

The Deluxe body might tip its hat to the Telecaster, but it's a totally different playing experience, with better access and more contouring...

These DiMarzio mini humbuckers might look kitsch – but their amplified tone will chew your ears off...

Bolted to the body by Rahbek's unique join, the mahogany neck is a superb player, promoting slippery slides and extravagant bends...

£1,800

The Deluxe we're testing here features a Gotoh 1088 bridge, but it's possible to change this depending on your playing style...

# RAHBK COS-T DELUXE

DENMARK: LAND OF BACON, PASTRIES AND... GUITARS? TG INVESTIGATES THE LATEST RAHBK ELECTRIC WORDS: HENRY YATES

## THE SIZZLE

Peter Rahbek is a great Dane. No, we don't mean one of those slobbering great dogs. Quite literally, we mean that he's Danish (he currently lives and works in Copenhagen) and he's done great things to put his country on the map. Over the past 11 years, while his countrymen were slicing bacon and squeezing icing onto pastries, Peter has led Rahbek Guitars from strength to strength; establishing his company's reputation around the world and bolstering his product line to suit every player.

11 years may have passed, but the founding principle of Rahbek remains the same. In a word, it's all about quality. Whether you choose the Standard, the Classic or the Cos-T model, all of Peter's instruments start out as chunks of the world's finest trees, before being crafted by hand in his Copenhagen factory, and finally emerging as some of the most beautiful and interesting guitars we've ever seen. So when Peter offered to send us his latest creation (the stunning Cos-T Deluxe) we didn't need asking twice

## WHAT'S IT GOT?

When it comes to Peter's guitars, the spec list is built on shifting sands. Perhaps the coolest thing about Rahbek is that you can customise anything apart from the basic body shape, and often without having to cough up any extra cashola. Theoretically then, you could tweak the Deluxe's body material, neck profile, hardware, fretboard radius and finish – or even specify a dirty great Floyd Rose tremolo and different pickups. Although we'd dearly love to, TG doesn't have time to open that can of worms, so we're testing the stock-as-a-rock version of the Deluxe.

Having said that, would you change anything about this model? Cosmetically, it's

one of the coolest guitars to pass through the office; not unlike a Fender Telecaster in its basic outline, but with a drop top, more contouring around the back and a finish that evokes the Les Paul Goldtop. In terms of tonewoods, we're in classic rock heaven, with a mahogany body and maple cap, plus a mahogany neck bolted on via one of the tidiest joins you've seen in your life. The hardware is both functional and faintly saucy, with a Gotoh 1088 bridge, Kluson-style Gotoh tuners and stainless steel frets. It's nice to have options and everything, but this combination makes most sense to us.

Mind you, there is one thing TG wasn't totally sure about. Mini humbuckers ain't exactly the most butch pickups in the world,

***"It takes a truly special guitar to stick in TG's memory. The Rahbek is that guitar..."***

and we couldn't help thinking that a pair of soapbars would go down better than these DiMarzios. Let's be mature about this, and reserve our judgement until we plug in...

## BUILT TO LAST?

Check out the factory shots on the Rahbek website ([www.rahbekguitars.com](http://www.rahbekguitars.com)) and you'll see the blood, sweat and tears that are required to bring each of Peter's instruments to life. With that in mind, it's no surprise that the Deluxe is flawless except for a slight wood discolouration round the back (and frankly we think this lends it even more character). Of course, if you actually want your guitars to look like shit, Peter also offers a cosmetic ageing option, but it'll still be perfect underneath.

## HANDS ON

Sometimes, a guitar just feels right hanging around your neck. We can't speak for anyone else, but to these fingers, the Cos-T Deluxe

felt as close to physical perfection as we've experienced in this price bracket. The weight was superb and the distribution better still. The cocobolo fingerboard seemed to go on forever (with brilliant access thanks to the bolted join), but feels equally natural when you're fingering basic chords as when you're noodling. Bends were a breeze; stretches were simple and painless. We didn't think the trem unit was as responsive as some, but like we say, it'll only take a phone call to get that whipped off and replaced with a floating item.

We also have an apology to make. Having questioned their masculinity earlier, TG must now admit that these DiMarzio mini humbuckers have more balls than any of us. The juicy vintage tone just seems to fit perfectly with the cosmetics; full and rolling when clean, and as big as any PAF when you crank it. And as is so often the case, the middle pickup setting is probably the most interesting, with a fantastic tone that finds the defining middle ground between power and clarity.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

In much the same way that Gene Simmons probably doesn't remember all the girls he's shagged, so it now takes a truly special guitar to stick in TG's memory. The Rahbek Cos-T Deluxe is that guitar. In a sea of identikit dross, this is an unforgettable player, an absolute cracker in the tone stakes, and surely the model that will put Rahbek on the international map. Remember the name...

**FOR:** Great sense of individuality; sumptuous tone; great feel  
**AGAINST:** Expensive, and the wobble stick isn't the most responsive

## WHO'S IT FOR?

Serious guitarists who don't mind melting the VISA card in their search for perfection

## INFORMATION

**ORIGIN:** Denmark  
**BODY:** Mahogany, with maple top  
**NECK:** Mahogany, bolt-on  
**FINGERBOARD:** Cocobolo, with dot inlays  
**PICKUPS:** 2 x DiMarzio mini humbuckers  
**HARDWARE:** Gotoh Kluson-style tuners, Gotoh 1088 bridge  
**FRETS:** 22  
**SCALE:** 25"  
**COLOURS:** Too many to mention...  
**LEFT-HANDERS:** Yes (on request)  
**CASE:** Yes (hard case included)  
**CONTACT:** DFD 01869 346519  
**WEB:** [www.rahbekguitars.com](http://www.rahbekguitars.com)

## ALTERNATIVELY

Fender Toronado GT HH – £499  
Fender Standard US Tele – £849  
James Trussart Steelcaster – £2200

TG RATING:

