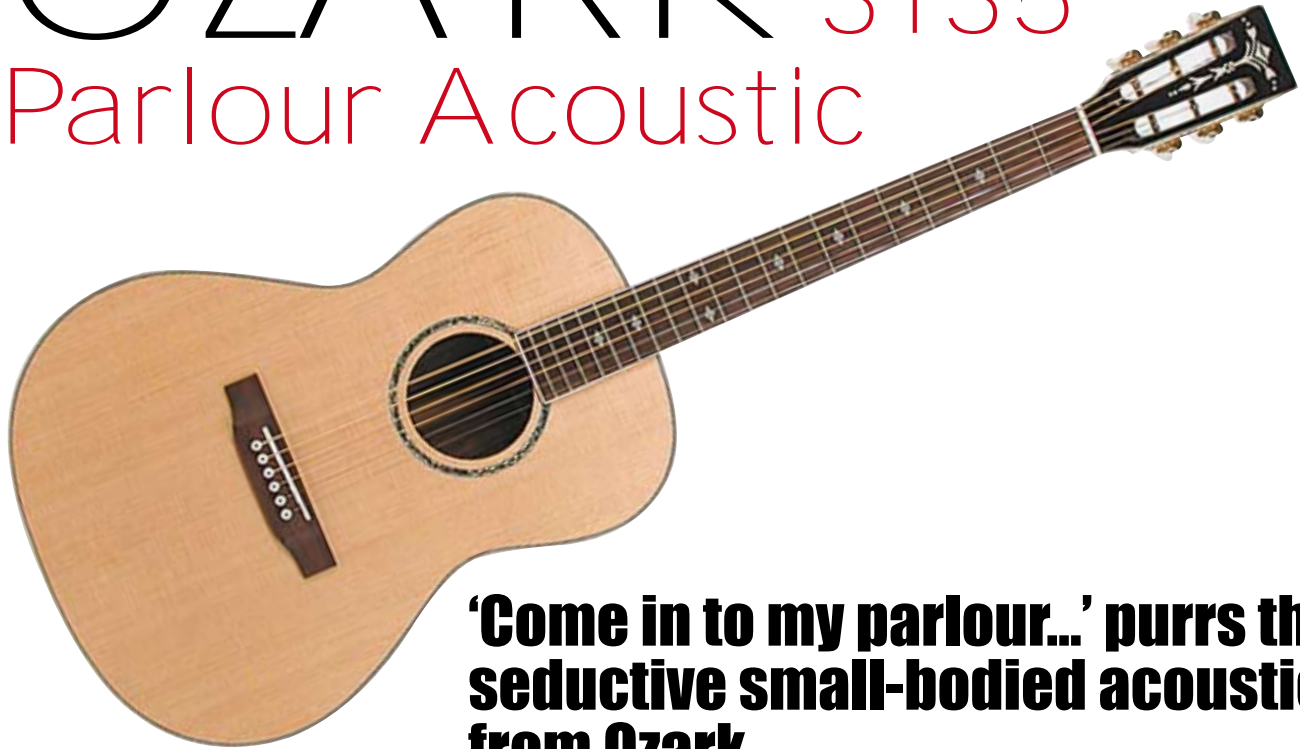


OZARK 3135

Parlour Acoustic



‘Come in to my parlour...’ purrs this seductive small-bodied acoustic from Ozark.

Words: Tim Slater

OZARK

3135 Acoustic Guitar

SRP £300.00

All prices incl VAT

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WHAT IS IT?

A parlour-sized acoustic guitar.

WHY SHOULD I WANT ONE?

The Ozark 3135 parlour style guitar impresses thanks to its great finish and good build quality, plus a strong versatile voice that belies the diminutive design. This is great guitar for finger style guitarists or those seeking a stable and consistent sounding acoustic guitar for the recording studio.

Acoustic guitar aficionados usually refer to small bodied steel strung acoustics as ‘parlour guitars’, a phrase that dates back over one hundred years to a time when the acoustic guitar was beginning to emerge as a credible musical instrument in its own right. The parlour guitar took its name from the practice of musical gatherings in the home, often in the main family room or ‘parlour’ and its compact design reflected the style of the time, which predated the larger dreadnought style guitars by several decades. Parlour guitars’ popularity peaked roughly from the mid nineteenth century to the late 1930s when larger and more powerful designs like the dreadnought began to emerge but many guitar players still prefer the parlour design for its portability and sweet tone, besides which parlour guitars were generally viewed as ‘entry level’ instruments and were consequently less expensive to buy than many of their larger counterparts.

The Ozark 3135 follows the traditional compact parlour guitar design and has a full depth of 90mm and a fairly narrow maximum width of 359mm across its widest point. Cosmetically speaking, the 3135 is smart without being overly ostentatious and strikes a nice

balance between the subtle pin striping surrounding the otherwise plain solid spruce top and a slender ring of abalone that trims that soundhole. The slotted headstock is another hallmark of the typical parlour guitar design and again, the torch inlay and ice white binding helps to lend the guitar a sense of identity whilst the rosewood fingerboard’s diamond shaped abalone inlays lend the final touches, finishing off what is undoubtedly a very attractive little guitar. The solid spruce top is complimented by laminated rosewood back and sides and a mahogany neck whose high gloss finish echoes the rest of the guitar. In this instance the gloss-backed neck feels entirely appropriate and in this instance it’s nice to see that Ozark hasn’t opted for the industry standard matt finish neck, even though some players definitely prefer the smoother feel of a matt finish.

At 45mm wide the fingerboard feels surprisingly wide (another parlour guitar trademark) and the back of the neck has a very well executed ‘C’ shape whose profile flattens out distinctly towards the middle, making a very comfortable and roomy space to rest the left thumb.

Besides manufacturing guitars Ozark has plenty of experience

building folk instruments ranging from mandolins to banjos and even tenor guitars and its high standard of finishing rarely fails to impress. Our review guitar is immaculately constructed and really well set up with a well cut nut, a medium to low-ish action and intonation that is pitch perfect all the way from top to bottom.

Traditional ‘X’ bracing means that the 3135 produces a well balanced tone with an impressive amount of volume. Good projection is everything with an acoustic guitar and the little Ozark really delivers, with an excellent balance between singing highs and a sonorous but not overbearing bass which suggests that the 3135 would make a superb guitar for recording. This style of guitar sounds very different compared to a dreadnought, which has a ‘bigger’ tone and a greater volume. By contrast the parlour guitar sounds much more intimate and detailed, which makes it ideal for finger picking and styles that generally place more emphasis on delicacy and control than balls-out strumming. At around 300 quid, the Ozark 3135 looks like superb value for money and in these challenging financial times it’s reassuring to find that a low budget guitar that refuses to compromise on build quality and tone. **PM**