

THE **BIG**  
BARGAIN  
BIKE TEST  
£690

WHAT  
MOUNTAIN BIKE  
HIGHLY  
COMMENDED  
★



## Diamondback Heist £690

### With development funds

limited, it's perhaps inevitable most lower priced mountain bikes are relatively generic, slightly dated cross country designs which fight for attention via componentry, not ride character. That means Diamond Back's Heist really stands out in the shop and – more importantly – on the trail.

The big rectangular frame tubes are definitely a clue to its tough, trail persona. Even if you don't notice the forks sit at the same relaxed angle as the DBR Myers All Mountain Hardtail, you'll certainly feel the confidence boosting, self centring effect on the steering. It'd feel even better if you bin the 80mm stem for something shorter and fit slimmer, clamp secured grips, but the 740mm Race Face handlebar adds authority and big brand kudos. The RockShox Recon fork is a much better quality unit than you'll normally find at this price,

complete with an easily adjustable air spring, consistently controlled damping, and even a handlebar lever to lock them out on climbs. While you don't get a through-axle like you might on a Suntour fork, the big bar and quality fork structure means you've still got plenty of precision to exploit the grip of the Schwalbe Nobby Nic 27.5x2.25in tyres. While they're basic by Shimano standards, the M396 brakes are much better controlled than most in this price category. The SLX and XT gearing is something you'd only normally find on more expensive bikes.

If you think this year's bike is a belter, you should see how the Heist looks for 2017. Unfortunately, we were a little too early to get a sample, but our insider mentions 1x11 Shimano XT, stealth dropper, and "extra bits" for a few quid more.

[www.diamondback.co.uk](http://www.diamondback.co.uk)



### THE HIGHS

✓ Proper technical trail hardtail geometry with controlled fork travel and the handling to match.

✓ Excellent component spec for the price.

### THE LOWS

X Stiff frame can be body and chain clattering on rougher trails.

X A through-axle fork and shorter stem would better suit the aggro character.

