



EPIPHONE DAVE GROHL DG-335

£1,249

The best of Foo, or a mere Pretender?
Grohl's long-awaited new signature model is here

Dave Grohl needs very little introduction. From having a hand (or both hands) in changing the course of rock as the drummer in Nirvana to steadily growing Foo Fighters from a collection of self-recorded songs into a stadium-filling band, he's become the poster boy for all things rock in mainstream culture. Rewind to 1995, and it's most likely you'll see him bouncing between Gibson Les Paul Standards and Customs, Explorers and SGs. Throw in the odd Firebird and RD, and it's clear that – spare a brief dalliance with an Ampeg Dan Armstrong, the clear-bodied Lucite guitar you can see in the *All My Life* video –

go-to since 2007. Originally released as a mega-expensive, Memphis-made guitar, the DG-335 has been issued and reissued a few times since it was first released, with used examples pushing towards £20,000 at times.

Well, now it's been issued as a production model under Gibson's Epiphone brand, giving real-world Foos fans the opportunity to bag the iconic colour and shape without having to sacrifice basic necessities like food and heating.

Spec-wise, it would've been easy to start putting lines through the spreadsheet to save money, but Epiphone has kept it pretty faithful. There's the double-bound, laminated body (maple and

1 TRINI LOPEZ-INSPIRED

Many of the guitar's visual features come from Grohl's love of the Gibson Trini Lopez signature model – there's the six-in-line headstock, diamond-shaped F-holes and split-diamond inlays.

2 GIBSON PICKUPS

These aren't soundalikes. They're the same US-made Gibson Burstbucker 2 and 3 found in the elusive Gibson version of this guitar.

3 THE COLOUR AND THE SHAPE

It's not nitrocellulose, but then we weren't expecting it to be. Regardless, Epiphone has aped the Pelham Blue hue of Grohl's distinctive on-stage guitar brilliantly.

AT A GLANCE

BODY: Laminated maple/poplar, with maple centre-block

NECK: Mahogany

SCALE: 24.75-inches

FINGERBOARD: Indian laurel

FRETS: 22

PICKUPS: Gibson USA Burstbucker 2 (neck) and 3 (bridge)

CONTROLS: Volume x2, tone x2, three-way selector switch

HARDWARE: Epiphone lockTone T-o-M bridge and tailpiece, Grover Mini-Rotomatic tuners, nickel

FINISH: Pelham Blue

CONTACT: Epiphone, www.epiphone.com



THE GUITAR THAT FOO FIGHTERS FANS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR

Grohl has almost exclusively favoured Gibson models.

His leanings towards slightly leftfield variations go back to before the conception of Foo Fighters though, thanks to a chance purchase of a 1967 Gibson Trini Lopez model while he was still drumming in Nirvana. This cherry red guitar would go on to play a massive part in the band's sound and history, with Grohl using it to track the bulk of his guitar parts on every one of the band's studio releases.

But as well as that, Grohl used it to inform much of the design of the Pelham Blue Gibson DG-335 signature model that's been his

popular rather than the Gibson's pure maple), one-piece mahogany neck, and a laurel – rather than rosewood – fingerboard. The elusive Trini Lopez features adopted by Grohl are all present, too: diamond-shaped F-holes, split-diamond inlays and the Firebird-style six-in-line headstock all combine with the Pelham Blue paint job to complete the picture.

But one of the biggest features is bubbling at the surface: the DG is packing Gibson USA pickups. In the neck position we get a Burstbucker 2, and the bridge humbucker is a Burstbucker 3 – the same pairing found in the USA version.





In Your Honor

The Epiphone DG-335 pays tribute to one of Grohl's most prized guitars

Gibson released two signature models for Trini Lopez: the Standard and the Deluxe. The latter was a fully-hollow electric based on the Barney Kessel shape with pronounced horns and wide cutaways. It's the Trini Lopez Standard, however, which found favour with Grohl, who first picked one up in 1992. Since then, Dave attributes much of the Foo Fighters' guitar sound to his Trini, which can be seen in the *Best Of You* video. In 2011, he told NME of his vintage guitar, "I didn't really know anything about Trini Lopez, the artist, when I bought it, but this f*cking thing... this is the sound of the Foo Fighters, this guitar. On every record I might use other guitars every now and then, but for the most part it's just this."

To the back of the headstock sits Grohl's signature, and the guitar comes in a sturdy hardcase, which, while devoid of any candy, does include a larger version of the same John Hancock on the outside.

Straight out of the box, the DG-335 cuts a familiar figure – the hue of the finish is spot on, and delivered flawlessly to boot. Acoustically, it's fairly vibrant and lively, which we think bodes well before plugging in.

The neck shape is also a little different to the norm, another 'win' in our book, rather than opting for an off-the-peg profile. Epiphone calls it an Elliptical C-shape, and it's quite different to the common SlimTaper profile – it's rounded, wider, chunkier and more of a palm-filler that strikes



a great balance for chord and rhythm playing at the lower frets, while giving us a great anchor for string bends and lead playing.

The tone is where the heart is, though, and those USA pickups earn their spot. Many of Grohl's tones come from a combination of Vox AC30 or Fender-style cleans, combined with Marshall and Mesa/Boogie for the dirt. Yes, we're talking relatively meat and potatoes for a lot of Foo Fighters sounds, but as we all know, getting the simple things right can present as much of a challenge as more complex sounds. Not here though, because with our modeller dialled in, we were able to quickly replicate some typical Grohl sounds using very little processing beyond amps, overdrive and delay.

But, it goes beyond Foo Fighters. This is essentially a rock-friendly ES-335, and it's got the firepower to cover everything from blues to indie to classic rock tones with ease.

As with every successful signature guitar, you're wearing your influences around your neck with the DG-335. For fans and tribute bands, it's the guitar we've been waiting for. For everyone else, it's Dave Grohl's guitar, and a fine one it is, too.

Stuart Williams

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★
	OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★

ALSO TRY...

EPIPHONE EMILY WOLFE SHERATON

£969

Emily Wolfe's signature semi-hollow delivers some of the DG's visual cues, namely the diamond-shaped soundholes, with a SlimTaper neck and Epiphone Alnico Classic PRO pickups.



GRETSCH STREAMLINER G2622

£549

This G2622 in Gunmetal gets you some way towards the DG vibe, at a lower price point. It's loaded with Broad'Tron BT-35 'buckers, with coil-splitting from the controls.



VINTAGE VSA500

£429

More traditional than the DG, this is a great budget semi that will see you right with Grover tuners and Wilkinson pickups. Plus, it's the same colour as Grohl's inspiration.

