

**LAPTOP** | £967 from PCSpecialist [www.snipca.com/59545](http://www.snipca.com/59545)

## PCSpecialist 15.3in Lafité AI AMD

Home worker

It's getting harder to find a laptop with strong mid-range specifications for under £1,000, but British builder PCSpecialist has managed it with this release. By basing the system on an affordable AMD Ryzen 7 processor, it's managed to pack in luxuries like a high-resolution QHD+ screen and a 1TB SSD. And because the entire spec is flexible you can cut costs or spend more for faster performance.

“Faster running intensive programs than many laptops at this price”

It's available in many different specifications. To match our £967 model, choose '16GB PCS PR SODIMM DDR 5600MHz DIMM' in the Memory dropdown menu on PCSpecialist's site. You'll also need to choose '1TB KLEVV C925G' in the '1st M.2 SSD Drive' menu.

The Lafité is not the thinnest, lightest, or most refined machine we've ever tested, weighing a robust 1.7kg. But the aluminium shell and matching lid feel tough and the backlit keyboard gets plenty of space, stretching across the width of the deck. The layout is slightly off-centre to make space for the slimline numeric pad on the right, but the firm, consistent action and good-sized palm rests make for comfortable typing. The trackpad isn't anything fancy, but it's smooth with consistent tracking.

There's ample connectivity as well, starting with USB-C 3.2 Gen 2 and USB-C 4.0 ports as well as three USB-A ports,



two of which are high-speed USB 3.2 Gen 2. Then you get an HDMI 2.1 video output, a Gigabit Ethernet socket and a 3.5mm audio jack. Wi-Fi 6E has you covered for wireless networking, and there's also Bluetooth 5.2. That should be everything you need for a desktop setup if you're working from home.

The screen is another highlight, thanks to its crisp 2560x1600-pixel resolution and 500cd/m<sup>2</sup> maximum brightness level. The squarer 16:10 aspect ratio works brilliantly when you're switching between programs and windows, and though it lacks the wide colour range of some high-end laptops, photos and streamed video still look fantastic. The speakers could be more lively, but they produce audio with substance and a decent stereo spread.

Laptops have become less upgradeable in recent years, but the Lafité can accommodate more RAM or a second SSD once you unscrew and remove the bottom of the case. What's more, PCSpecialist offers it with a wide range of RAM, storage and processor options, rising to the 12-core AMD Ryzen AI 9 HX 370 chip.

Our test unit uses an unusual Ryzen 7 255 processor, with eight of AMD's Zen 4

cores running 16 threads at speeds of up to 5.1GHz. Paired with 16GB of RAM, this gives you greater speed when you're running intensive programs than you'll find in many laptops at this price. It's close in performance to our Buy It! favourite – MSI's Prestige 16 AI+ (see page 30) – and actually faster when it comes to 3D graphics, thanks to its superior AMD Radeon 780M GPU. And while this is not a dedicated gaming machine, it will run many modern games at low or medium settings at Full HD with a little FSR upscaling.

The big sticking point here is battery life, with the laptop lasting just seven hours 32 minutes in our video-playback test. That's significantly less than the 17 hours 45 minutes of the Prestige 16 AI+, which is a lot slimmer and lighter, despite its larger 16in screen. Because it's relatively hefty, the Lafité is not the best option if you're always on the go, but as a good-value laptop for home or office use, it's hard to beat.

**VERDICT** Not the perfect all-rounder, but with a bright screen, plenty of storage and impressive speeds, it's a great buy

★★★★★

**ALTERNATIVE** MSI Prestige 16 AI+

£1,299 Great performance from one of Intel's latest chips, plus a slick, lightweight chassis and superb OLED screen



### SPECIFICATIONS

8-core AMD Ryzen 7 255 processor • 16GB RAM • AMD Radeon 780M graphics • 15.3in 2560x1600-pixel IPS screen • 1TB SSD • 1x USB-C 4.0 port • 1x USB-C 3.2 Gen 2 port • 3x USB-A 3.2 ports • 1x HDMI 2.1 port • 1x Gigabit Ethernet port • 3.5mm audio jack • Wi-Fi 6E • Bluetooth 5.2 • Windows 11 Home • 18x342x238mm (HxWxD) • 1.7kg • Three-year warranty [www.snipca.com/59545](http://www.snipca.com/59545)