

## ENDURO BIKE TEST SPECIAL

Orange might well be tinkering with the 224 but it'll take something pretty major to move one of the finest mountainbikes currently available off its perch (even if Jon the designer has tilted this shot). The Alpine offers limitless horizons.



### PRODUCTION BIKE: ORANGE ALPINE 160MM

In its simplicity and speed in ragged conditions the Alpine is still one of our favourite 160mm bikes. Shock tune, geometry and rugged build quality make it a bike that has characteristics more akin to a mini downhill bike than a long travel trailer.

It's a bike that is built to last, not break. Whilst we opted for the single 36T chainring and Hope Race brakeset, the bike you see is otherwise standard. The RockShox Reverb seatpost being a custom option and frankly an essential part of a bike of this nature. Just take care to add a zip tie for cable routing. Wide bars, short stem, high volume tyres, chain protection...all fundamentals.

So how does it fare in today's heavy 160mm traffic? Listen, it's still a lot of bike, probably too much bike for all-day trail riding. To make it such a beast, you'd be looking at attempting a frame only, 27lb full custom build. I'm already thinking carbon wheels, cranks, bars... But for tackling the rougher terrain both here and abroad this very version on test will hold you and protect you so much better than a 140mm bike. This leads to the question for UK riders, should you go Five or Alpine? Its name hints at the places it would be best suited, plus a touch of DH uplift and overseas competition enduros. Its smaller stablemate would work better in events based around UK trail centres and for all-round speed across the ground in more of the in-between places of our UK networks.

But then on the Alpine you could be comfortable in a far larger variety of places. In terms of grip and its ability to descend this remains the benchmark of 160mm bikes. It's just a shame that they don't make that wide range of models using the same chassis, but in a range of weights from a 26lb trail version up to the barn storming version we have here. Still, the Alpine remains one of the current wonders of the mountainbike world. Go steady.

Price: From £3099  
[www.orangebikes.co.uk](http://www.orangebikes.co.uk)

#### SPEC

Frame	Orange Alpine 160mm
Shock	Fox Float RP23 XV
Fork	Fox 36 Float R TS
Headset	Cane Creek ZsT25 tapered
Bottom Bracket	Race Face X Type
Crankset	Race Face Respond Double X Type
Stem	Sunline AM 50mm
Seatpost	RockShox Reverb
Handlebars	Sunline 742
Chain device	MRP
Rear derailleur	Shimano Saint
Brakes	Hope Race 180mm
Shifters	Shimano SLX
Saddle	SDG Bel Air
Wheels	Hope Pro 2/Mavic EN 321
Sprocket	Shimano HG 50
Tyres	Maxxis High Roller 2.35 60compound
Sizes	16/18/20

