

SQUIER VINTAGE MODIFIED TELECASTER SPECIAL £334

This Tele with a twist has bags of retro style plus a little bit of 'kook' to spare

IF ALL guitars are girls, then this one is Zoëy Deschanel. Like Zoëy, Squier's Vintage Modified Telecaster Special is beautiful but kooky at the same time. And sure, the classic Tele look is there, but it's offset by modern sensibilities and a quirky, retro-styled twist. Classic Deschanel, in other words.

This is a guitar for players who appreciate the versatility and tank-like quality of the common or garden Telecaster, but pine for something a little outside of the usual. That's what the Vintage

"This Tele is something outside of the usual"

Modified series is all about, really. Most of us don't have pockets deep enough to stretch to anything of actual vintage these days, and finding something that has tone, genuine old-school charisma, and that won't fall apart after a light thrashing isn't exactly easy.

But consider this: familiar Tele curves; silky butterscotch blonde finish with a hint of the basswood grain underneath; 50s-style bridge and black pickguard combo guaranteed never to go out of fashion; and a neck ripped straight from a Squier Jazzmaster, chunky medium-jumbo frets and all. Squier has put the effort in here – this guitar is light, poised, ready for anything and built to last.

That pickup combination might raise a few eyebrows, though. The chunky singlecoil at the neck (Duncan Designed and also borrowed from a Jazzmaster)

jars a little at first, but you soon forget that when you plug in. Full-bodied, growly with a bit of well-deployed distortion and handy for art-rock noise, chugging riffs and much more besides. It's got a lot of balls for a singlecoil. Select the bridge pickup and it's back to business as usual Tele-wise, sharp and stinging in all the right places and pretty much perfect for anything from folk rock to funk. If you're considering buying one of these you're probably not planning on shredding your days away, but you could give it a bloody good go. Teles can do anything. True story.

The Jazzmaster headstock won't be to everyone's taste, and the machineheads look a bit on the cheap and cheerful side of things, but they hold their tuning well enough. The maple neck is a joy, comfortable and slick with well finished frets, and once you start experimenting with pickup combinations and amp settings you'll soon realise just how broad the range of tonal possibilities on offer here are.

It's often said that you can't go wrong with a Tele. They can cope with anything from post-punk to Peruvian pop, they look the part and most will outlive you. Squier's Vintage Modified Telecaster Special carries on that tradition, and at a price that will leave you feeling like you've robbed someone. It's the kooky girl at the party with the pretty smile and the faded Stones badge, and you won't regret taking it home for a second. The Deschanel formula – it works.

Rob Power

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

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Basswood
NECK: Maple, 4 bolt neck plate
FINGERBOARD: Maple
FRETS: 21 medium jumbo
SCALE: 25 1/2"
PICKUPS: Duncan Designed TE-101B (bridge), Duncan Designed JM-101N singlecoil Jazzmaster pickup with AlNiCo 5 Magnets (neck)
CONTROLS: Volume, tone and three-way pickup selector toggle switch
HARDWARE: Chrome, vintage-style three-barrel string-through-body bridge
LEFT-HANDED: No
FINISH: Butterscotch Blonde (shown), White Blonde
CONTACT: Fender UK 01342 331700
www.fender.com



1 HEADSTOCK

IF THE standard Tele headstock isn't for you, then maybe this Jazzmaster neck will float your boat

2 FINISH

FLAWLESS finishing is always great, especially when you get a tease at the grain below. This one's a sultry Butterscotch Blonde, but there's a White Blonde option too

3 PICKUP

IT MIGHT look a little out of place on first inspection, but this Duncan Designed Jazzmaster pickup opens up your tonal palette with style

