

Tanglewood TW2-E

Today's acoustic market is flooded with guitars chasing the current boom in acoustic and the quality is being driven higher. There's little room for a rubbish offering these days and Tanglewood is determined to stay ahead, hence its new Winterleaf series. **Lewis Turner** reports.

The Tanglewood TW2-E acoustic guitar is part of the new Winterleaf Classic series, so new in fact that much of the line still says "coming soon" so we were lucky to get our hands on this one to give you a sneak peek. The Winterleaf series dwells in the lower end of the market and this is a tough proposition for a guitar company. Build quality and playability still need to be great, especially if aimed at beginner players as nothing will put a keen starter off more than a massive guitar with an action of doom. It's also an area of the market where the competition is phenomenal. But Tanglewood is a trusted brand for a good reason, so our hopes were high. I have owned some Tanglewoods in the past and have loved them, so I had a personal interest to see how the TW2-E stacks up to my fond and hopefully not too rose-tinted memory.

This model has a laminated mahogany top, finished in natural satin, giving it a classy, classic look. The back and sides on this model are also mahogany as is the neck.

This gives tone continuity throughout the guitar yielding plenty of bottom end and a very focused sound, you don't get the ping and pleasant highs that you would if you combined mahogany with a Sitka spruce top for example, but mahogany is a very good stable material to use and looks cool too. What's more it has become popular again in recent years as players have taken to its warmer, slightly darker sound.

The Winterleaf's Orchestra shape makes this a perfect size guitar. What you may lose from volume of a Dreadnought you make up with comfort and, as discussed above, playability is the main aim here. Despite its size, much volume and dynamic range was achievable on this instrument, depending on where you picked/strummed, making it a good guitar for big bold strums down to delicate picking and everything in between. The rosewood fingerboard and bridge were the perfect match to enhance the richness of sound. Small chrome die-cast tuners did a great job of keeping everything in tune, and were adjustable should they start to become

STAR RATING



PROS High quality construction • Comfortable and easy to play

CONS Limited tonal platform • Not the greatest pre-amplifier

music. Which is great news for guitarists as it means margins are being slashed while and as one of the pioneers of the 'huge bang for your buck' acoustic market, Tangle-orts on the latest model.

loose over time. The actual tuners were a little small for my liking, but that's just a personal taste issue. The neck is a very comfortable shape and actually felt more like an electric guitar profile. The action was good, leading to easy playability but with no issues of fret-buzz or dead spots, in fact this guitar had been set up well with the player in mind.

So far, as an acoustic guitar, everything is adding up to this being a fantastic entry-level instrument, offering great tone and playability, but this is an electro acoustic, and that has been the Achilles heel of many an instrument in the past. So how does the TW2-E perform once plugged in?

The pre-amp/pickup and EQ on this model are provided by a B-Band M450T, featuring a three band EQ and built in tuner which is excellent at this price range. As you might expect at for this kind of money, it isn't the greatest pre-amp on the market and a fair amount of the guitar's natural tone a resonance was lost when plugged in, but it wasn't the worst I have ever heard and will defiantly serve you well to begin with. We



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effortless playability • Hard case included • Lots for your money!

mp/pickup

[...>]

plugged straight into our PA system with the speakers quite close by, and I didn't have any feedback issues, even when I rolled the bass right up, which is a real plus. It's convenient to have these controls on board but if you wanted to capture this guitar's true tone I would be tempted to put a good quality mic in front of it for live and recorded work.

The TW2-E is a fine looking and excellent playing guitar. The tones available from it give the impression of a far more expensive instrument, as does the playability and set-

up. A quick tune-up straight out of the box and it was ready to go. Sure the pickup and pre-amp aren't great, but at this price you would be hard pushed to find much better. The simple fact is that this is a great guitar for the price and will encourage anyone who buys it to keep playing, and that can only be a good thing. Possibly the deal clincher for many will be that the guitar comes with good quality hard case despite its low price! The company's website says it ain't so but we are told by Tanglewood that this is an error



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and that the guitar definitely does ship with this nice case included. I'm happy to report that my soft spot for Tanglewood Guitars continues to get softer! **END**>

Tanglewood TW2-E

MSRP £299.95 US \$TBC

Made in: China

SHAPE: Orchestra

TOP: Mahogany

BACK: Mahogany

SIDES: Mahogany

NECK (MATERIAL): Mahogany

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood

BRIDGE: Rosewood

BINDING: None

SADDLE: Nubone, Compensating

NUT (WIDTH): Nubone (43mm)

SCALE LENGTH: 650mm

MACHINE HEADS: Small Chrome Die Cast

FINISH: Natural Satin

EQ: B-Band M450T

STRINGS: D'Addario EXP11