

PRS SE TREMONTI CUSTOM

£729



PRS's UK-exclusive signature model is the full Tremonti with an altered bridge

THE original PRS SE Mark Tremonti was launched back in 2003 as a pure 'n' simple rock guitar with the added kudos of Mark Tremonti's seal of approval. While a great guitar, it's also a world away from its USA-made counterpart, which has since been upgraded with a thinner neck and an up-routed vibrato. Cash-strapped guitar players have been awaiting an updated SE version ever since, and our patience has finally paid off.

Sat next to an original SE Mark Tremonti, the Custom's plush vibe is much closer to a USA PRS. While the flamed maple is a veneer, it's lightly carved and sat on a maple

Bridge's *Blackbird* through a clean valve amp sounds fantastic, with the neck and middle positions providing plenty of low-end plummy and just the right hit of sparkle when you pop the higher strings. The bridge gives you more bite – perfect for clean leads that coax your amp into the early stages of crunch.

But with Mark Tremonti, playing clean is only half the story, and you'll soon ramp up the gain for some high-octane rock. While the SE 245 humbuckers are happy to handle anything you can throw at them, we do wonder if the more modern-sounding Vintage Bass/HFS combo of the SE Dave

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cap fixed to a thick mahogany body, so you get all the tonal benefits of a full-spec PRS without paying through the nose for it. The maple has even been masked off to create a natural binding effect, just like the USA version.

There's a vibrato this time around, too, complete with up-routing on the body. This means the vibrato gets a good amount of upward movement when you pull on the bar – not quite to Floyd Rose standards, but more than enough for some flashy tricks. You also get a wide thin neck profile to play on, which is much improved over the original when it comes to playing blistering lead lines up and down the immaculate fingerboard. Playability is superb and the setup faultless, as you'd expect.

It would have been a stretch to hope for USA-spec Tremonti pickups, but the pair of SE 245 humbuckers deputise ably. Fingerpicking the intro to Alter

Navarro (reviewed in issue 233) might have been a little closer to Tremonti's signature sound. As it stands these are still excellent pickups, certainly well suited to hammering home huge riffs with the thickness and warmth that single-cut fans adore.

The SE Tremonti Custom is one hell of a guitar, not just for Tremonti fans but anyone who's interested in a slick shreddable single-cut that doesn't resort to the excesses of design that can often plague more 'metal' guitars. It's one of the most compelling SE's we've played, and the fact that it's exclusive to Blighty (at least for the time being) just sweetens the deal.

Alun Lower

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★★★★
	SOUND QUALITY	★★★★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★
	BUILD QUALITY	★★★★
	PLAYABILITY	★★★★
OVERALL RATING	★★★★★	

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany with maple cap
NECK: Mahogany
FINGERBOARD: Rosewood
FRETS: 22
SCALE: 635mm (25")
PICKUPS: 2x PRS SE 245 humbuckers
CONTROLS: 2x volume, 2x tone, 3-way pickup selector
HARDWARE: Chrome
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Black Cherry (as shown), Grey Black
CONTACT: Headline Music
 01223 874301 www.prsguitars.com

BODY

THE thicker mahogany body and maple cap yield a more authentic single-cut vibe with sustain for days and a full, balanced tone

PICKUPS

A pair of SE 245 pickups lend the Tremonti Custom a wide palette of tones, but hardcore fans will be looking to swap them for something more aggressive

VIBRATO

NOT only do you get a PRS vibrato but also a specially up-routed cavity, allowing the bar to be pulled up for all manner of whammy trickery

