

RASMUS GUTHRIE GOVAN £1,299
ELECTRICS



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOBY SESSIONS



Rasmus Guthrie Govan

£1,299

If it's a workhorse with some serious pedigree you're after, have a flutter on this GG. It's a Suhr bet... *by Ed Mitchell*

You might recall that back in issue 346 we had our socks blown off by a couple of Chinese-made Rasmus versions of John Suhr's Standard and Modern electrics. Well, as we reluctantly packed the guitars off back to the distributors we distinctly remember thinking aloud, "Wouldn't it be cool if John sorted out a Rasmus take on the US-built Guthrie Govan signature models?" As it turns out, the jaw-droppingly talented English guitarist was already way ahead of us.

"I always liked the idea of a more affordable version that captured the general spirit of the original Suhr GG guitars," Guthrie Govan tells *Guitarist*. "The whole concept made a lot of sense to me."

While it's closest in spirit and specification to the set-neck, all-mahogany Suhr Guthrie Govan SN model (£2,949), the new Rasmus shares the bolt-on neck construction of the maple-topped Suhr Guthrie Govan Signature Model (£2,999) and Antique Modern (£3,025) axes. You don't get the Tremol-No

device and blower switch (see issue 331's Suhr GG review to see what you're missing) featured on its US cousins. You do get the US-spec Gotoh 510 vibrato that swings both ways thanks to a recess routed in the guitar's top, however.

The direct-mounted (aka screwed to the body) US-made Suhr pickups include an SSH+ humbucker at the bridge; an SSV 'bucker loitering at the neck; and an ML Standard single-coil in the middle. The pickups are wired to a master volume, master tone and five-way selector switch. Position five on the switch is the neck humbucker on full; four is the middle pickup plus the neck humbucker's outside coil; position three activates the outside coils of both humbuckers; two is the single-coil and the bridge humbucker's inside coil; and one is bridge humbucker solo. Oh, and the push/pull tone control splits the coils on the neck pickup.

The Rasmus is supplied with a pro-quality gigbag and Elixir Nanoweb 0.010 to 0.046 gauge strings. Like the other Rasmus

models, Guthrie's guitars make the trip from China to the Suhr factory in Lake Elsinore, California for a fret dress on a Plek machine and final set-up before being shipped to dealers. According to Guthrie this attention to detail puts the Rasmus on a level playing field with his US guitars. "They feel pretty much identical," he says. "Much as you would expect, given that all the set-up and general tweaking is done in the same factory."

Sounds

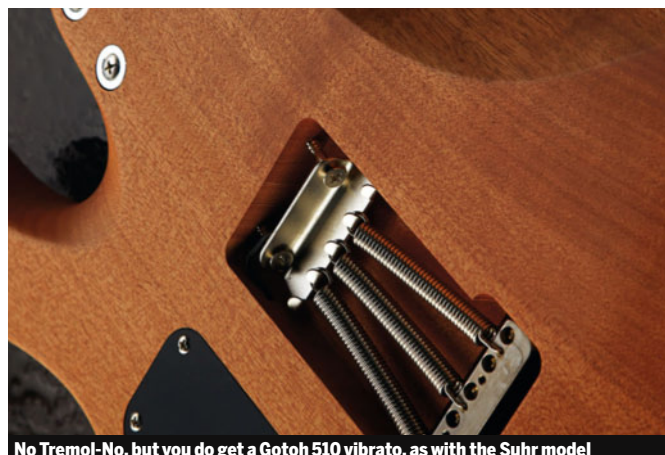
The bridge SSH+ humbucker is punchier than the last 10 minutes of a Rocky movie. Feed it some overdrive and it sounds a lot like a great Gibson SG, a

The Rivals

Like the Rasmus Guthrie Govan, the non-locking vibrato **Ibanez Prestige S Series SV5470** (£1,425) and locking Floyd Rose-equipped **Caparison Dellinger Pro** (£1,995) offer slim mahogany bodies, the HSH pickup layout and 24-fret bolt-on maple necks. On the other hand, if you're up for some old-school cool, make the acquaintance of the **Fender Dave Murray Stratocaster** (£1,719). Based on his heavily-modified '57 ex-Paul Kossoff Strat, the Iron Maiden guitarist's alder-bodied, 22-fret signature boasts a pair of DiMarzio humbuckers sandwiching a Fender single-coil.

guitar very close to Guthrie's heart. To help emphasise this guitar's tonal versatility, position three on the selector switch unveils a convincing Tele-type tone that works great for chicken pickin' and pedal

The Rasmus' bridge position Suhr SSH+ humbucker is punchier than the last 10 minutes of a Rocky movie



No Tremol-No, but you do get a Gotoh 510 vibrato, as with the Suhr model



The Suhr-made pickups are screwed directly into the mahogany body


steel licks. We also can't get enough of the glassy 'Jimi' tone of the split neck 'bucker. At every click of the switch the Rasmus just sounds so alive.

"Tonally, I think the mahogany on the Rasmus may be a little brighter than my US guitars," explains Guthrie. "It's not quite so honky, but arguably a little clearer and glassier for the clean tones. In terms of a hypothetical SG-to-Strat ratio, my US mahogany guitar might be 70:30. The Rasmus is more like 60:40."

We can't get enough of the glassy 'Jimi' tone of the coil-split neck humbucker. The Rasmus just sounds so alive

Verdict

"I'm not sure there is such a thing as a guitar for everyone," comments Guthrie, "but I think the Rasmus comes as close as anything else that's out there." We think Mr Govan has the nail hit square on its nut. Getting as many great sounds as possible

out of one guitar is precisely what the bloke whose signature is silk-screened on the back of the Rasmus headstock is all about. If a player of the calibre of Guthrie Govan can get what he needs from this fantastic guitar, the rest of us will be just fine. 



The Gotoh locking tuners are another example of the GG's high-spec approach

The Bottom Line

We like: Chameleon-like tone palette; flawless playability and build quality; neutral looks; price

We dislike: The Tremol-No and blower switch gizmos are absent...

Guitarist says: John Suhr may have cut some corners to bring the Rasmus in on budget but the crucial strands of DNA remain. This guitar delivers on every level



Rasmus Guthrie Govan

PRICE: £1,299 (inc gigbag)

ORIGIN: China

BODY: African mahogany

NECK: African mahogany, bolt-on

SCALE LENGTH: 648mm (25.5 inches)

NUT/WIDTH: Graph Tech Black Tusq/42mm

FINGERBOARD: Indonesian rosewood with dot inlays, 355mm (14-inch) radius

FRETS: 24, jumbo

HARDWARE: Chrome Gotoh 510 vibrato and locking tuners

STRING SPACING, BRIDGE: 52mm

ELECTRICS: Suhr SSH+ humbucker (bridge), Suhr ML Standard single-coil (middle), Suhr SSV humbucker (neck), master volume, master tone with push/pull coil-split for neck pickup and five-way pickup selector blade switch

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 3.3/7.2

OPTIONS: None

RANGE OPTIONS: Other models in the Suhr Rasmus range include the Standard 510 (£899)

FINISHES: Natural satin (as reviewed)

Guitarist
0800 456 1959

www.suhrguitars.com



Test results

Build quality	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★