

Gazelle Orange Pure Innergy

Simon Vincett discovers a new benchmark in electric bikes.

How wonderfully easy life is when you simply step on to your bike and ride off, without changing clothes or even clipping your pants leg. This “Bike of the year” from the Netherlands achieves supreme convenience through clever design and the result is much more than a conventional bike with a motor attached.

The highlights are:

- Subtle, effective and silent power assistance. My test assistant, Jo Chambers, commented “it feels like you have a fairy godmother kicking in to give you a hand when you need it”.
- Beautifully modulated braking from the rear roller brake and dampened side-pull front cantilever (both operated by hand brake levers). It’s virtually ABS braking.
- A dashboard with buttons for the lights and power assistance level. This combined with the convenience of a chainguard and skirtguard makes for an experience more like jumping in a car than on a bike.
- The battery is easily removed to charge inside.

There’s no throttle, you choose eco, normal or boost mode (or none) when you turn the bike on, and the assistance comes in when you pedal. Eco uses the least power and requires you to do the most work. Boost gives you the most assistance and uses the most power.

The silver battery that comes standard provides 80km of travel in normal assistance mode. The full charge of an empty battery takes approximately 3.5 hours. You can also partly charge the battery, leave it charging overnight or buy a second battery.

The assist system is moderated by sensors at the pedal cranks and in the



Superbly convenient and easy to use, this is pretty much the perfect power-assisted city bike.

99%

front hub. These sensors check how fast you are pedalling relative to how fast you’re actually travelling. If you need more assistance you change down a gear.

Some people will feel that the motor could give more assistance, especially compared to other e-bikes. Some aspects of the power assist system – how soon it assists once you start pedalling for instance – can be tuned to suit you by a Gazelle dealer. The motor is speed-limited and will provide no more assistance over 27.5km/h.

The bike gives the rider a bolt upright position, which is fantastic for scanning ahead over the traffic. I found the turned back handlebar hit my leg if I tried to make a tight turn, limiting the turning circle.

Electric bikes are heavy with their battery and motor and also mudguards, a rack, lights, etc, which combine to add weight. The benefit is a very practical machine well appointed for daily use.

Pray you don’t get a puncture though because the chainguard and the connections for the hub gears and motor make removing the wheels difficult, particularly the rear wheel. For strong protection, Schwalbe tyres are fitted.

The built-in lights don’t flash, so it’s advisable to fit another set of flashing LED lights. An odd aspect is that the

tyre tubes have English valves, which are almost only used in the Netherlands. The pump mounted on the bike is also set up for English valves, though you will probably replace the tubes with the Presta or Schraeder valves that are the common types in Australia. It’s an elegant ride – if only the roads were as civilised. 🍷

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Frame and fork:	Aluminium
Shifter:	Shimano twist grip for 7-speed
Gearing:	Shimano Nexus 7-speed hub gear
Front brake:	Shimano side-pull cantilever
Rear brake:	Shimano hub activating roller brake
Tyres:	Schwalbe City Lite
Included extras:	Chainguard, skirtguard, mudguards, lights, kickstand, suspension seatpost, rack with bungy strap, bell, rear-wheel ring lock, rack-mounted pump
Optional extras:	Larger capacity battery (extra \$299), cable lock
RRP:	\$2,999

For more info <http://bit.ly/gvYMbs>
For where to buy www.gazellebicycles.com.au/dealers.html