

Photo: Robert Spanning



Pros & cons

- + Good helmet hood
- + Doesn't overheat
- Dull colours for men

Rab

Cinder Kinetic waterproof jacket

Expensive but highly effective off-road waterproof

£220 rab.equipment/uk

British outdoor company Rab is better known for equipping folk heading into the mountains with its down jackets, sleeping bags and rugged gear. I've bought, used and abused Rab's kit in truly testing high altitude winter environments, and I've always been impressed. More recently, Rab has made forays into the off-road cycling world with its Cinder range, available for both men and women.

My initial test was in the wilds of North Wales while riding Wayfarer's Pass on a very damp day with variable temperatures

and conditions. Both the ride and the weather were tough but the jacket (and trousers, see cyclinguk.org/rab-cinder-pants-mens) breathed well and kept out the worst of the storm. Since then, in more humid Surrey, I've found it a comfortable jacket to wear with just one layer underneath.

The jacket's breathability is down to its Proflex fabric – a pleasantly soft material that could do as a makeshift pillow in a pinch. As an 'active wear' jacket, it's designed to keep you comfortable when pedalling; I felt the chill when stood still and on prolonged descents.

Verdict

A great waterproof jacket for when the going gets rough. You'd expect that for £220 – which is a high price – but good waterproofs that perform well in the wet under exertion will always cost a pretty penny.

I was particularly impressed by the hood, which fitted snugly over my helmet, didn't block my peripheral vision and also stayed put when the wind gusts were strong. The elasticated cuffs were also good, being watertight and, compared to Velcro straps, faff free.

There are two zipped pockets: chest and rear. The chest pocket would make a great map pocket if it was a bit deeper. The vertical rear pocket is handy for snacks and the like. A drawcord cinches the waist and hood. I'd like the main zip to be two way, as I find that more comfortable for adjusting when in the saddle.

The colours for the men's jacket are a touch 'dRab' for my liking – blue, black or olive green – and there's little in the way of reflectivity. The women's jacket (review online at cyclinguk.org/rab-cinder-jacket-women) has a pleasant marmalade option, which I would have snapped up if available. ●

Sam Jones

Other options

ENDURA MT500 WATERPROOF JACKET II £239.99

Top jacket with a premium price by the Scottish brand. Good range of colours to suit all tastes, with ventilation controlled by pit-zips as well as fabric. endurasport.com



ALTURA ESKER WATERPROOF PACKABLE JACKET £110

A compact, reportedly robust jacket for all seasons and all types of riding – at a more wallet-friendly price. Also has a helmet-compatible hood. altura.co.uk

