

Just 12lbs and weeny beyond belief, ZT's Lunchbox Acoustic amp packs in two channels with two-band EQ, reverb, an anti-feedback facility and more. Review by Jerry Uwins

ZT

Lunchbox Acoustic Combo

Launched in the States early last year but only just arrived here, ZT amps push the envelope for power-to-size ratio. Despite a maximum dimension of under 10", the twin-channel Lunchbox Acoustic is rated at a hefty 130W RMS, delivering the decibels via a single 6.5" speaker. The top-mounted control panel on the dinky yet chunky limed-oak-look cabinet is uncomplicated. The instrument and mic channels each have gain, two-band EQ and level for the digital plate-type reverb; the master section is simply volume and a three-position anti-feedback switch. The guitar jack input is on the top array, but space limitations mean that the mic channel's jack and XLR inputs, along with switchable 12V phantom powering for condenser mikes, are located on the rear panel.

There's plenty else besides hereabouts: an Aux In for, say, mp3 or CD player; an FX loop; a line-cum-headphone out with volume control, and an output for an external speaker. This last facility isn't as versatile as it first appears, as two speakers can't be run simultaneously - you have to switch for either internal or external, unlike on ZT's electric-guitar combos where an extension cab

The ZT Acoustic delivers a dynamic performance, but the anti-feedback is less successful



can supplement the main driver. Still, Acoustic's either/or scenario could prove useful for hooking up a larger speaker for a bigger image and more headroom.

SOUNDS

Not that these aspects seem to be a worry, in fact. The amp delivers a dynamic performance without choking, right up to maximum welly which, assuming your onboard system is reasonably gainful, is pretty darn loud and expansive for such a little fella. Channel gain and master volume do need to be turned up high, though, to exploit the available power. Tonally, the sound is quite neutral and natural, with a sensible range of treble and bass EQ and an intrinsically well-restrained midrange. Less obviously successful is the anti-feedback, which relies on three predetermined (unspecified) frequencies, rather than working on a seek-and-destroy basis. Sometimes it hits the spot, sometimes

it doesn't, and of course you have to be right on top of the amp - not likely to help - to select which setting might do the job.

VERDICT

When you see a Lunchbox Acoustic in the shop, don't be deceived by its practice-amp size and walk straight past. This is a proper, gigworthy, decent-sounding amp wherein ZT has, to an encouraging extent, managed to extract a quart out of a pint pot. Cheers! ☺

FINAL SCORE

Build Quality	18	20
Playability	16	20
Sound	18	20
Value for money	17	20
Vibe	15	20

TOTAL **84%**

Good for... Pocket-sized power; any players with back problems

Look elsewhere... multi-FX; more effective anti-feedback



FACTFILE

LUNCHBOX ACOUSTIC

Description: Twin-channel 130W solid-state acoustic combo with one 6.5" speaker. Made in China

Price: £389

Controls: Instrument Ch: jack in, Gain, Bass, Treble, reverb level. Mic Ch: jack and XLR ins and 12V phantom power switch (all on rear panel), Gain, Bass, Treble, Reverb level. Master: Volume, three-position Feedback Cut

Rear Panel: Headphone/Line Out with volume, 1/8" aux in, FX send and return, external speaker out, internal/external speaker switch, power on/off

Dimensions: 192mm x 249mm x 196mm

Weight: 5.4kg/11.9lb

Options: Extension cabinet (£94), carry bag (£35). Single-channel 120W RMS Lunchbox for electric guitar is £269

Contact: Aria UK
01483 238720
www.ariauk.com or
www.ztamplifiers.com

THE COMPETITION

AER ALPHA

Single-channel, two-input 40-watter barely bigger than the Lunchbox. Includes 8" twin-cone speaker, subsonic filter and digital reverb

RRP: £629

ROLAND AC60

Twin-channel, 2 x 30W stereo, 6.5" speakers. Features auto anti-feedback and digital chorus and reverb/delay

RRP: £458

VOX AGA70

Compact retro styling, 70W RMS via 6.5" speaker, two channels - one tube driven. Anti-feedback, digital reverb and chorus

RRP: £317