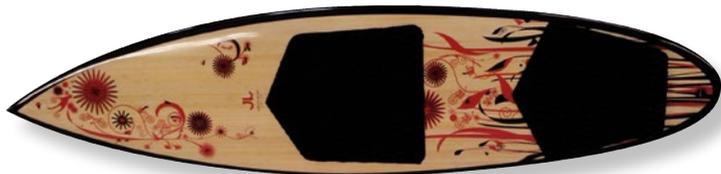


TESTED

£650 | JN OPIUM 5'11

WWW.JN-KITES.CO.UK



→ INTRODUCING:

As ever, **JN** spend a lot of time working on their products and ensuring that everything is just so before they bring kit onto the market. Getting the Opium out for the first time and you could see that that is the case here. It is a lovely looking board. And the carbon rails and the bamboo are evidence that this is no Sunday afternoon cruise machine either.

Tested AH

→ BUILD:

As is generally the case with production surf boards, everything begins with an EPS core. The Opium is then built up with a bamboo laminate, with extra reinforcements where you need them. The carbon wrap around the rails adds further strength and - I'm guessing here - have allowed them to go slightly thinner on the rest of the lay up. The fact is that this is a light board - not the lightest, but up there. The outline is fairly classis surf, although with a little more width in the nose, then the mid point only comes out to 18", so it's a pretty trim number. The Opium is then finished off with a diamond tail, as we're seeing on a few more boards this year. Fin wise and there are five boxes, ours was supplied with a quad set up and this was how we rode it.

→ PERFORMANCE:

With the wideish nose, the Opium gets going nice and easily and the first thing you notice is the ride: it is smooth. The flex pattern is really pleasant and there is

less of the 'ping' that you can get with Epoxy boards - the carbon rails certainly seem to help in this department. The quad set up gives a great 'on rails' feel to the Opium. In onshore waves you can really commit to your turns and slash it off the top without any fear of losing the rail (unless you've gone proper radical and slipped the fins out the back of the wave. Grrrrr). The diamond tail also makes for quite a loose, skatey feel, so all in all it's a really fun onshore option and will have you smashing around in the slop all day long. If you have the chance for some down the line riding, then the Opium is also happy to oblige in this department. Again the quad fins work to your favour and, as the rails are relatively soft, the extra grip with the fin sets up makes for a racy ride. Having coped with the speed, the Opium is also more than happy to oblige with some snappy turns, and holds its speed nicely throughout.

KS → VERDICT

Like a nice pair of trainers, sometimes you just look at surfboard and think: "me and you are going to get on." The Opium is a well-conceived and constructed board. The ride is smooth, the shape works well, and it is pretty much certain to leave you smiling after your wave fix (Fix? Opium? Geddit?!).