

BUGERA 333, 6260 AND 412-H CABINET \$899, \$799, \$699
GUITAR AMPS





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Tube amplification for under a grand? We search long and hard for the catch *by Kris Petersen*

There is no denying that there is nothing sonically sweeter than a valve amp fully cranked. For years guitarists have been forced to choose a tone based on budget. Enter Bugera. A new line of tube amps that you can take home for under a grand.

Bugera have drawn inspiration from some of the world's most popular rock amps to create the 6262 and the 333. Both heads are 120 watt driven by 4 6L6's that can be changed for EL34's if you so desire. The 6262 uses five 12AX7's in the preamp while the 333 uses four. These amps are the real deal. Great construction, features, aesthetics and most importantly sound.

Sounds

We began our test with the 333 head and 412-H cab. We used a collection of rock guitars to put the amp thru its paces including an Ibanez prestige, Peavey Wolfgang, Les Paul Custom and our old Tele fitted with a Di-Marzio fast track fitted in the bridge.

Starting with the clean channel, we found the tone to be rich and bright. With the mids backed off a little and increased presence, we heard a beautiful glassy tone. This was especially sweet with the Ibanez in middle pickup position with a chorus and delay inline. By changing to the bridge pickup (and killing the effects) we had a harsher in your face tone that

could possibly offend. The neck pickup position really opened up the clean channel on this rig. We backed off the presence and added a little reverb and got a great clean blues tone that kept us soloing for way longer than legally aloud.

In crunch mode, we were able to get a variety of sounds ranging from overdriven to full distortion that was almost the same as channel 2. The standout feature on this channel was the range of the EQ's. Boosting or cutting the mids had a massive impact on the sound and opened up a whole world of sonic variety.

Channel 2 is the 'meat and potatoes channel of this head. In our tests, we set our main overdriven tone on this channel and then boosted it for solos with channel 3 and cut to clean with channel 1. For gain applications,

Channel 2 would defiantly be the place to start building your tone. The EQ range on this channel sounded awesome. Although all the EQ's on the 333 are rated with a 15db boost / cut on each and every EQ dial, the combination of gain saturation with the EQ on this channel really made it stand out. We were able to draw an infinite number of tones just by subtle adjustments in the settings. We were able to get everything from sparkling overdriven clean tones to tight, fat and saturated sounds.

The lead channel (Channel 3) gave us infinite tube gain. While the EQ's reacted in a similar fashion to Channel 2, the overall sound of the channel was fatter. This channel was perfect for those complex sweeping, tapping and whammy bar lines. This channel

defiantly lives in the high gain area. You are able to back the gain off to get subtler overdriven tones but with the gain cranked up, it came to life.

Like the 333, the 6260 is a definite rock amp. This head has 2 channels with a crunch option on the Channel 1. With 5 tubes in the preamp stage, the tones are fat and warm.

The Clean channel (channel 1) gives a fat fully sound. Backing off the gain and using the 'bright' switch we were able to get a passable sound for cleaner applications. The bright switch gives a 6db boost at 2K and adds a nice sparkle to the sound. But let's keep it real. This amp wasn't built for clean.

Instigating the crunch option on the clean channel gave us a range of distortion tones. Starting with the gain around 2 we had a light overdrive and by progressively turning it up, we ended up with a saturated, rich distortion that is sonically the same as channel 2. The advantage of this distortion range would become apparent if you use one sound for both rhythm and solos. You will be able to match the distortion level on channel 1 and 2 then set separate volumes for them both at the power amp stage.

Channel 2 (lead) is built for rock solos. The gain control doesn't allow this channel to convincingly enter 'clean' territory. But you are more than able to pull out the classic 'Brown Sound' here. The beauty of the distortion on the 6260 is that although it is heavily saturated, there is clear definition in the notes and chords. Using the Wolfgang's neck pickup, we were treated to a full bodied warm tone perfect for those shredding riffs and feature lines that you don't want to cut through with too



The front panel features classy dark red gas cooker controls on a gold anodised chassis

much aggression. On the other hand, in the neck pick up position we were able to really rock out while still enjoying the clarity of notes that you get on either of the two channels regardless of the levels of gain.

Both channels of the 6260 share the same EQ. By having the head built in this manner, the range of tones are extremely limited for live applications. If you are looking for an amp that will be able to give you a fat overdriven tone then switch to a transparent clean sound, the 6260 is not for you. This amp will suit players who want a rocking primary sound, with a slight variation for solos.

Although this amp gave us great distortion tones, we also found that plugging our guitars into the low input drastically affected the tone. The Tele worked great in this input as we were able to drive the amp harder and with increased gain while still maintaining a level of control over the guitar. The High gain input is said to be 6db louder than the low. We were pretty sure that using the low gain input as a control mechanism wasn't what Bugera had in mind but hey, whatever works.

Verdict

Bugera has produced two great tube heads in a price bracket that make them extremely attractive to both the beginner and professional gigging musician.

Overall tonal versatility isn't one of their strong points. These amps are for modern rockers and give you a great range of tones in the field of high gain. If you're looking for a sound other than that, you probably won't find it here, but it would be a good idea to grab your favorite Ibanez and go give them a trashing. Bugera has made entered the amplifier market with a bang. We're looking forward to see what's in the pipeline for these guys. 🇺🇸

The bottom line

We like: Solid tube tones across both heads. EQ range on the 333.

We dislike: Needed to really push the presence to get clarity in notes.

Guitarist says: A set of great tube amps at an affordable price.



The front panel features classy dark red gas cooker controls on a gold anodised chassis



Bugera 412H-BK

Price: \$699.99
Origin: China
Speakers: 4 x 12" Bugera vintage series 12G50J4
Power rating: 200watts mono, 100 stereo
Impedance: 16 ohms / 8 ohms
Dimensions: 762 x 762 x 382
Weight: 38.6 kg

Test results

Build quality ★★★★★
Features ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Value for money ★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



Bugera 333

Price: \$899.99
Origin: China
Type: Valve
Output: 120W
Channels: 3 Clean, Crunch and lead
Controls: Master volume, presence & reverb. Channel Volume, treble, mid and bass. Gain on the crunch and lead channels.
Footswitch: Bugera FSB104 (included)
Additional Features: Built in reverb, pre amp out, FX loop
Options: None
Range Options: 333XL Head (addition of a noise gate), 333 & 333XL 2 x 12 combo



Test results

Build quality ★★★★★
Features ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Value for money ★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



Bugera 6260

Price: \$799.99
Origin: China
Type: Valve
Output: 120W
Channels: 2 Channel. Clean / Crunch and lead
Controls: Master volume, presence & reverb. Channel Volume, treble, mid and bass. Gain on the clean and lead channels.
Footswitch: Bugera FSB104A (included)
Additional Features: Built in reverb, pre amp out, FX loop
Options: None
Range Options: 6260-212, 6262, 6262-212

Test results

Build quality ★★★★★
Features ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Value for money ★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

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