

Ellsworth Epiphany

Cycling is like church—many attend, but few understand. For those that do, there are Ellsworths.

Sure there are a number of excellent bikes around: Titus, Turner, Santa Cruz, Specialized—too many to list—but an Ellsworth is the kind of bike that manages to speak to the deepest part of your soul, the one where that 8-year-old boy still lives in.

Aside from being selected as *Outside Magazine's* Mountain Bike of the Year, the Ellsworth Epiphany has been described as the “Holy Grail of trail bikes” by the industry media and is often referred to as the Rolls-Royce of cycling. It's one of very few bikes that are still handmade in the USA, and I have yet to meet a single owner that has a harsh word to say about it.

I knew that life would be made up of just one pointless corner after another until I got one, so about six months ago I bit the bullet. At P127,000 for the frame alone, it was worth far more than what I was willing to spend on a completely built bike but miraculously, a slightly used one came up at a far more reasonable price. Thank God, too—otherwise I would be writing this article in a body cast from the single father's ward of my local hospital.

So how does a 127-grand frame ride? Well, that would be like trying to explain color to a man blinded at birth, but I'll give it a try.

As one of the lightest 5.25-inch travel bikes in the world, the Epiphany is the perfect compromise for those seeking that elusive balance between climbing, cross country, and downhill. The long travel in the Fox suspension soaks up even the most wicked ruts, while the (ICT) Instant Center Tracking technology with Ellsworth's unique four-bar link suspension, makes sure that every precious pedal stroke counts, and power is driven straight to the rear wheel.

Poorly designed suspension frames rob the rider of power, absorbing energy on the down stroke, and loses a lot in translation; the patented ICT system with the pro pedal feature “locks out” the frame suspension during the downward pedal stroke, making sure all your effort remains tax-free.

The Epiphany uses a very relaxed geometry that reduces fatigue and does an amazing job of smoothening out even the roughest terrain. The ride is incredibly plush, which allows you to push harder without losing composure, no matter how rough the trail gets. It is confidence with a capital E.

The last thing I remember saying before handing over a thick wad of cash was, “Are you sure I will feel the difference?” Boy Simsuangco from Sabak Sports just smiled and said, “Those that ride know.”

Almost 5,000 kilometers later, it is one of the very, very few purchases I have made that has left absolutely no residue of regret, and each time I lock into my pedals, I feel like a Na'vi making a halo connection with their animal in Pandora.

There are few joys that are quite as pure as just carelessly swinging one leg over your bike and going out for a ride. Hemingway once wrote: “It is by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them. Thus you remember them as they actually are, while in a motor car only a high hill impresses you, and you have no such accurate remembrance of country you have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle.”

I say: If it's worth riding, it's worth riding an Ellsworth. - James Deakin

REPORT CARD	
Pogo points	A-
Build quality	A
Ease of use	A+
Value for money	A-
Overall performance	A

