

Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet

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Limited to just 250 pieces in Europe, will this affordable single-cut leave Chris Vinnicombe feelin' blue?





Although the Electromatics are no longer the most affordable Gretsch guitars – the sub-£400 Streamliners now hold that accolade – a series of updates in recent years has brought them closer to their ‘grown up’ stablemates in the Professional Collection.

Announced at back in July, you can get this limited edition G5435 in any colour you want as long as it’s Fairlane Blue – you won’t see this sucker for retro automobile colours complaining. Here, for the first time, a guitar in the Electromatic line features the Gretsch ‘V’ stop tailpiece, seen initially in the Streamliner series, but now in use on the Player’s Edition Broadkaster and in the Custom Shop. It’s a subtle nod to the Cadillac tailpiece on Penguins and Falcons and the V-cutouts on Gretsch-branded Bigsbys, but it’s a much more stable string anchor.



Elsewhere the spec is familiar, with a chambered 47mm deep basswood body, arched maple top and a maple neck with a 12-radius rosewood fingerboard. Gretsch describes the neck as a 'Standard U' but in reality a nicely-rounded, medium-slim profile that anyone can get to grips with.

The pickups are a pair of Blacktop Filter'Trons with Gretsch's customary master volume on the lower horn, while individual pickup volumes, a master tone and a three-way toggle switch complete the picture.



In Use

A common affliction among single-cut electrics at this end of the market is a woolly neck pickup that makes dialling in amps for the right balance across all pickup positions a challenge. Happily, that's not so here – the Blacktop 'Tron has plenty of clarity, bite and Gretsch twang, but this can be smoothed out nicely with a tone control that's useful through almost all of its range; another rarity at this end of the market.



Flip over to the bridge and there's fantastic edge that takes you straight to Nashville with all your faux pedal-steel licks – then wind up the crunch a little and it's the Stones, AC/DC and beyond. It's great at band volumes as well as at home and, because the upper reaches of the fretboard are in contact with the body (rather than floating like a traditional Duo Jet) the additional coupling and transmission of resonance means that there's a smoothness of response and sustain in higher registers that's more Les Paul-like.

The Blacktop Filter'Trons perform remarkably well, with a harmonic complexity and dynamic response that's rare at this level. Don't be fooled by the price, this is a serious guitar. Get one while you can.

KEY FEATURES

Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet

- **PRICE** £450
- **DESCRIPTION** Single-cutaway set neck electric guitar. Made in China

- **BUILD** Chambered basswood body with arched maple top, maple neck, 12-inch radius rosewood fingerboard with pearloid thumbnail inlays, 22 medium jumbo frets and a synthetic bone nut
- **HARDWARE** Adjusto-Matic bridge with 'V' stoptail, vintage-style tuners
- **ELECTRICS** 2x Blacktop Filter'Tron pickups, master volume, master tone, bridge pickup volume, neck pickup volume, 3-way toggle pickup selector switch
- **SCALE LENGTH** 24.6"/625mm
- **NECK WIDTH** 43.3mm at nut, 51.9mm at 12th fret
- **NECK DEPTH** 21.4mm at first fret, 23.5mm at 12th fret
- **STRING SPACING** 34.5mm at nut, 50.8mm at bridge
- **WEIGHT** 7.3lb/3.3kg
- **FINISH** Fairlane Blue gloss polyurethane only
- **CONTACT** Fender EMEA 01342 331700, www.gretschguitars.com

The **Guitar** Magazine VERDICT

- + Very neatly built, feels dependable
 - + Fabulous clarity and crunch that sounds heavenly with reverb
 - + Outrageously good value for money
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- Some still prefer the rollercoaster ride of a vintage-style Gretsch
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One upon a time, Gretsch addicts used to view Electromatics as modding platforms - we wouldn't change a thing about this guitar

9/10