

NEW GEAR

EXCLUSIVE

REMO KEY-TUNED DJEMBE



From £199 Djembes are great fun to play, but tackling rope-tuned models can sometimes be daunting. Charlie Price has a bash at Remo's key-tuned solution

This traditional African instrument, when tuned properly, can possess a myriad of beautiful tones and is exceptionally good fun to play! However, the usual rope-tuned 'Mali weave' method of tuning does take a lot of practise and might leave the uninitiated plain frustrated. Remo has addressed this tuning issue with the introduction of its contemporary drum key-tuned World Percussion Series djembes, and these models (as well as Remo's awesome Paulo Mattioli and Leon Mobley signature djembes) offer hope as infinitely easier-to-tune alternatives.

Remo sent us a formidable-looking 12" diameter Black Earth key-tuned model that stands 24" tall and, as Spinal Tap's Nigel Tufnel famously uttered, "How much more black could this be? The answer is none. None more black!"

This model is one of five sizes available, ranging from 10" to 18" diameters and between 24" to 28" in height, so there would certainly be a model to suit your needs. In addition to the slightly fibrous Black Earth finish you can also choose from five others, including an interesting Metalized Nickel-Silver finish, from the Remo catalogue.

Build

The drums are constructed entirely from man-made materials so, as a result, are vastly different from traditional solid wood drums with animal-skin heads. Remo's Advanced Acousticon shell is strong, much more weatherproof and environmentally friendly, whilst their new SkynDeep Black FiberSkyn Mondo drum head is a revelation. This head features a 'straight-wall' construction method, which elevates the head well away from the metal rim, mounting support rim and tuning lugs, allowing unhindered playing and giving a unique look to boot.

The SkynDeep head has an attractive black

marble finish that contrasts well with the minimal finish of the drum itself, and a rubber lip at the bottom of the drum protects the instrument well.

Hands on

This solidly-made drum exhibited beautiful bass tones that were lush, extremely full-sounding but well controlled. Mid-tones and finger strokes were easy to execute and sounded truly articulate when played in combination with the bass strokes. Closed and open slaps were truly a joy to play, possessing a voluminous consistency of tone that will definitely get your playing noticed.

Verdict

The djembe has become an increasingly popular instrument for the aspiring or professional percussionist, and has also proven to be the best choice for drum circles and schools, not to mention those solitary buskers on the London underground. In performance, this djembe simply slayed the current competition with an extremely wide array of beautiful sounds coupled with the kind of playability that is second to none. You would be extremely hard pressed to find a better model for the money. **R**

Rating ★★★★★



THE ADVANCED

Acousticon shell makes this djembe stronger than traditional models

ESSENTIAL SPEC



PRICE

10"x24"	£199
12"x24"	£232
14"x25"	£266.30
16"x27"	£308
18"x28"	£391.50

CONSTRUCTION METHOD

One-piece wrap

PLIES

Multi-ply (mismatched)

BEARING EDGE

Sharp angled

FINISHES

Black Earth, Metalized Nickel-Silver, plus colour/patterned finishes on request

HOOPS/RIMS

Steel

SHELL AVAILABILITY

Remo Advanced Acousticon

SUPPLIED HEADS

Remo SkynDeep FiberSkyn Mondo

CONTACT

Arbiter Group Ltd
Unit 3
Atlantic Business Centre
Stirling Way
Borehamwood
Hertfordshire WD6 2BT
0208 207 7890
Website
www.arbiter.co.uk
www.remo.com

Slaps possess a voluminous consistency of tone that will definitely get your playing noticed