



We've been talking dream bikes on The Paceline. One of the hallmarks of any dream bike is its gorgeous appearance. Nobody sinks three, four, five (or more) thousand dollars into a bike with all the eye-grabbling aplomb of faux wood paneling. Srsly. No, you make sure it's the right color and then you take care of it.

So I have to admit that after building up my DiNucci and taking it for a few rides I realized that I was terrified that its psychedelic paint job was vulnerable to flying bits of gravel. I won't say that I felt stupid, but there was a moment of, "Hey, I need to do something to protect this bike." And I wasn't considering *not* riding it on unpaved roads.

Then I remembered the [Effetto Mariposa Shelter](#). Shelter is a transparent composite plastic with an adhesive backing. Stick it on a vulnerable part of a bike (like a chainstay) and this will protect the finish while still allowing it to show through. I'd seen the stuff at Interbike (several times) and kept telling myself I ought to review it, but for reasons having to do with the number of hours in a day, I just hadn't gotten around to it. The DiNucci is the perfect bike to give it a test drive.



Shelter comes in pre-cut kits as well as rolls. Effetto Mariposa offers two versions of the kit—one for **road bikes** and another for **mountain bikes**. The big difference between the road and mountain kits is the thickness of the plastic. The road version is just .6mm thick, while the mountain version is 1.2mm thick, to offer more protection from flying debris. The two kits differ slightly in the number and shape of the pre-cut pieces, but both kits are built on a backbone of a downtube protector, a chainstay protector and a bunch of dots that can protect paint from damage caused by cable housing rub.

A kit goes for \$32.95, which strikes me as a bargain as protection against some of the obvious opportunities for finish damage. Also notable is the the mountain kit would be good for protecting especially thin and vulnerable sections of carbon fiber frames.



I've taken a few chain-slapping unpaved descents since installing this stuff and it has performed admirably, which is to say I wiped a bit of chain lube off the Shelter and saw no damage to the underlying paint. Not surprising, but definitely encouraging.

Application isn't hard, but be forewarned that this stuff is crazy sticky—sticky enough to stay put on a painted bike tube *ad infinitum*. It's helpful to just peel back a tiny bit of the backing and get one end located before trying to lay down the rest. If you put it on crooked, you're going to either need to live with that or buy another, or maybe be very, very patient, but I don't think this adhesive will flourish under repeated applications.

I've ridden the bike through some pretty dirty circumstances and washed it afterward. There's not a single corner or edge beginning to peel.

Final thought: Insurance for the cost of one good entree.