

Leaos embeds solar panels in a carbon e-bike frame

Italian premium brand Leaos believes solar power has a role to play in the development of electric bikes. The company is showing a prototype of the Solar, an e-bike that has solar panels embedded in the frame.



Leaos Solar

The Solar design isn't a huge stretch from Leaos bikes already on the market. Founded in 2012, **Leaos A4-703** makes urban pedelecs that are built around monocoque carbon fiber frame. The large surface area of the frame provides room for the built-in solar panels.

"We just want to show what is possible and where we should be going with sustainable products," Leaos CEO Armin Oberhollenzer said. "Our bikes are bought by opinion leaders and company bosses and we believe this kind of technology will be adopted from the top down towards a mass audience."

Based on tests around the Leaos headquarters in the sunny northern

Italian city of Bolzano, the company says riders can reach a range of about 20km (12 miles) a day on solar power alone. That assumes one side of the bike is in direct sunlight for about eight hours.

Leaos is offering pre sales of the custom-built Solar for more than €8,000 (\$8,740), so it's got a ways to go before it appeals to a wider audience. Oberhollenzer said Leaos is considering small manufacturing runs that should reduce the final price.

The Solar is certainly a more elegant way of marrying solar power with e-bikes than the more common DIY method of slapping big solar panels on a bike trailer or roof canopy. ■ RP

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