

Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet

Written by P.G Fitzgerald

Originally in the March 2018 Songsmith

When I was in Los Angeles, coming back from my Mexico, Belize & Guatemala trip, I had a day to further explore the city with a customised private tour as I'd seen a lot of the city back in 2006, when I'd last been there.

Apart from the fantastic Natural History Museum, I also checked out the Guitar Shops on Sunset Boulevard – a customised tour was way cheaper than a taxi! I went to Guitar Center, which was amazing, then Neely Guitars, where I liked the locally made Titan guitars, but it was at Sam Ash Music where I met the Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet. Only available in Fairlane Blue and on special at \$450 US I had to have a play.



Going through a Fender Twin the sound was amazing. Both snappy like a Tele, but smooth also like a jazz guitar. The salesman must have been able to read the look of surprise on my face. He told me the guitar had top line Blacktop Filter'Tron pickups like the best Gretsch guitars. Why so cheap then? It's made in China, but under the Gretsch name so they can get a brilliant job done for less.

Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition features the Gretsch 'V' stop tailpiece, which gives it a very distinctive feel and tone that's different to other Gretsch guitars, Gibsons and Fenders. Extremely unique, but very, very pleasing.

The body has a chambered 47mm deep basswood body with a arched maple top. You can feel the resonance when you play un-amplified – very warm.

The neck is maple with a rosewood fingerboard which Gretsch describes as a 'Standard U' but is more a nicely-rounded, medium-slim profile that's very playable and makes you want to play it. It also features pearloid thumbnail inlays, 22 medium jumbo frets and a synthetic bone nut.

The guitar's controls are a Gretsch's customary master volume on the lower horn, with individual pickup volumes, a master tone and a three-way toggle switch. The controls have the customary "G" for Gretsch on them.

I don't care that much for the stats as it's the playability and tone that's important to me and this has it in bucketfuls. I knew I had a great guitar for a great price, but then I read in the February "The Guitar Magazine", a British publication a review of the Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet and they raved about it!



To quote from the article: *"A common affliction among single-cut electrics at this end of the market is a woolly neck pickup that makes dialling in amps for the right balance across all pickup positions a challenge. Happily, that's not so here – the Blacktop 'Tron has plenty of clarity, bite and Gretsch twang, but this can be smoothed out nicely with a tone control that's useful through almost all of its range; another rarity at this end of the market."*



Flip over to the bridge and there's fantastic edge that takes you straight to Nashville with all your faux pedal-steel licks – then wind up the crunch a little and it's the Stones, AC/DC and beyond. It's great at band volumes as well as at home and, because the upper reaches of the fretboard are in contact with the body (rather than floating like a traditional Duo Jet) the additional coupling and transmission of resonance means that there's a smoothness of response and sustain in higher registers that's more Les Paul-like."

*The Blacktop Filter'Trons perform remarkably well, with a harmonic complexity and dynamic response that's rare at this level. **Don't be fooled by the price, this is a serious guitar. Get one while you can.**"*

The article went on to give the Gretsch G5435 Limited Edition Electromatic Pro Jet a 9 out of 10 for their Guitar Awards. You can read the full article online at <http://www.theguitarmagazine.com/gear/electric-guitars/gretsch-g5435-pro-jet/>

I've since heard that there were only 250 for the whole of Europe, so I didn't expect many to be in Australia. But I've seen them online for sale in stores between \$750 - \$799, so they are around, but they are limited. I just typed in "gretsch g5435 limited edition electromatic pro jet fairlane blue", but limited the Search to Australia.

If you've thought of playing an electric, after years of acoustic use, it could open up a whole new area of songwriting for you. It's not expensive and I can tell you it's a great guitar for the price. It could even be a second guitar if your first is a Gibson, or a Fender. One way, or another I'd check it out like I did and be ready to be pleasantly surprised. In fact, I think I'll get mine again right now!

