

THE GAS STATION



EPIPHONE DC PRO



£499

This reimagined cult double-cut promises heaps of tone on tap

We had all but forgotten about the Del Rey until Epiphone rocked up at NAMM 2019 and debuted the DC Pro in all its flame maple-veneered splendour. The DC Pro, says Epiphone, is a “modern take on the classic” Del Rey; and while classic is pushing it – if anything the Del Rey is/was a cult favourite, with a strong emphasis on cult – there is no arguing with the statement that, yes, this truly is a modern take on a time-honoured Gibson guitar design. And this is a seriously cool guitar that keeps some of its most newsworthy and distinguishing features hidden below the surface.

modern twist comes via a full two-octave fretboard in the CITES-compliant pau ferro, a trim belly cut to ease the ergonomics, and a few super-cool features accessible via the volume and tone pots.

Firstly, the DC Pro’s volume controls are wired with a treble bleed circuit, which means that you won’t be losing any of your tone’s high-end when you roll back the volume on the guitar. Given how invaluable our volume pots are when controlling gain on the fly, this is a really neat way to ensure your tone remains bright and consistent. It’s always on, always working, so you can forget about it. Where you, the guitar player, come in is on the volume

“THE PROBUCKERS SING WITH A SWEET, ORGANIC WARMTH”

Ostensibly, the DC Pro looks and feels like an asymmetrical double-cut riff on the Les Paul. If everyone wasn’t so darn litigious right now we’d maybe even say the DC Pro body has a PRS Custom 24 vibe, too, but let’s not go there. The DC Pro has a mahogany body with a nice, rounded Goldilocks C-profile mahogany neck glued to it. The maple veneer completes the look, affording the DC Pro a little premium Gibson pizzazz, while a fully-adjustable LockTone Tune-O-Matic bridge setup keeps things solid and honest. The DC Pro goes with a classic Gibson setup with a humbucker pairing in bridge and neck positions, a three-way selector in the shoulder, and two volume and two tone knobs for each pickup. The

controls, as each offers a push-pull coil-split function for their respective humbucker, allowing you to split the pickup and tease some snappy single-coil tones from the DC Pro. In 2019, a coil-split seems like a ubiquitous feature for production line, humbucker-equipped electrics but this would have been unheard of in 1995 when the Del Rey was launched. We shouldn’t take it for granted. And sure, while there is a little buzz and hum when the humbuckers are split, especially at high volume, to have such tones so easily on hand, and to have the capability to transform the voice of the instrument opens up so many options for your sound.

And, finally, there’s one other welcome surprise hidden in the

1 TUNERS

The DC Pro’s 18:1 ratio Grovers are a premium feature, befitting the King Louis XIV aesthetic of the sloping dove headstock with pearloid-abalone vine inlay

2 PICKUPS

Joe Bonamassa is a big fan of Epiphone’s PAF-style vintage ProBuckers. Here, the neck pickup is wound a little hotter so your leads cut through

3 FRETBOARD

On balance, 22 frets would have been plenty, but the upper-fret access is excellent and the pearloid block with abalone triangle inlay classes things up



AT A GLANCE

BODY: Mahogany w/ flame maple veneer

NECK: Mahogany, set

SCALE: 629mm (24.75")

FINGERBOARD: Pau ferro

FRETS: 24

PICKUPS:

1x ProBucker 2 humbucker (neck), 1x ProBucker 3 humbucker (bridge)

CONTROLS: Three-way pickup selector, 2x volume w/coil-splitting and treble bleed circuit, 2x tone w/push-pull phase circuit

HARDWARE: LockTone Tune-O-Matic bridge w/ stop-bar, grover 18:1 tuners, chrome

LEFT-HANDED: No

FINISH: Black Cherry [as reviewed], Faded Cherry Burst, Mojave Fade, Midnight Ebony, Wild Ivy

CASE: Optional

CONTACT: Gibson Epiphone.com





Key changes

How does the DC Pro compare to the Del Rey?

The Epiphone Del Rey was in production from 1995–2000. The DC Pro is not a million miles away from its design, but the Del Rey had a bolt-on neck and a heel that wasn't quite as accommodating for letting you noodle on up to the 24th fret. Indeed, where the DC Pro leaves almost the entire fretboard exposed, the Del Rey's cut on both treble and bass side comes around the 22nd fret. The Del Rey's high-output OBL humbuckers are a world away from the DC Pro's ProBuckers. Designed by Bill Lawrence, these were made under licence by Epiphone, featured a blade construction, and were wound to handle high-gain. The Del Rey had a coil-split, but only master volume and tone controls, with the three-way pickup selector between them.

DC Pro's circuitry, especially for Peter Green fans, and that's the push-pull phase reverse feature on the neck tone knob which comes in play when both humbuckers are selected. So if you want to go full *Albatross*, with a tone that's kind of wrong-sounding but nonetheless elastic and expressive – a sort of warped, chime-heavy tone that's really quite unique – it's as easy as pie.

The DC Pro's versatility is hard to beat. Country twang? Step this way. Neck pickup split for single-coil funk strut with clean tones and, heck, some auto-wah



The PAF-style vintage ProBuckers are wound to handle a fair whack of gain



for disco magic? The DC Pro has got you covered. But it's when the DC Pro is working its natural blues-rock tone that it reveals its sweet spot. The ProBuckers' design is inspired by Gibson's 1950s PAF humbucker, and they sing with a sweet, organic warmth. They'll handle a fair whack of gain but are at their best working the sonic territory somewhere between bar-room blues and classic rock. They'll even do jazz, too. The only thing to be mindful of is not to overcook the gain, whereupon the DC Pro loses a little definition, but, after all, vintage-voiced pickups

are referencing tones that were minted decades before metal.

There is no question that the DC Pro is a formidable update on the Del Rey. This is one classy performer, and another statement from Epiphone that it's serious about getting that wholesome Gibson DNA out to the masses.

Jonathan Horsley

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

ALSO TRY...

YAMAHA REVSTAR RS420

£390

The Revstar doesn't get enough love – its VH3 Alnico humbuckers sound great and the Dry Switch allows you to tease single-coil tones from them.



PRS SE STANDARD 24

£525

A hard-rockable perennial from PRS's affordable SE line, the South Korean-built Standard 24 expands on the double-cut mahogany body, dual humbucker template with a vibrato.



EPIPHONE G-400 PRO

£359

Okay, it's another Epiphone, but when we're talking double-cuts, none are more iconic. The G-400's Alnico Classic humbuckers are vintage-sounding and both have coil-taps.

