



Aclam Guitars

CINNAMON DRIVE



TESTED BY DAVE HUNTER

ACLAM GUITARS OF Barcelona, Spain, has built a solid reputation in the European market these past few years and is now looking to make inroads into the U.S. The company's new Cinnamon Drive is a dual-stage overdrive that runs from low- to medium-gain distortion on its OD side, with further boost available from a second switch to achieve a volume or gain boost when needed. The pedal has controls for gain, tone and volume, while the boost side has them for boost and volume boost (i.e., gain and level). Switching is true bypass, and the pedal can be powered from a nine-volt battery or external center-negative supply. In addition, both status LEDs blink when the battery is getting low, a nice feature we'd like to see on other pedals.

Aclam's claim of capturing "the essence of the '60s and '70s tube amps when pushed to the max" might sound like standard fare for overdrive pedals, but the Cinnamon Drive certainly does things a little differently. The gain control passes signal through a soft-clipping stage in the early part of its

range, then to a hard-clipping stage when rolled up higher, making for a fairly dramatic range from just the one knob. There are two internal DIP switches to tweak bass content and a trimpot to adjust overall presence. And if you happen to have invested in one of Aclam's Smart Track pedalboards (see *GP's* Holiday 2018 issue), this pedal has its fasteners built right into channels on its sides, so no Velcro is necessary.

I tested the Cinnamon Drive with a Collings City Limits with humbuckers and a Fender Telecaster with single-coils, plugging them into a tweed Deluxe combo and the Clean and Lead channels of a Friedman Small Box head and 2x12 cab. The pedal proved to be one of the most dynamic and realistically "tubey" overdrive units that I've played in quite some time. My key takeaways are that the sound is balanced, natural and inspiring. The Cinnamon Drive retained the character of each guitar beautifully, while making both the Deluxe sound more "cranked tweed" and the Friedman sound more "cranked Marshall" than their unassisted

selves could. The pedal's boost enables an easy and perfectly voiced Lead mode when you want to cut through or jump to more high-octane gain, while its OD side sounded great through the entire range of the gain knob. With its touch-sensitive and authentic-sounding means of achieving tube-toned overdrive, the Cinnamon Drive is impressive enough to earn an Editors' Pick Award.

SPECIFICATIONS

Cinnamon Drive

CONTACT aclamguitars.cat

PRICE \$293 street

CONTROLS Gain, volume, tone, boost, volume boost.

Footswitches for bypass and boost

I/O ¼" input and output jacks, DC adapter jack

WEIGHT .91 lbs

BUILT Spain

KUDOS Excellent tube-style tone and feel. True bypass

CONCERNS None