

To The Top

The Teye El Doblon Doubleneck

Growing up in the Netherlands with pirate stations Radio Veronica and Radio Luxemburg opened the eyes of guitar builder Teye to two of his greatest loves – flamenco music and the drive of electric guitar.

As an adult, Teye has played professionally both as a flamenco player (with Joe Ely) and on electric guitar. And until he had instruments built for him by Tony Zemaitis, he was never fully satisfied with his instruments. But that relationship led Teye to build his own “dream” guitar, combining the elements of a great electric with the responsiveness of a well-built nylon-string. This became the Teye Electric Gypsy guitar (reviewed in *VG*’s October ’07 issue).

Teye Guitars’ latest offering, the double-neck El Doblon, is part of the series Teye builds by hand. Made with a light mahogany body chambered for resonance and weight relief, the guitar’s bound mahogany necks are ordained with exceptional inlays.

One of the many striking features of the El Doblon is its bound, figured-maple top that recesses into its mahogany body. The top, with its three-tone sunburst finish, is stunning by itself, but attached to the cherry-stained mahogany body, it’s a true work of art.

Another artistic feature that catches the eye is the hand-tooled pewter used to make the pickups rings, headstock front-plate, bridge, tailpiece, and control plates; inspired by his beloved Zemaitis instruments, the workmanship is pure Teye. Close inspection reveals slight variances in the carving. Those, and the shading in the pewter, prove this is truly the work of a master craftsman, not some computer-driven machine.

Artwork aside, though, this is a working guitar, and the attention to detail continues with its electronics. In the six-string position, the control-knob

configuration includes dual Volume controls for the three pickups. The player can tweak between numerous combinations with just the Volume options, and there’s a master Tone control along with Teye’s proprietary Mood knob – a filter that rolls from a fatter, more Gibson-like vibe, to a leaner Fenderesque sound. There’s also a dedicated master Volume for the 12-string that can be used to produce balanced output between necks.

Rounding out the electronics are a five-way switch on the six-string side and a three-way on the 12-string. Both toggle between custom-wound Jason Lollar humbucking pickups.

One high point of the electronics is the ingenious neck switching; two pushbuttons allow for neck selection, and the top switch turns off the six-string, which allows switching necks while having a note ringing on the 12 while you transition to the six-string neck without that noticeable switched sound. Tres cool!

So, we’ve established that the El Doblon looks like it should be in an art gallery, and that its electronics are extremely well-conceived. But does it warrant the incredible sticker price? Well, any player lucky enough to try one will have to decide for themselves. Without a doubt, it packs a huge “Wow!” factor. And in terms of tone,

its resonance is impressive. Each neck responds like a separate top-shelf guitar. The six-string has an amazing warmth and depth to its sound that will work very well for everything from rock sounds to great jazz-like lines, and the Mood knob is truly a sonic secret weapon.

The 12-string side has its own magic as well – a neat combination of an SG-like attack partnered with a Rickenbacker vibe. The jangle quality, in particular, is super-cool.

For players wanting the ultimate combination of luxury and function, this guitar is worth considering. This thing truly is over the top. –

Sean O’Brian Smith



TEYE EL DOBLON

Price: \$19,000

Contact: teye-guitar.com.