



ORTEGA Classical M20 CS



From their Custom Master Selection, will this Ortega inspire your inner Pachelbel? We think so . . .

Competing in our modern market place for a high quality made classical guitar is a tall order. This is particularly true when many options are now available at affordable prices. So what are some of the features which you may appreciate more fully from this top of the line guitar?

This company is not shy of innovating or using modern CNC tools to optimise their construction methodologies. As an example, among their product line they have offered maple fingerboards and use tooling to refine certain components. What are the results?

BUILD QUALITY

Anticipation runs high opening the black/purple crocodile skin effect arch top hard case and it does not disappoint. Apart from its sturdiness and general solid feel the OGCC1-DB case catches open and close with surety and the thick croco-effect handle is comfortable on a fair walk as it compresses comfortably under your grip. If bought independently of the guitar, the case retails at over 100 Euros, but it's supplied with this instrument. Further value for money to your purchase is included with a fittingly elegant brass plated effect hygrometer with clear display and for security you can lock your new possession away with the combination lock. Also, a small and refined inclusion of a simple Velcro neck strap, which lives across the neck brace, prevents the guitar falling out, should you accidentally tip over the opened case.

Unlike the laminate and less expensive models in the range, the Master Series offers all solid woods. For the top, German

spruce, Indian rosewood back and matching bridge, all of which are enveloped in a high gloss finish. The fingerboard in African ebony is lacquered at the edges and typically tight grained.

Tradition is honoured with a Spanish heel construction yet has been duly bevelled as it roundly tapers into back of the guitar thus reducing hard exposed wooden angles for the sound waves to contest with. The internal braces are shaped by CNC for consistency and the soundhole area is reinforced to improve structural integrity in this area of the top which takes much stress. Spruce has been used to fan brace the top and for the side struts while the back employs what appears to be cedar matching the neck wood

materials. The neck heel is one

piece of wood capped with rosewood and striped with a single black stringer. Nut width weighs in at a practical 52mm and string spacing at



the bridge is 58mm making tremolando repetitions executable with comfort.

The physical balance and poise of the guitar is comfortable when sat with it in a traditional position and alternatively across the knee. Body depth is 104mm at the lower bout. The machine heads are

not overbearingly heavy – they're a real joy to operate. It's actually pleasurable to tune the guitar because accurate results can be obtained so swiftly, highlighting one of the instrument's real premium

qualities. They're also detailed and decorative in gold plate with ebonised buttons and really look the part.



WOODS USED

This made in China classical from German brand, Ortega, uses German Spruce for its top. It has Indian rosewood for the back and sides, has a Spanish cedar neck with an ebony stripe running down it and an African ebony fingerboard home to 19 frets. See Ortega at the London Acoustic Guitar Show on stand C13.



Decorative gold plated tuners with ebonised buttons



Spanish cedar neck with an ebony stripe

SOUND QUALITY

The spruce produces a fast attack and the rosewood opens out this overall tone with more flowing characteristics and breadth of frequencies within its tonal range. The guitar is snappy and responsive, suitably broody and moody within its Phrygian home-

ground progressions. There is light and shade however with maturing trebles and rotund bottom end and at the same time a reasonable balance from string to string can be appreciated. This is a loud guitar in its own right and there are no violent extremes in volume differences between the strings. The bass side presents a mellowness and warmth. Here there's a liquidity within the cycling sustain which compliments the instrument's presence and offers a great partnership to the spruce's more alacritous personality.

The guitar's harmonics are pointed and focussed rather than open and blowing and despite a typically medium action at the

twelfth fret, intonation is quite forgiving at this register and more accurate still at the first frets as you may expect. The well profiled and tightly seated frets enhance a clear speaking voice with a compelling sensitivity to varying attack.

CONCLUSION

This is a smart purchase at this money with the solid tonewoods making leaps and strides above its laminated family members. Playability is good but it will take some time using the guitar to open out its fullest potential as the top is quite substantial in places. This will aid top stability and overall longevity. It's already producing good volume and

musical responsiveness to delicate through to fiery flamenco playing. Complexity of the spruce will mature as you grow with this charming and assertive performer.

Tom Christopher

ACOUSTIC TEST RESULTS

Pros: Affordability. Quality hard case. Great projection. Sensitivity to dynamics. Superb machine heads
Cons: Saddle seating could be more squarely fitted. Lacks overtone complexity

Overall: A well appointed guitar with a less traditional price tag making a convenient purchase option

ACOUSTIC RATING

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Build Quality | ★★★★☆ |
| Sound Quality | ★★★★☆ |
| Value for Money | ★★★★☆ |

5 Stars: Superb, almost faultless.
4 Stars: Excellent, hard to beat.
3 Stars: Good, covers all bases well.
2 or 1 Stars: Below average, poor.



ORTEGA Classical M20 CS

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Manufacturer: Ortega
Model: M20 CS
Retail Price: £1,345
Body Size: Classical
Made In: China
Top: German spruce
Back and Sides: Indian rosewood
Neck: Spanish cedar with ebony stripe
Fingerboard: African ebony
Bridge: Indian rosewood
Frets: 19
Tuners: Gold-plated with ebonoid buttons
Nut Width: 52mm
Scale Length: 650mm
On-board Electronics: No
Strings: High-quality nylon
Left-handers: N/A
Gig Bag / Case: Deluxe crocodile skin hard case

CONTACT DETAILS

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