

ACOUSTIC GUITARS: Under £500

Acoustic AWARDS

WINNER

Vintage

V1800

Reviewed July 18/6 Price: £449

This might be Vintage's first stab at a parlour-sized guitar, but it's an unqualified hit. With a 12-frets-to-the-body neck and a slotted headstock, it's a trad-style picker dressed to impress. The all-solid spruce/rosewood body is bound in maple with abalone top purfling; the fingerboard, also maple-edged, sports decorative markers. A great looker, then, and the finish – gloss on the body, satin on the neck – is flawless. Parlour neck profiles can be dauntingly broad, but this one is a comfort zone with a regular 43mm nut width. Fingerstyle is definitely on the agenda, however, thanks to a spacious higher-position span and decent string spacing at the bridge.

Eschewing the middly brashness of many parlours, the V1800 has a relatively pure, folk-like tone which may not be so blues-focused but is more versatile for tackling divergent playing styles. The guitar also punches above its weight for volume and projection, courtesy of the near-00-size body. You can buy into this compact genre more cheaply, but the Vintage's combination of quality and value is hard to resist.

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