



## Orange Tiny Terror head £299

Orange's first Chinese-made valve amp is a little stunner. Be prepared to want one by Chris Vinnicombe

A couple of months ago in issue 282 we encountered one of the loudest valve backlines on the planet in the shape of the monolithic 200-watt Orange Thunderverb. While it is undoubtedly a stunning piece of engineering, it's fair to say that for many gigging musicians the thought of transporting a full Orange stack without the help of at least one burly roadie is somewhat intimidating. Imagine, if you will, an Orange head that packs in all the juicy raunch that the company's amps are famous for, while managing to fit inside a gigbag most people would expect to contain nothing more than an SLR camera and a couple of rolls of film.

Orange technical director and resident amp guru Adrian Emsley has followed the launch of his most powerful valve guitar amp design with the most diminutive in the current catalogue. It's not the first time the company has dabbled in the low-wattage arena; 1 x 10 and 1 x 12 AD15 15-watt combos in the late nineties were joined by the limited edition AD5,



Small is beautiful: another class act from Orange

a five-watt hand-wired valve combo that has become a collector's item. Now for the first time, an Orange valve amplifier is being manufactured outside of the UK, although the design process remains 100 per cent home grown. The first 1,000 Tiny Terrors will be Korean

made, with production then moving to China with no change in components, spec or manufacturing standards. The bottom line is that there's no other way the \$299 retail price would be possible.

On opening the cardboard packaging in which the Tiny Terror arrives chez



★★★★★  
Guitarist  
CHOICE

ORANGE TINY TERROR	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

■ **WE LIKED** Pristine clean to filthy drive sounds of the highest quality; easily portable; great price

■ **WE DISLIKED** Nothing

Guitarist, we are confronted with a generously padded black nylon gigbag with a shoulder strap and embroidered Orange logo. An extra pocket provides room for mains and speaker leads and other accoutrements, while an opening in the top of the bag reveals the Tiny Terror's chromed carry-handle echoing the 'roll bars' on the full size heads. Unzipping the gigbag unveils one of the coolest looking and instantly desirable bits of kit that we've seen in a long time. With its white powder-coated finish, the aluminium chassis looks like a component from a funky retro-futurist hi-fi, while the quartet of valves that peak through the grille provide reassurance that it's far from being merely a kitsch practice amp.

Under the hood is Orange's first EL84-based circuit since the aforementioned AD series amplifiers. The Tiny Terror features a pair of EL84s in the output section, while the preamp utilises a pair of ECC83s. Far Eastern manufacture may be keeping the price tantalisingly low, but as far as we can tell there is no lack of quality; everything feels just as rugged as Orange's UK valve gear. The volume, tone and gain pots have a familiarly smooth action, while the space-saving three-position switch toggles the amp between off, standby and on and is as rugged as we'd expect. A second, two-position toggle flips between 15 and seven watts, lowering the plate voltage in pentode mode, rather than running



the EL84s in a triode or single-ended configuration. Around the back, a trio of 6.4mm speaker outputs facilitate the connection of a single 16- or eight-ohm cabinet, or a pair of eight-ohm cabs should you desire to be bold.

Before powering up and igniting that iconic orange jewel light, we hook the Tiny Terror up to the new Chinese-made Orange 1 x 12. The dimensions have been upped from those of the existing PPC112 cabinet, so that any of the full-size Orange heads fit perfectly

on top. Also, rather than a Vintage 30, a 100-watt Celestion G12K has been utilised to ensure that the 1 x 12 could happily be used with say, a Rockerverb 50, without any worries about speakers blowing. It makes for a compact, yet powerful mini-stack.

**SOUNDS:** This writer's main gigging and recording amplifier for the last few years has been an Orange AD30TC, and we were greeted with a very similar tonal range on firing up the Tiny Terror →

**ORANGE TINY TERROR**

**PRICE:** £299 (inc padded gig bag)  
**ORIGIN:** China  
**TYPE:** All-valve single channel guitar head  
**OUTPUT:** 7/15-watts switchable  
**VALVES:** Preamp: 2 x 12AX7/ECC83, Output: 2 x EL84/6BQ5  
**DIMENSIONS:** 305 (w) x 155 (h) x 135 mm (d)  
**WEIGHT (kg/lb):** 6/13.2  
**CHANNELS:** One two-stage channel balances compression as the gain is increased, resulting in gain levels approaching a four-stage channel when flat out  
**CONTROLS:** Gain, tone, volume, 7/15-watt power toggle switch  
**CONNECTIONS:** Two 8-ohm and one 16-ohm, 6.4mm speaker output jack sockets  
**FOOTSWITCH:** N/A  
**RANGE OPTIONS:** Chinese-made 1 x 12 birch ply cabinet equipped with 100-watt Celestion G12K driver (£189)  
**OMEC**  
**020 8905 2828**  
**www.orange-amps.com**

## ORANGE TINY TERROR HEAD £299

AMPS  CD TRACKS 4 & 5



### The rivals

Epiphone Valve Junior head	£109
Zvex Nano head	£325
Matamp First Lady Mono V head	£607

Low wattage valve amps have become more and more popular over the last few years, with players looking for the tonal benefits of power tube overdrive without the ear-splitting volumes associated with a 50- or 100-watt stack. The five-watt Epiphone Valve Junior combo was reviewed in issue 280, and the new head version is similarly old school, with just one volume control to worry about. The ZVex Nano head is a stompbox-sized miniature valve amp that is as quirky as you'd expect, kicking out just 0.5 watts, but it sounds simply ace in the studio. Matamp's First Lady is the priciest option here but is the latest incarnation of the C7 amplifier that wowed us back in issue 255.

### We'd have no qualms about taking this along as our only amplifier for a studio session, virtually regardless of genre

and 1 x 12 cabinet. Beginning with the chunky toggle switch flipped to seven-watt mode and the volume running high with the gain low, that lovely, foggy Orange clean sound is there in abundance; like a warmer, richer AC30. With a neck single-coil, Hendrix-style chordal embellishments have so much depth and harmonic complexity. Add a good outboard reverb unit and it's instant Albatross. Even on the seven-watt mode there's plenty of headroom, assuming you aren't competing with a very loud rhythm section.


If you are planning to gig this thing in anger then we reckon the 15-watt setting through a bigger cabinet would give you just the right stage volume, especially if you are the type of player

who gets their clean tones by backing off the guitar's volume, or who doesn't even use clean tones at all. Remember that not only is the relationship between wattage and perceived volume a complex, non-linear one, but also that the Tiny Terror flat out is capable of pushing out around 28-watts RMS. For those of you who require a more intricate, channel-switching set-up live, this is still going to be an incredibly tempting prospect. Perhaps the ultimate studio amp, the Tiny Terror allows you not only to utilise different cabinets to taste but also the lower sound pressure of the

our ears. The great thing is that the Tiny Terror isn't all about power valve saturation though; with the drive revved right up, even low volume levels yield a very useable tone that sounds great on tape. The seven-watt setting allows violin-like sustain all over the fretboard and allows musical feedback to bloom just like a cranked stack, only in a more controllable way and without the excruciating decibel ratings.

### Verdict

Emsley and Orange should be very pleased: the Tiny Terror has all the tonal prowess and identity of its bigger siblings in a package that you could easily take on the bus or tube to a gig, rehearsal or recording session. For just £299, you are getting an amp with the performance to compete with anything the US boutique market can offer.

Regardless of price, we really struggled to find fault with the Tiny Terror. Some might feel that just three controls and a variable power switch could be perceived to constitute a lack of features. However, when you hear the sheer scale and quality of the tones that this amplifier delivers, across a volume range that goes from bedroom studio quiet to pub gig loud, all that remains is to dig in and rock out. It's also worth remembering at this time of year that an amp head this small might even fit in a Christmas stocking. Are you listening, Santa? 

### Orange Tiny Terror

Guitarist RATING



A second toggle switch enables you to move between 15- and seven-watt output