

Reviews

Gear up

COMPONENTS, KIT, AND MEDIA SELECTED
AND REVIEWED BY BIKE JOURNALISTS AND CYCLING UK STAFF

Put to the test

Is there a product that you think needs reviewing?

Write to: *Cycle*, PO Box 313, Scarborough, YO12 6WZ

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Pros & cons

- + Warm enough for winter
- + Relaxed fit and good design
- Pricy



Iris Spinosa Winter Jacket

Windproof women's jacket that's warm, well designed and fits nicely

£179 velovixen.com, i-ris.cc

IRIS stands for 'I Ride In Style'. It's also the name of this women's cycle clothing brand's founder, former Dutch National Road Champion Iris Slappendel. The colour choices across the range are a bold side-step from the pinks and pastels often used for women's bike gear.

I was a little wary when I saw the design of the Spinosa Winter Jacket online but as soon as it arrived, I was sold. It arrived in recyclable packaging, with no plastic or Sellotape in sight. Sustainability is high on the brand's priority list, and all kit is designed to last and produced using sustainable materials

certified by OEKO-TEX (oeko-tex.com/en/).

The jacket is extremely comfortable out riding, both with and without a rucksack. Most importantly, the fit is fantastic. The materials are not too stretchy, so it's not clingy and uncomfortable like some thicker winter jerseys. The back sits a little lower down the waistline, which prevents it from riding up when you're on the drops.

The three rear pockets give ample room for accessories and are deep enough that I didn't worry about losing things (as I have before). I would recommend sizing up if you prefer a more



relaxed fit. I tend to take a small but went for a medium in this jacket.

I often get quite warm when riding but the thickness of this jacket is perfect. Temperatures have been down to 2-3°C on my morning commute, and the Spinosa Winter Jacket has kept me comfortable with no need for any additional layers. The fabric on the sleeves and back is a soft but dense fleece material. It wicks sweat away nicely, so you stay warm without feeling sticky. Unlike some jackets, it also fits well and keeps you warm enough off the bike, not just on it. ●

Pip Munday

Other options



CASTELLI TRANSITION W JACKET £200

Incredibly light and well insulating Windstopper jacket with the Castelli style... and price to match. castelli-cycling.com



DHB WOMEN'S LONG SLEEVE THERMAL JERSEY £40

If you're not fussed about water resistance, this affordable dhb jersey is a great option for those colder mornings. dhbsport.com

Verdict

A perfect outer layer for autumnal and crisp winter weather, whether you're a casual rider, commuter, or serious racer. I'm impressed with the quality and look forward to many more miles wearing this.



Cycle's test promise

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Carradice Duxback Rain Poncho

Old-school waxed cotton cape that actually keeps you dry in a downpour

£88-£93 carradice.co.uk

Probably the most waterproof coat I own is my late father's wax jacket. It's over 40 years old, with carefully hand-sewn patches. So long as I don't forget to proof it now and then, it never lets the rain in. It is, however, too hot for cycling and any form of semi-vigorous exercise.

The waterproofs I use for cycling, meanwhile, are lightweight and breathable but rarely last more than a couple of seasons before they start leaking, despite reproofing. I've long been on the look out for that holy grail of waterproofs: something durable that keeps me dry.

While searching through the indexes of old CTC Gazettes for mention of the Cape Wrath Fellowship, ahead of its 70th anniversary, every edition mentioned "capes" if not "wrath".

The Rough Stuff-Fellowship archives are similar: capes everywhere. I could immediately see the benefit. I finally bit the bullet last autumn and bought the waxed cotton Duxback from Carradice.

There is one obvious drawback with a cape: the wind. Accepting that, it is great for keeping you dry. It has that solid Barbour jacket feel, and water rolls off it like the proverbial. Two wrist loops ensure it doesn't flap from the front, and a belt loop makes sure it doesn't blow up and leave your midriff exposed.

A solid zip with button guard allows an opening to get the cape on while wearing a helmet, while also preventing water entry. The hood doesn't affect your periphery vision, though you'll find you'll need to wear it under your helmet (if you wear one).

The poncho's positioning over your handlebar will prevent the use of lights or GPS units mounted there. If that doesn't bother you, then you'll soon enjoy the benefits of being dry without overheating. Another bonus is that your legwear, especially your knees, won't suffer as much in the downpour, although you'll still likely get damp at shin level.

If I had one real reservation it would be the dark olive green colour. Despite the wide Scotchlite strip on the back, I am conscious of potentially blending in with the hedgerows as I ride along. ●

Sam Jones

Verdict

Durably made waterproof that will keep the more sedate commuter or tourer dry for years to come. Not cheap, but as the saying goes: buy cheap, buy twice.

Pros & cons

- + Very waterproof
- + Keeps your knees dry
- Not especially visible

Other options



WEATHERGOODS IMBRIS RAIN PONCHO £120

More expensive but this Swedish cycling poncho has a handy front pocket. Review at: cyclinguk.org/weathergoods-imbris-weather-goodssweden.com



CARRADICE PROROUTE RAIN CAPE £40

Less than half the price of the Duxback and nearly half the weight, this fluorescent yellow poncho should provide the same excellent coverage if not the same durability. carradice.co.uk