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Castelli Body Paint bib short £180.00



Technically brilliant bib shorts with an eye-watering price tag... although you could pay more

Weight: 206g **Contact:** www.saddleback.co.uk

3 comments

by [dave_atkinson](#) on July 16, 2011 - 14:17

Castelli Body Paint short.jpg



Thor Hushovd and co on the Garmin-Cervlo team are currently wearing Castelli's Body Paint bib shorts in the Tour de France, so I was expecting them to be nothing short of superb on test. And they are. These Body Paint shorts really do deliver, in all aspects of their design and function. Enough to justify that eye-watering price tag? Well...

Let's look at the design brief for these shorts. Castelli's grand plan was to make a short that 'practically disappears' when worn. So, everything in the Body Paint short is designed to be as unintrusive as possible. The minimum number of seams, the simplest and most functional construction. To that end, the short part of the Body Paint bibs is a single piece of lycra, with only the bare minimum number of seams necessary to make the shape. The grippers in the legs are woven into the lycra, and the bibs are lycra straps too, a single piece with no seams.

Inside the Body Paints you'll find Castelli's Progetto X2 seatpad. This is a two-layer pad with a stretchy cover and padding layer beneath. The two sections are free to move over one another so nothing rubs; it's the same basic theory as those two-layer walking socks you get.

Put this all together and what do you get? £180 worth of bib shorts is what. How much? You could buy a bike for that, etc and so on. Let's gloss over that for a sec and get back to whether they're any good. Are they any good? Yes, they're quite brilliant. They really are. They're the best shorts I've yet tried, I think.

I've done the Fred Whitton in them, in the pouring rain. I've done a 16-hour, 350km all-dayer in them, and many other shorter rides. And they're just great. They're barely there, they never need to be adjusted, the pad is fantastic and the two-layer system works like a dream. It's hard to see how they could be better, really. You simply don't ever think about them when you're riding, which is exactly what you want.

So to value. Are they worth the money? As with anything top-end, it's the law of diminishing returns. Are they twice as good as the best £90 shorts you can buy? No. But they are among the best shorts you can buy. To be honest if you're paying the best

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part of two hundred quid for some shorts you'd expect nothing less than the best, and you won't be disappointed here.

Say you've spent three grand on a road bike and another thousand quid on a trip to the Marmotte or the Étape: do you want your ride to end in tears just because your cheap shorts have rubbed you raw? And it has to be said in comparison to Assos bibs these are mid-range in terms of price –the Assos Fl.13 S5 bibs will set you back £225.99. So it's horses for courses, there's always a place for top-end kit and the technology trickle down might mean we can all have a pair for a hundred quid in a couple of years, who knows. What I do know is that Castelli aren't getting them back. Not that they'd want them now, mind.

Verdict

Technically brilliant bib shorts with an eye-watering price tag... although you could pay more

road.cc test report

Make and model: Castelli Body Paint bib short

Size tested: XL

Tell us what the product is for, and who it's aimed at. What do the manufacturers say about it? How does that compare to your own feelings about it?

Innovation sometimes means looking at something totally differently. When we started working on Body Paint in January 2006, we set out to build a short with all the components integrated into a product that is clean and simple, with the goal to make it practically disappear. Now, after 3.5 years of development, we've had to revolutionize fabric construction, completely rethink patterns and fit, and reengineer details like the bib straps and the logo applications. Our testers have universally been stunned. They describe it in just one word: 'wow!'

Tell us some more about the technical aspects of the product?

* The short portion is made with a single piece of engineered Power Stretch Lycra designed to support muscle function and that painted-on look.

* Seamless straps using Giro++ elastic for lay-flat comfort.

* Leg grippers are knitted into the leg fabric. No stitching, no binding.

* Reflective serigraph print provides 360 reflectivity.

Rate the product for quality of construction:

9/10

Beautifully made with excellent attention to detail

Rate the product for performance:

10/10

Hard to see how they could be better

Rate the product for durability:

8/10

No problems during testing, the thin lycra is more hardy than it looks

Rate the product for weight, if applicable:

9/10

You'll barely know you have them on

Rate the product for comfort, if applicable:

10/10

As good as any shorts I've tried

Rate the product for value:

7/10

Difficult call - they're hugely expensive and really, really good. You get what you pay for.

Tell us how the product performed overall when used for its designed purpose

As well as any short I've tried

Tell us what you particularly liked about the product



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Tell us what you particularly disliked about the product

How much?

Did you enjoy using the product? Yes

Would you consider buying the product? I wouldn't have before the review, I would now

Would you recommend the product to a friend? Yes, the well-heeled ones anyway

Overall rating: 9/10

About the tester

Age: 38 Height: 190cm Weight: 98kg

I usually ride: whatever I'm testing... My best bike is: Genesis Equilibrium with SRAM Apex

I've been riding for: 10-20 years I ride: Every day I would class myself as: Experienced

I regularly do the following types of riding: time trialling, cyclo cross, commuting, sportives, general fitness riding, fixed/singlespeed, mtb, Mountain Bike Bog Snorkelling, track

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Ridiculous price they are only a pair of cycling shorts

posted by martin [7 posts] 16th July 2011 - 23:10
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Guys a quick Google search will show these shorts can be purchased at around £130 mark.

Martin they really aren't 'only a pair of cycling shorts'.

As reviewed they the best you can buy. All day comfort is 2nd to none. Compared to any other shorts I have owned they stand head and shoulders above.

If the £ are a concern then try Castelli Free Aero as they have the same pad and the lycra is just as good.

posted by gazzaputt [108 posts] 17th July 2011 - 8:27
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I bought a pair of these in March last year, rode in them for around 9 months and the seat wore though, which showed my bum through several small holes. Really disappointed as they were great to wear.

So such problems with their Free or Velocissimo shorts.

Simon Mason, Kingston upon Hull

posted by swldxer [17 posts] 17th July 2011 - 15:51
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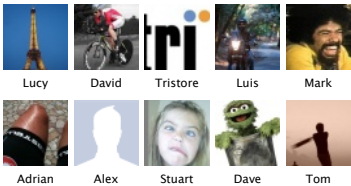
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