

Cambridge Audio Azur 640C v2 E 569

WHAT TO DO with an Award winning product? If Cambridge Audio has anything to do with it, nothing. Instead of tuning the Azur 640CV2 to ensure another Award, the company has left this CD player alone. We think it's so good, you'd probably have to upgrade to something like the E 1000

"The 640C V2 will shame a lot of players within the E 450-E700 price range

Joe Cox, Staff Writer

Product of the Year above to get appreciably better performance. In fact, the 640CV2 leaves the other mid-price contenders out in the cold, fighting over second place.

The Cambridge is a rare breed, especially at this price point, because it has no real weaknesses to speak of. Budget players can be easy to criticise, usually lacking refinement and an even-tonal balance or they have a rhythmic snap similar to an elastic band. This CD player excels, though: music is delivered assuredly, without the sound being diluted too much (it is still a budget player) by unwanted intrusions.

The result is an even tonal balance and a

detail-packed, exciting listen. This spread of abilities means that the 640CV2 is as happy with Bomb 20's *Field Manual* as it is with Madonna's Confessions on a Dancefloor.

It's not only the sonic qualities that set the Cambridge Audio player apart. Okay, it doesn't quite feel like it's been carved out of a block of granite, but for a budget player it's very solid indeed, making us realise that Cambridge could easily have been greedier and charged more for it.

And the good news doesn't end there. That remote feels wonderful in hand. It's the sort of thing you'd expect to receive in your E 2000 CD player box, or pay a large premium for. All this is yours for the measly sum of E 569: we still find it hard to believe what Cambridge has achieved!

Complete ability at a bargain price

Put all these attributes together and you have a class-dominating player that doesn't look like it's going to give up the crown in the near future. Its rivals will have to do something very special.

Verdict

No improvements this year, but then again, if it ain't broke... this is the second year running the Cambridge has ruled the roost: it's a truly class act



All its attributes make this a formidable opponent