

Audio

The music
lovers' guide
to the best hi-fi

Audio news

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Meridian 586 DVD player



Denon tuner

New at the top of Denon's tuner range is the TU-425RD, an AM/FM design equipped with the full range of RDS facilities, including Programme Name and Type, Clock Time, Traffic information and Radio Text (which can display details of the programme being received - Radio 3, for example, transmits details such as the name of the work, artist and so on). The tuner has 40 presets grouped in five sets of eight stations and also has auto tuning on FM. Switchable and programmable IF bandwidth and RF Attenuation are provided, the former helping avoid interference with weak signals in 'busy' areas and the latter beneficial in converse situations where the signal strength is too high. The tuner can also be operated by remote control from a Denon "IS" amplifier or receiver handset. The TU-425R costs £199.99. Hayden Laboratories Limited, Chiltern Hill, Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire SL9 9UG Telephone 01753 888447 Fax 01753 880109.



Goldring pickup

New from Goldring is the Excel VX moving-coil pickup cartridge, an improved version of the Excel and Excel GS (reviewed in January 1989 and February 1992 respectively). It features a low-mass "PH" diamond, shaped to mimic the cutting stylus as far as is practicable and said to provide an optimized transient response. The coils are of fine silver wire wound on a low-mass armature using a symmetrical winding technique. The result is claimed to be an MC cartridge offering "exceptionally high standards of sonic performance and reliability" and proving the "ultimate in detail retrieval". The Excel VX costs £495. Goldring Products Limited, 8 Greyfriars Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 7DX Telephone 01284 701101 Fax 01284 750040.



Meridian DVD

Meridian has announced the launch of its high-end DVD player, the 586 (pictured left - see also the Las Vegas CES report on page 122). We have reported on this upcoming technology as it has been defined over the past couple of years. In essence DVD (Digital Video Disc, or perhaps more helpfully Digital Versatile Disc) looks like a CD but the information on it can be stored on more than one layer and is packed at a much higher density, giving it a capacity at least seven times greater. This offers the prospect of many new applications, DVD Video being the first. The use of high quality MPEG2 digital video compression techniques permits full-length motion pictures to be held on a single disc. The picture quality is close to the original and far better than VHS or LaserDisc. DVD also brings new audio possibilities, including Dolby AC-3, MPEG Surround, DTS for 5.1-channel movie sound, MPEG Extended for 7.1-channel and extended PCM formats including 16-, 20- and 24-bit 48 and 96kHz sampling rates.

Best thought of as a DVD transport, the 586 offers two-channel analogue sound output (normally encoded in Dolby Surround) for direct connection to a television receiver or to an analogue surround sound processor such as the Meridian 541. It also provides IEC1937 digital audio outputs to convey PCM, AC-3, MPEG Surround and DTS audio streams to an outboard processor such as the 565. Multiple video outputs are provided, including Composite, S and Component, RGB or SCART (according to region). All DVD players offer 4:3 and 16:9 picture aspect ratios and Letterbox/Panscan versions are available for NTSC and PAL. The 586 is fully compatible with other 500 series components and includes the 500 Comms bus allowing operation from the MSR system handset.

Further descriptive, technical and pricing details from Meridian Audio Limited, Stonehill, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 6ED Telephone 01480 434334 Fax 01480 459934.