. No, this isn't some hippy-dippy, bong-hit hallucination, but instead a process that Dean claims increases strength and durability of the tube. The tube sets are cold-worked and stress relieved for additional strength, and the carbon fiber used on the Animas CTI is uni-directional tubing. The titanium has a fatigue strength-to-weight ratio roughly twice that of 4130 chrome-moly steel. And as we all know, titanium has incredible resiliency and corrosion resistance. Mated to the Alpha Q fork and you have one nasty [according to my nephew who is 15, that's code word for good] couple.

HOW DOES IT FEEL?

A couple years ago we featured a Dean bike in our pages, but it's been a while, so it's a treat to have one back in print. To say that Dean is a boutique bike is an understatement. How many times have you seen someone on this machine outside of Boulder, Colorado? Known as a titanium builder, Dean are branching out and incorporating carbon fiber, but it's the titanium that makes the biggest statement on the Animas CTI. Sure, the carbon is sexy and the way they use it is similar to Temple Cycles in terms of appearance, but it's the metal that grabs your attention, the details that keep you focused and the craftsmanship that makes you shake your head. This frame is a work of art from the trick water bottle bosses to the junction points where the "plastic"

meets the metal, the welds that don't even look like welds, and the rear dropouts are some of the "sickest" out there. It's one thing to have a wicked frame, but it's quite another to match it up with specification that complements the hot body. The Ritchey gear is always on my short list with a nod going to the Stream carbon bar. I have moved on from the flat-top bar, but this set has a subtle enough section to keep you coming back to the tops. The Alpha Q fork is a solid choice too and the straight leg that tapers from "fat" to "skinny" (top to bottom) is a sexy accent especially since the red is spot-on with the red bits scattered throughout like the King headset and slick post collar. Speaking of Red: this was my maiden voyage on SRAM Red. I've been using Force for a couple years and find that Red is equal to it with the adjustments that have been made in throw making it better than Force. Contrary to a lot of the "chatter" about the aesthetic of the Red crank, I dig it. I like the chunkiness, color and logo placement of SRAM on the inside of the crank arm. Rounding out the specification is the DT Swiss Mon Chasseral wheel set. I have these on another machine and they roll like butter. They are the perfect everyday wheel and light enough to rival anything out there. Though mostly known for durability, you can't argue with the look either. Red nipples, black spokes, and white hubs/rims? Hot! I love titanium. I like the look, the feel, the hum and the thud you feel when you tag a bump or hole in the road. The combination of the carbon and titanium silences some of the road noise, while acting as a vibration dampener. It's a good combination even though the predominant material is carbon fiber.

On the flat, open road the Animas hums along. The frame is stiff, but has a fair bit of compliancy with the carbon fiber. The oversized head tube and bottom


ANGLES

Measurements in centimeters [TT= top tube; SA= seat angle; HA= head angle]

SIZE	46	49	52	55	58
TT	52	53.5	55	57	59
SA	74°	73.5°	73°	72.5°	72°
HA	71.5°	72°	72.5°	73°	73.5°

bracket contribute to the stiffness with particular attention paid to the bottom bracket. It's not a gigantic section like we are used to with most carbon bikes, but it offered some serious, noticeable strength when swapping the bike back-and-forth trying to get up to speed or a sharp pitch. Ascending is also solid with the full power hitting the titanium chain stays instantly. No swoops or curvaceous bends here, just straight forward, beefy, sexy design. Direct energy to the rear wheel and felt instantly. Where the Animas is most fun is when descending and cornering. It's a reactive machine meaning it goes to where you point it without fuss or wrestling. A slight lean and subtle point of the bars was sufficient enough to stab a corner. On the straight, downhill roads it was a comfortable, safe descent with that pleasurable hum of the titanium sans shakes and wiggles. With a very slight slope in the geometry on the top tube, the Animas was a comfortable ride overall and I found that longer rides were as "cush" as one-hour loops.

LAST CALL

Every time I wonder about the health of titanium bikes and whether they are obsolete or not, I ride one and wonder why more people don't have them. There are pretenders out there who produce a higher volume of frames, but if you want a truly custom build that speaks of tradition and craftsmanship, you certainly must reach out to the smaller companies like Dean [among others]. If you are willing to spend the money and want the truly definitive ride that titanium bears, than a titanium-based machine could suit your needs for what you desire in a high-end bike. 



THE LOW DOWN

Price: \$3,500 approx. (frame and fork)

Weight: 15.2 lbs.

Sizes: Custom

Color(s): Titanium and carbon fiber

Information: deanbikes.com

Chassis

Frame: 3/2 Titanium w/carbon fiber

Fork: Alpha Q Carbon

Wheelset

Wheels: DT Swiss Mon Chasseral

Tires: Hutchinson Fusion2 Kevlar

Cockpit

Brake levers/shifters: SRAM Red

Brakes: SRAM Red

Handlebar: Ritchey WCS Stream Carbon

Stem: Ritchey WCS Carbon Matrix

Headset: Chris King

Saddle: Selle Italia SLR

Seatpost: Ritchey WCS Carbon

Drivetrain

Crankset: SRAM Red

Bottom Bracket: SRAM Red

Cassette: SRAM Red

Chain: SRAM

Derailleurs (F/R): SRAM Red