

Tanglewood TW28-CSN & TW45-H-B Guitars by Rob Tardik



The first of two guitars I tested was the new **Tanglewood Evolution Series TW28-CSN** with a list price of \$299.

First off, the facts: the Tanglewood TW28-CSN is a steel string flat top dreadnought-style guitar and is built around a solid cedar top, with bound mahogany sides (laminated) featuring scalloped bracing using the common Martin-developed X-bracing pattern. A glossy finish adorns the bound headstock – a nice, classy touch – while the top, back, sides, and mahogany neck feature a natural satin matte finish. The mahogany bridge, which features a compensated saddle for better intonation, compliments a smoothly-set dovetail neck joint and a set of chrome die-cast machine heads. The guitar features a 25 1/2" scale, and a 1 11/16th nut. It came strung with 12-gauge D'Addario EXP strings.

I personally like clean, understated style, and the TW28-CSN looked very attractive at first sight. Despite its low price, the Tanglewood's build quality is hard to fault. Fret ends lie flush against the bound-rosewood fretboard, and the precise dot inlays demonstrate build care. A quick peek and sniff (I love that new guitar smell!) inside revealed clean construction and kerfing, and no visible excess glue anywhere. In all, fit and finish is excellent. A faux tortoise shell pickguard is included as an option for protecting the solid top from heavy-handed strummers and beginner players. Cool!

This guitar is LOUD! Sitting in my upstairs studio, I began playing some fingerstyle jazz, then some quick single-note driven runs, then some plain old steady strumming to check the guitar's playing dynamics. The frequency range is quite even-voiced with a huge bottom end (but never too boomy), sharp highs (but not shrill), and a good midrange punch – with decent harmonic overtone complexity for, again, an instrument in the sub-\$300 range! Factory set-up is quite uniform, with only some buzz at the 12th-fret B, G, and D strings if I played a bit hard, but overall all notes were intonated and well-balanced all the way up. String action was perfect for easy playability, whether with pick or fingerstyle.

Now the second guitar arrived in a nice deluxe black arch-top hardshell case with an included sound-hole humidifier – smart thinking! This model is the new **Tanglewood TW45-H-B**, part of its Heri-

tage Series with a list price of \$1,299.99.

The facts: the Tanglewood TW45-H-B is a Mini Jumbo Cutaway style built around a solid AAA select cedar top with a nice tight grain and gorgeous solid mahogany back and sides with walnut binding to add to its definite higher-end look and feel. Here again, Tanglewood went with the classic scalloped X-bracing pattern. A glossy polyurethane finish covers the headstock and the top, back, and sides. The choice of wood for both the bound satin-finished neck and bridge are ebony, a personal favourite of mine. The bridge, again, is compensated for proper intonation and features complimentary Gold Vintage Style precision tuners. Real abalone adorns the Tanglewood logo on the headstock and attractive neck position markers, while a plastic tortoise shell pickguard finishes off this beauty! The guitar features a 25.59" scale, and 1 11/16th inch nut. It came strung with 12-gauge Elixir strings.

This guitar features a great preamp in the B-Band A5T transducer. It has a 12dB volume slider; 3-band EQ with presence for detailed tone sculpting, and a slick notch filter for taking away nasty errant frequencies during live performance; and a phase switch, low battery indicator, and a responsive built-in tuner that worked great on my gig. Again, I must mention that fit/finish work is exceptionally clean, with smoothly crowned frets and not a seam out of place. A glance inside revealed similarly fastidious craftsmanship: precisely-cut kerfing and no excess glue spots whatsoever.

In both plugged and unplugged situations that I tried through my stereo gigging rig, the TW45-H-B responded to all types of touch from light fingerstyle to heavier picking and strumming using standard tuning, and a few altered- and dropped-type tunings, with sweet, clear sound and ample tonal complexity. Action is medium and might be a tad high on the headstock end due to a taller nut, but I did not find it distracting to my playing, and notes were clear end to end. Plugged in, the frequency response is very even and balanced with focused bass, lush mids, and light brilliant trebles, with plenty of harmonic colour and excellent sustain and volume. Normally, cedar tops yield darker tones found on many classical-style guitars, but

this choice of top suits the guitar's personality and voice to a tee!

With a clear, complex voice, superb playability, and state-of-the-art onboard electronics, the Tanglewood TW45-H-B all-solid-wood guitar with deluxe preamp offers great value (for under \$1,300) for anyone who wants a handsome stage-ready acoustic instrument ready to take on any gig!

Rob Tardik is a guitarist, contemporary artist, teacher, and clinician and was just recently voted 2007 Established Performing Artist of the Year in Mississauga, ON. Rob is currently working on his second follow-up CD to Without Words and is also the inventor of the Music Stamp Series, a series of educational accessories for teachers/students and working musicians. For more information you can visit www.robhardik.com or e-mail Rob at rt@robhardik.com.

DISTRIBUTOR'S COMMENT

Though the TW28-CSN and TW45-H-B represent opposite ends of the Tanglewood Guitar Company UK price spectrum, they both embody the characteristics that have allowed this brand to emerge as the UK's best-selling acoustic guitar. Tanglewood offers a diverse collection of acoustic guitars, each a manifestation of some of the finest tone woods available and produced with our factories' meticulous attention to detail, then quality-checked and set up right here in Canada.

Erik Lind,
Musical Instruments Product Manager,
SF Marketing