



HOME THEATER REVIEW, DECEMBER 12, 2011

“EASE OF SETUP, AESTHETICS AND MOST IMPORTANTLY – SHEER AUDIO BLISS”

“I’m new to the Audio Pro Series and the last time I tried wireless speakers, it was an unmitigated disaster. As such, our editor thought I was the perfect candidate to review these speakers and find out if we’ve made strides in wireless technology.” “All of the speakers in the LV line are wireless and, aesthetically speaking, they’re simply gorgeous. They all come wrapped in your choice of white or black leather – cool eh?”

“The LV3 measures 29.5 inches tall by just less than nine inches in width and depth. I found the size to be perfect, not only for blending seamlessly and unobtrusively into a room, but also for keeping a wife happy.”

“With the grill (which mounts on the top of the speaker) removed, it looks a bit like something out of Star Wars, and I mean that in the most complimentary way. These speakers are aesthetically stunning, grills on or off. This aspect of their design also increases their versatility; you can go grills on to make them blend into your room, or remove them to make them stand out and create a conversation piece.”



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“THE HOOKUP

The packaging on the LV3s was top-notch and definitely in line with what you’d expect at this price point. As is typical with higher end audio, they came packaged in a box within a box. Inside the box, everything was laid out intuitively and with adequate spacing between the accessories. Audio Pro even goes so far as to include a pair of white gloves, so as not to mar the fine leather wrap. And trust me when I tell you, once you’ve handled a pair of these speakers, you don’t want to take any risks in marking them up. By the time you finish reading this review, you’re going to be sick of me talking about how gorgeous these speakers are – mea culpa. The other thing I’ll rave about is the simplicity of setup; you simply plug each speaker into a power outlet, pop the included USB dongle into your computer (Mac or PC) and then enjoy brilliant CD quality sound. Trust me when I tell you – it’s that simple. ”

“Further adding to their versatility, the LV3s can play music from other sources such as iPods, cell phones, network music players, etc. You simply plug your source into the USB dongle via its 3.5 mm input and you’re in business.”

“Another cool feature is a bass EQ, which allows you to adjust the bass from +10 to -10 dB to compensate for placement in the room. I had each speaker positioned about 10 inches out from the wall and neither were near a corner, so I left the bass levels alone, but every room is different, so it’s nice to have the option.”

“Another cool thing to note about the functionality of the LV3 is the option to add an infinite number of speakers in your home. Each speaker has three different “House Codes,” or channels, which allows you to have three different zones with three different volume levels.”

PERFORMANCE

First up was an MP3 of Elton John’s “The Wasteland” from his album Songs From the West Coast (Universal Music). I played the track through iTunes and while there was certainly a tradeoff in sound quality from what I’d heard with the lossless files during burn-in, I was still impressed with the sound quality. While the MP3 track was less detailed and a bit lacking in the low end, I was still able to enjoy the track as the LV3s managed to deftly convey the soulfulness of Elton’s voice. While imaging was decent on this track, it turned out to be exemplary with CD (and above) quality tracks. The bass response was solid, belying the size of the speakers.

Next up was an Apple Lossless file in the form of The Black Eyed Peas “Imma Be,” from their album The E.N.D. (Interscope). First of all, I love this song; secondarily, it’s a great way to test the low-end mettle of a loudspeaker. While bass response was impressive, especially for a speaker of this size, true bass junkies might want to consider adding the LVSUB. That said, I don’t think the LV3s were designed with bass junkies in mind; more along the lines of discerning audiophiles who are also concerned with how their gear looks in a room. But back to the track: on the upside the soundstage was impressive and wide. Imaging was also solid, with Fergie’s voice floating in space in the middle of the room. Despite their somewhat diminutive size, the LV3s did an impressive job of filling my large listening room with detailed, engaging sound.

For the next round I cued up another Apple Lossless file in the form of Nat King Cole’s “Stay as Sweet as You Are” from the remastered version of his album Love is the Thing (Capitol). This is a popular track amongst audiophiles as it’s well recorded and gives you a good idea of



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how a speaker handles vocals. What I can tell you is that the LV3s are revealing, in the best sense of the word." " While lost in the magic of how this track sounded, I again had to remind myself that I was listening to wireless speakers. This is actually the first set of wireless speakers I've ever heard that were able to convey that "You are there" experience that all audiophiles crave.

Moving on, I cued up Paul McCartney's "Band on the Run" (Hear Music), which I downloaded as a 96/24 FLAC file from HDTracks. While the LV3s max out at 48 kHz, I was curious if there would be an audible improvement with a high-resolution file. There was. Put simply, the sound quality of the title track was stunning, with every layer of the instrumentation brilliantly rendered."

"(Listening to "Soul Meets Body" by Death Cab for Cutie) The vocals were coming from all around me and it was impossible to "place" the speakers in the room. The LV3s exhibited really solid low-end authority and the resolution was jaw dropping. The thought I kept having was that these are some really well engineered speakers, and well worth \$2,000. I was already sold on the LV3s from my earlier listening sessions, but listening to "Soul Meets Body" is where the experience became transformative. You can try to call me out for being overly effusive in my praise of the LV3s, but I'd like you to audition them before doing so."

CONCLUSION

"The most striking audible characteristic of these speakers has to be their resolution. Comparing them to my Bowers & Wilkins 685s I thought the LV3s exhibited more control, better low-end thump and higher resolution."

You know it's funny, I've jumped through a lot of hoops both physically and financially to build a great sounding home theater. We're talking about carefully matching source components, choosing the right cabling and trying out all kinds of speaker placement options. Not to mention the headache of trying to get high resolution 96/24 files to play through my system. DACs that lack 96/24 capability through their USB input anyone? Having been through all of this, I'm astonished at how quickly and easily the LV3s can provide stunningly good sound quality.

"As a reminder, I ran MP3s, lossless and high res files through the LV3s in order to test their versatility. They passed this and every other test I threw at them with flying colors – ease of setup, aesthetics and most importantly – sheer audio bliss. They're also, due to the leather wrapping and cool design, a great conversation piece. I had plenty of people come in and out of my listening room while auditioning the LV3s and every one of them asked about the speakers. The bottom line is that whether you have a rickety old computer on its last leg, or one of those shiny new Macs, your music is going to sound nothing short of spectacular through the LV3s and it's going to take you about 10 minutes to set them up."

Read the full review here:

<http://hometheaterreview.com/audio-pro-living-lv3-wireless-loudspeakers-reviewed/>



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