

Orange ALPINE 160 FR

A SUPER QUICK SIX-INCH, WITH FANTASTIC ANGLES AND GREAT BUILD. ALPINE BRED, BUILT FOR LONGER DOWNHILL EVENTS AND UPLIFT ACTION



TESTED:
ORANGE ALPINE 160 FR
SPECIALIZED SX TRAIL 2
COMMENCAL SUPREME

Reasonably light at 34lbs, the Alpine puts in a strong case as being the best all-round 160mm complete package currently available. It doesn't really have any weak points. James McKnight, Champory V2, Malaga, Spain.



BREED

Prototyped in Alpine terrain over many summers, the early versions were more or less slackened and strengthened versions of the Five. Now in their final version the Alpine is longer, stronger and with more travel, essentially a mini 224 – and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that.

GEOMETRY

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| SIZE | 18" |
| WB | 46" |
| BB | 13.5" |
| CS | 17" |
| HA | 65.5° |
| WEIGHT | 34lb |



BUILD AND CHANGE

Over at the Orange HQ, Jay the head of operations, was complaining that too many people were opting for the air sprung version of the Alpine over the coil. It's a tempting option, but I'm sure the more gravity-biased rider will be able to get their head around this coiled beast a little easier. Fox provide excellent kit these days, and together with Race Face, Sram and Mavic there's not really a weak point apart from the narrow and high bar and a ridiculous stem. Replacing the stem with a 50mm and lowering and widening the bars transform the Orange getting the weight in the right place. It's also massively over-sprung and we went down to a 375lb spring from a 450, even being the wrong side of 14 stone. Probably think very strongly about ditching the double ring and swapping to a grippier tyre set up too.

RIDE/CHASSIS

A ripper from the start, it's quiet, balanced and just has a simply overwhelming thirst for downhill action. Light for a six-inch bike of this nature, the Alpine covers ground quickly, great for the longer Enduro or Mega type events and uplifts. Perfectly balanced with 160mm front and back, the rear suspension is impossible to fault even with the bog standard DHX3.0. Those Maxxis 60A compound tyres? Great for carrying speed and longer rides, but they seriously compromise flat-out descending, so they need changing if that's what you're about.



FINISH UP

Arguably...no hold on. This is the best all-round 160/160 complete bike you can currently buy. You want it more black and white than that? A few years ago it didn't exist, but then it would have been up against the mighty and never since replaced (well not as good as the early ones) Specialized Enduro. Today many might compare the Lapierre Spicy, a good long travel trail bike, and a super close second for that type of business, yet not quite as good at cushioning the rider from impact on descents and possibly a touch too big for UK trail riding. This bike also suffers from the latter also, but I feel as an uplift and Mega type race bike (especially the air version) it has miraculously sneaked onto the top of the pile. What are companies thinking?

Price: Alpine 160FR £2799
Price: Alpine 160AM £2799