

## **Fret-King Elise Custom with Vintage Vibrato**

*If you love the vibe of a semi-hollow but want something a bit more adventurous than the usual suspects, the Fret-King Elise Custom might be our next crush. With a chambered body, offset styling, and a clever pickup configuration — including a P90 and a vintage-voiced humbucker — this one covers a lot of tonal ground. Throw in the Wilkinson vibrato and signature Fret-King mojo, and you've got a guitar that's as unique as it is versatile. **Nick Jennison** tells more.*

**THE** Fret-King Elise Custom with Vintage Vibrato is one of those guitars that catches your attention with its looks, then keeps you hooked with its thoughtful design. It's a semi-hollow with vintage character, modern wiring, and a few clever tweaks that make it feel refreshingly individual in a world of familiar silhouettes.

The Elise isn't trying to be another ES-style clone. Its offset body shape gives it a slightly more aggressive edge, and the carved maple top paired with a mahogany back and center block gives you that perfect blend of resonance and feedback control. The gloss cherry finish ties it all together with a classic, high-end feel. ▶

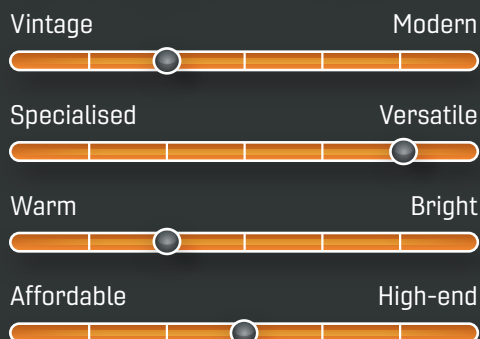




## Fret-King Elise Custom with Vintage Vibrato

**MSRP:** (UK) £1,099 | (US) \$N/A

### The Breakdown



### For fans of

- » Maximum tonal versatility
- » Classy semi-hollow looks
- » Vintage tremolo shimmers

For more information, please visit:

**[jhs.co.uk/collections/fret-king-guitars](https://jhs.co.uk/collections/fret-king-guitars)**



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The mahogany neck is slim and fast — comfortably in that 60s-style carve zone — and it's topped with a bound rosewood board and low-profile vintage frets. They may not be ideal for players who live for big bends on jumbo wire, but for expressive, articulate playing, they suit the guitar's voice perfectly. Combined with a contoured heel and the offset lower horn, upper fret access is genuinely impressive for a semi-hollow.

Visually, the headstock leans into Fret-King's own identity with a six-a-side "rake" design that feels right at home on this guitar. It's functional too, offering straight string pull — a detail that matters when you're using a vibrato.

Speaking of which, the Wilkinson locking roller bridge and VW vintage vibrato setup is one of the Elise's most interesting features. The roller bridge eliminates friction and keeps tuning stable, while the vibrato unit adds a soft shimmer and a subtle metallic air to the guitar's tone. It's not a dive-bomber, and it's not trying to be — but it adds something musical and distinct to both clean and driven playing.

The electronics are where this guitar really shines. Fret-King's custom-wound 55 humbuckers sound warm, articulate, and full

of character. But it's the switching options that set things apart. A push-push tone control flips the pickups out of phase in the middle position, delivering that unmistakable Peter Green-style hollow tone. And the Vari-Coil — Fret-King's take on a continuously variable coil-split — lets you blend between full humbucker and single-coil with precision. Want just a touch more brightness? Roll it back a notch. Want full single-coil clarity? Keep going. It's a brilliantly simple, endlessly usable feature that adds real versatility without any tonal compromise.

From clean jazz runs to raunchy slide lines, the Elise handles a surprising range of styles. Jazz tones feel open and airy, especially with the Vari-Coil rolled halfway down. Blues players will love the out-of-phase middle setting, which responds beautifully to touch and dynamics. The bridge pickup with some gain delivers a classic rock grind that can shift from barky to jangly in seconds, depending on how you set the Vari-Coil. While it's not aimed at high-gain metal, it can still handle saturated lead tones with surprising clarity and sustain — especially with a little delay and compression.

Out of the box, the setup leans a little conservative — around 1.9mm action on the treble side — which gives it a bit of stiffness, ▶





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but also makes it ideal for slide. If you prefer a lower action, the bridge can easily be adjusted thanks to its locking design.

In short, the Elise Custom with Vintage Vibrato feels like a guitar built by people who actually play guitars. It's vintage-inspired but not stuck in the past, offering tones that are classic, flexible, and deeply musical. The Vari-Coil and phase switch alone make it a standout in its category —

not just cool features for the sake of it, but tools that genuinely expand what the guitar can do.

If you're looking for something that sits somewhere between traditional semi-hollow tone and forward-thinking versatility, the Elise Custom more than earns its place in the conversation. It's classy, clever, and full of character — a real player's guitar.

