

FIRST PLAY



GODIN G-TOUR
£1,749

WHAT IS IT? Canadian-made electric-guitar-shaped thinline nylon-string with top-mounted controls and 22-fret bolt-on neck

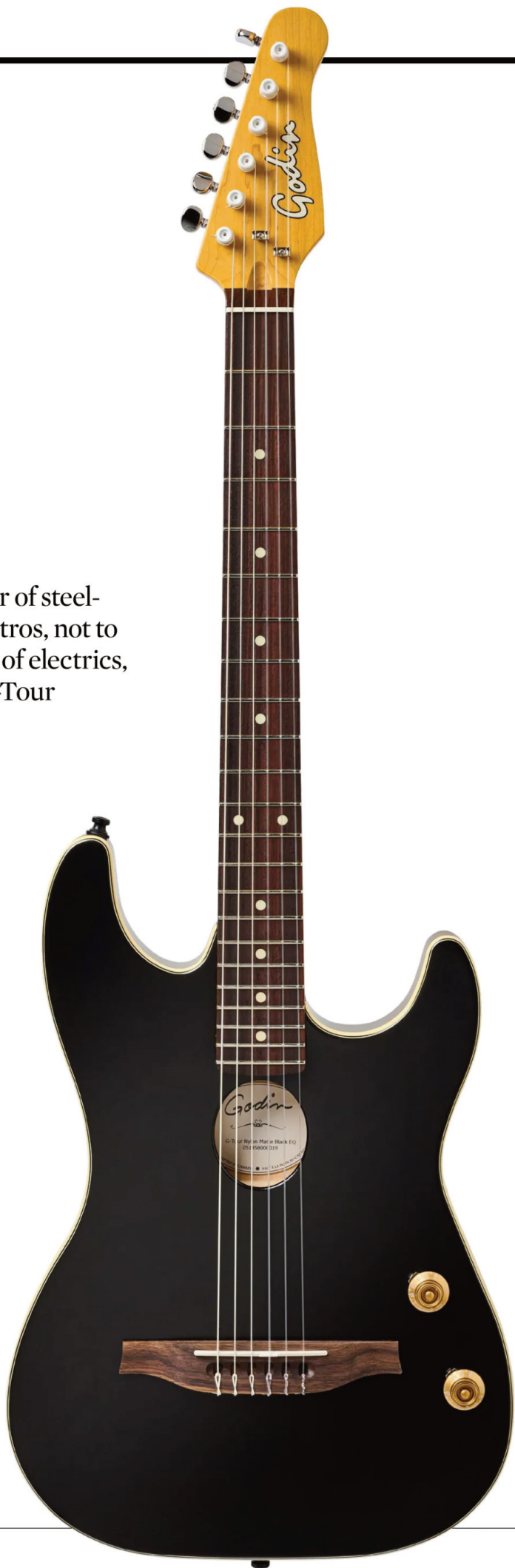
Mystery Tour

As Canada's foremost manufacturer of steel- and nylon-string acoustics and electros, not to mention an increasingly broad line of electrics, Godin combines its past into the G-Tour

Words Dave Burrluck **Photography** Olly Curtis

It's been a little quiet on the Godin front in recent months, but the Canadian giant announced a new UK distribution partner towards the end of 2023, so the expansive range will hopefully be more accessible. And when we say expansive, we mean it. Just under the Godin brand – other house brands include Norman, Seagull and Simon & Patrick – we have regular steel- and nylon-string acoustics and electros, stage-aimed 'crossover' models such as the long-running Multiacs, instruments for 'world' musicians, and an extensive range of hollow, thinline and solidbody electrics.

Before we get to look at some of the new-for-2024 models, we managed to get our hands on a pretty unique model that launched during the distribution changeover period: the G-Tour. This instrument certainly blurs the line between the electric guitar and the nylon-string electro-acoustic, the latest in a long line of stage-aimed nylon-strings that lie within Godin's range. The term 'crossover' is often used for such modernist excursions – for example, a nylon-string with a narrower neck, a cambered fingerboard and often a thinner-depth body – but the G-Tour is more a thinline, mainly hollow electric with nylon strings.







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1. The combination of the Fender-style headstock with the upright classical-style string posts is pretty unusual – likewise, the electric-like string trees and narrow nut width

2. The G-Tour is a very simple drive with its top-mounted volume and tone controls, both of which have a centre detent – a good starting point for both, especially the tone control

3. The necessary battery is found on the back cover plate, under which you can see the extensive chambering of the guitar's body



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Here, we have a matt black top finish with dark brown-stained back and sides, which have a more satin finish. The modern Stratocaster-inspired body has a solidbody depth of 47mm and employs a solid cedar lightly braced flat top with a silver leaf maple back that's heavily chambered and braced. The top-edge is bound; the small soundhole isn't. On the back is a pretty sizable ribcage contour.

The neck continues the classic electric vibe, screwing to the body via a neckplate that's shaped to match the contoured body heel. It's also a 22-fret neck with a standard Fender scale, only a couple of millimetres shy of the standard 650mm classical scale length, and has a 305mm (12-inch) fingerboard radius. Unusually, while the tuners appear to be regular die-cast types, they have plastic roller string posts as you'd find on a classical guitar, although there's no slotted headstock here and they stick up at right angles to the headstock face, which is rather odd. We even get a couple of electric-like string trees and a large open hole to access the dual-action truss rod. Aside from the nylon strings, the only other classical reference is the tie-block rosewood bridge with its compensated Graph Tech Tusq saddle.

The G-Tour will more likely appeal to the electric player who fancies some nylon sound using a pick

Unusual for a thinline electro, though not unique, are the top-mounted volume and tone controls with Gibson-style top-hat knobs and those rather archaic (and unnecessary) pointed position indicators. There's no information on the actual circuit used here, aside from the fact it's an under-saddle EPM Q-Discrete (also called a Quantum Discrete) system that's used by Godin on plenty of other models. There's a separate cavity for the battery that sits on the back cover plate over a rectangular hole, which is necessary to install the electronics. The output is on the side on a cleanly installed Electrosocket-type mounting. Removing that cover plate, you can peer inside and see the thin top bracing. To call the guitar chambered is understatement; the body routing is considerable, leaving a pretty thin back, and sides that aren't much thicker.



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HOW SMALL?

Necks are usually bigger on nylon-string guitars, but not here

Back in issue 489 we took a look at Córdoba's Stage, which is more 'crossover' in style and also features top-mounted controls for a simple drive. Despite the style, it's a very different-feeling guitar and also a lot less expensive than the Godin, streeting around £599. Let's compare the two more closely.

(Dimensions in mm, unless stated)

- Scale length**
- Neck width at nut**
- String spacing at nut**
- Neck width at 12th**
- String spacing at bridge**
- Neck depth at 1st fret**
- Neck depth at 9th fret**
- Body depth at rim**
- Body width**
- Weight (kg/lb)**

	CÓRDOBA STAGE	GODIN G-TOUR
	650	648
	48.9	42.35
	38.5	35
	59.67	52.1
	57.5	53
	20.4	20.9
	23.5	22.8
	41.7	47
	352	321
	2.32/5.1	2.26/4.97



Bolt-on neck nylon-strings are a rarity but do offer some adjustability should you need it. The double-cutaway design gives full access to the 22-fret fingerboard

Feel & Sounds

Not surprisingly, then, it's a very light guitar, weighing just 2.26kg (4.97lb), and for any electric player it feels very familiar played seated or strapped on. But if you're used to the wider neck, even of a contemporary 'crossover' nylon-string, you might struggle a little. The nut width is Fender electric-like at 42.35mm with a string spacing of an electric-standard 35mm, whereas the spacing at the bridge is even narrower than Fender-standard at 53mm (see Dimensions chart above). Our sample needed a truss rod tweak to straighten the slight forward bow, and with virtually zero relief the string height drops to approximately 2.23mm on the high E, measuring 2.55mm on the low E, which is very low for the style but seems to be the key. The neck itself has a slightly V'd profile, which suits thumb-around playing and is very different from a classical-style shape. Likewise, the medium-gauge and well-polished frets – plus, of course, we have easy access to the top of the fingerboard.

While there's not much acoustic volume, plugged into our AER we're met with a strong output, louder than either of our Yamaha and Córdoba nylon-electro references, in fact. There is a subtle centre detent on both the rotary controls, which

Apart from the strings, the tie-block bridge is the only reminder that this is a nylon-string guitar. Good to see a compensated Tusq saddle



GODIN G-TOUR

PRICE: £1,749 (inc gigbag)

ORIGIN: Canada

TYPE: Thinline double-cutaway, electro nylon-string

TOP: Solid cedar

BACK: Chambered silver leaf maple

NECK: Maple, bolt-on

SCALE LENGTH: 648mm (25.5")

TUNERS: Godin logo'd enclosed 14:1 ratio with plastic roller string posts

NUT: Graph Tech Tusq

FINGERBOARD: Rosewood, 305mm (12") radius with face and side dot markers

FRETS: 22, medium

BRIDGE: Rosewood w/ compensated Tusq saddle

ELECTRICS: Godin/EPM Q-Discrete under-saddle system with top-mounted volume and tone controls

OPTIONS: Also available in Arctik Blue (£1,829)

RANGE OPTIONS: Another recent launch is the more 'crossover'-style Multiac Mundial (£1,629) with dual-source pickup system and choice of 4 colours

LEFT-HANDERS: No

FINISH: Matte Black (as reviewed), Arctik Blue

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8/10

PROS Smart lightweight build; strong output; simple controls; well-voiced tone control; a nylon-string for the electric player

CONS Narrow neck and string spacing will be too cramped for some; seems expensive



seems a good place to start, rather than with both full up. The string-to-string output is pretty well balanced, and the G string slightly hot. Perhaps not surprisingly, the bass end isn't the biggest we've heard, but that's probably not a bad thing, especially for ensemble or band situations. The

The neck has a slightly V'd profile, which suits thumb-around playing and is very different from a classical-style shape

midrange is a little more forward than either of our references, but that's easy to balance outboard from either our AER's controls or an additional dedicated preamp. Just remember: aside from the tone control, you have no onboard EQ help. The tone control actually works very well, not least if you start in that centre mid-position where turning the control clockwise adds a treble lift that's not over-harsh, a little more flamenco perhaps, and turned anti-clockwise the response is more mellow with a usable character shift.

While it takes a little adjustment with the spacing and the nylon strings, the quality of sound here is very good. We used a Carl Martin Acoustic GiG multi-effect pedal, which is quite the perfect match, particularly with its tuner, EQ, compression and tap-tempo delay. Gradually, the G-Tour begins to make a lot of sense.

Verdict

Mixing up the styles as the G-Tour does is always going to create a polarising result. While the build is of a pretty high standard, the G-Tour will more likely appeal to the electric player who fancies some nylon sound, probably using a pick, and for that it's a simple drive and very fit for purpose. If you've already entered the nylon-string world via a classical guitar or a more modern 'crossover', however, you simply might find the electric-like neck width and string spacing way too cramped. But, of course, Godin has plenty of options with nylon-electro models that have wider necks and more expansive dual-source pickups and EQ to choose from. It's not a cheap date, either, but you can't help applauding Godin for trying something a little different – something the company has done plenty of times over the years. **G**