


**JULIANA WILDER
X01 AXS TR RSV**
Price: \$9,449

Sizes available: S, M, L

Size tested: S

Weight: 23.9 lbs. (without pedals)

TEST BIKE MEASUREMENTS

- **Stack:** 587.4mm
- **Reach:** 412.3mm
- **Head tube length:** 90mm
- **Head tube angle:** 67.1°
- **Seat tube length:** 405mm
- **Seat tube angle:** 75.1°
- **Top tube:** 568.4mm (effective)
- **Chainstays:** 430.8mm
- **Bottom bracket drop:** 32.6mm
- **Bottom bracket height:** 339.9mm
- **Fork offset:** 51mm
- **Wheelbase:** 1125.8mm
- **Standover height:** 743.5mm

SPECIFICATIONS

- **Frame:** Juliana Wilder Carbon CC, three bottle mounts, Superlight suspension system
- **Fork:** Fox 34 Step-Cast Factory, 120mm
- **Shock:** Fox Float Factory DPS, 115mm
- **Handlebar:** Santa Cruz carbon
- **Stem:** Syntace LiteForce, 60mm
- **Rear derailleur:** SRAM X01 Eagle AXS, 12spd
- **Shifter:** SRAM GX AXS
- **Brakes:** SRAM Level TLM hydraulic disc
- **Rotors:** SRAM CLX Center Lock, 180mm

JULIANA WILDER

BY CAROLYNE WHELAN

→ We are all in agreement that the past almost-two years have been doozies. And while yes, sure, we should still be looking out those in need of love and assistance, don't we deserve a treat? That's what I told myself as I pulled the Juliana Wilder out of its box, perhaps the fanciest bike I have ever ridden. Let's just get it out of the way now that a bike this price is nearing obscenity levels. (Please don't write to tell me how expensive it is — I made a four-figure salary through most of my 20s and some of my 30s, and I helped start the used bike collective in one of my former homes.) But sometimes a bike is so preposterously expensive that, while we may never own it, we can still appreciate the engineering and extravagance of the design. And even the more affordable builds have the same geometry, and they're all either Carbon C or Carbon CC (tested). That soothing lavender color had me sighing as I snapped away at the zip ties and protective foam. I'm typically found wearing black, red, and gray, but that lavender got me feeling like a different person. A person who deserves a treat.

I often joke on group rides that I'm an uphill mountain biker. I love to climb and am pretty scared of descents. But the thing about gravity is that if you start at a certain point and you end at that same spot, you will inevitably end up going down some version of what you rode up. In



- **Bottom bracket:** SRAM DUB 73mm, threaded
- **Crankset:** SRAM X1 Eagle carbon, 32T
- **Cassette:** SRAM XG1295 Eagle, 12spd, 10–50T
- **Headset:** Cane Creek 40, integrated
- **Seatpost:** RockShox Reverb Stealth, 31.6mm
- **Saddle:** Juliana Primiero
- **Hubs:** Industry Nine 1/1, 110 x 15mm front, 148 x 12mm rear, thru-axles
- **Rims:** Santa Cruz Reserve 28 XC Carbon, 28h
- **Tires:** Maxxis Rekon Race, 29 x 2.4in., tubeless

GEARING RANGE

	32
10	93.7
12	78.2
14	67.1
16	58.6
18	52.1
21	44.5
24	38.9
28	33.4
32	29.3
36	26.1
42	22.3
50	18.7

Contact: Juliana Bicycles, 2841 Mission Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060, 831.471.2547, julianabicycles.com



Missoula, Newton's Law is all the more apparent as the best mountain bike routes (maybe even the worst ones) involve riding up and then down a mountain. The Wilder was surprisingly easy – nimble, even – to maneuver up the singletrack, and I had no problem keeping up with my friends who were surely fitter and knew the trail better than I did. The real joke is that I'm not particularly good at climbing, I'm just worse at descending. With the electronic shifting, there were no moments when the derailleur did that clunky *cha-chunk* because I realized too late that I needed to shift down a few gears to make it over a suddenly steep section or a bunch of roots. I truly felt like a proficient climber and a decent bike handler, and was barely out of breath when we got to the top of the mountain and stared out at the void that would have showed us the majestic beauty of the Missoula valley below if it weren't for all the smoke.

When it came time for the descent, I insisted on going last but lost that argument to a few people and was pretty smack in the middle of the pack. I didn't exactly zoom down the trail because I didn't know what was coming and I have a very firm "don't break a femur while on the clock" rule, but I didn't hold anyone up. I was impressed by the bike's handling of the dusty washboard trail, as well as the brakes' agreeability to my insistence on riding them for literal miles while I tried to make out what to do with the blur in front of me. By the end,

I was leaning into the switchback turns and shifting my weight to get some air on a few whoop-dee trail features and step-downs.

A few days later, I headed back up the mountain from a different angle. As I sucked in smoke on this 102°F day, I was thankful for the incredibly light frame and components that keep this machine just barely below 24 pounds. I ate my peanut butter sandwich at the same non-view spot, then headed down the same trail as my first ride. This time, now aware of the terrain ahead, I doubled my speed; each subsequent ride down this same trail was incrementally faster.

Concerned I may have pedaled into a glitch in the matrix, I called a friend who took me to a different trail network. Again, I had no problem climbing, and this descent, while a new trail network to me and therefore approached with caution, was zippy and I felt confident leaning into the turns of the dusty switchbacks. It was definitely a rockier trail network than the other spot I'd been testing this bike on, and

the brakes did a good job not only at managing my speed but also being used as tools to help me purposefully leverage myself over some particularly chunky terrain. The Maxxis Rekon tires held their line as the Wilder flew me down the mountain like Falkor.

When it came time to start writing this review, Ally, our Art Director, asked, "Are you just going to say it's perfect because it's a \$9,500 bike? How could you not?" And to a degree, that's true. Of course, a bike that costs three times more than my van is going to feel impeccable. The Fox 34 Step-Cast Factory fork makes for an incredibly smooth ride, whether you're lifting up and over a rock, bombing down a pocked and washboard trail, or — dare I say it — sending it off a tabletop. Similarly, the rear Fox Float Factory DPS shock absorbed all the micro-hits of the rockier trail sections, my legs felt fairly fresh after even long descents, and on those trail sections where I let loose and either rolled over a large rock or allowed myself to sail into the air for a few blissful seconds, I landed on a cloud of

suspension that absorbed the impact and kept my momentum in motion.

While it's worked like a dream on the Wilder, I've had issues in the past with AXS electronic shifting, and the support I received from SRAM was frustratingly insufficient. While I only charged the AXS battery maybe 20 minutes tops when I first built up this bike out of excitement to get riding and have since committed to forgetting to ever charge it, the shifting has never died on me or even faltered or been slow to react. That said, if this bike is to be used for a longer tour, I recommend bringing an extra battery and maybe a solar charger or other sort of power pack system because without juice, you'll have no shifting capabilities. Still, I will be forever wary of taking electronic shifting too far away from civilization, since it can't be adjusted on the fly if something breaks. But the way this bike handled myriad trail conditions, I'd feel confident using it for a multiday adventure that at least touched a road at some point.

Due to the limited storage space on a small bike made even lesser with a



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dropper post and slack geometry, I'd opt for a hammock or bivy setup with this bike, and would for sure check the forecast to make sure I don't need rain gear, additional layers, or cold-weather sleeping gear. That said, for a summer tour on terrain that is bound to get bumpy, I think this would be a fantastic bike to put in long days and not fear getting too tired or having to walk my bike over an unexpected boulder field.

For riders who are, like me, between sizes, I recommend consulting the size chart. I'm 5 feet, 5.5 inches tall, and therefore right on the line between small and medium. The small was the size available and I gladly accepted it. The benefits are having a tight cockpit, feeling compact and in control without feeling like I am hovering over the bike, the ability to make small adjustments to my body positioning and feeling major changes in bike handling, and dropping the seatpost to ride over or down something that feels outside my skillset so I'm at once shifted back to allow the front of the bike to do its thing while also centered to feel in control of handling. While this may be how most people feel on bikes all the time, it's a rarity for me to feel it with a stock build and it really did make a difference. I have an incredibly short torso and a 32-inch inseam though, and recommend someone with my height or slightly taller with a longer torso to size up.

Even without the super fancy-pants features that make this particular model so exceedingly expensive, I love this bike and would be very happy to ride any of the more affordable builds. It's compact, and the 115mm travel (120mm front) makes it a bike I can really control but is still capable of riding what I want it to ride. I'm not a racer, but I've been beating my own PRs with this bike that instills confidence without weighing me down. I love that all the small details make this a very competent riding partner, and that I could really trust the Maxxis Rekon Race tires to grab onto everything I rolled over and again, didn't feel nearly as heavy as I would expect for such reliable tread. And, come on, who can look away from that color without blushing? 

Carolyn Whelan is the Editor-in-Chief of Adventure Cyclist.

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TITANIUM



GOLD



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