

FIRST PLAY



**EVH 5150 ICONIC
15W 1X10 COMBO**
£639

WHAT IS IT? A portable, valve-powered 15-watt 1x10 combo with footswitchable Clean and Lead channels



Modern Icon

EVH adds a compact newcomer to the affordable Iconic series with this 15-watt 1x10 combo

Words Nick Guppy Photography Olly Curtis

1. The cab is available in black or ivory vinyl, with an easy-to-read brushed aluminium control panel. Inside, a special baffle arrangement maximises the loudspeaker's low-end response, creating the illusion that you're playing a much bigger rig
2. A pair of 12AX7 preamp valves and a single 6L6 power valve add plenty of authentic valve overdrive effects, with the benefit of improved control and consistency from the hybrid solid-state preamp
3. The Iconic's Clean and Lead channels have independent boost functions called Overdrive and Burn. You can change channels either from a button switch on the control panel, or a single-button footswitch that plugs into a socket on the rear panel
4. The DI/headphones jack features analogue speaker emulation, based on the 5150 4x12. It's a clean, low-noise output, great for live and recording console hook-up. Plugging into this socket mutes the power amp and loudspeaker, for silent recording/practice

Edie Van Halen's search for sonic perfection drove him to experiment with everything in his rig, from the fabled 'Frankenstein' guitars to his hot-rodded Marshall heads, generating countless myths and speculation about how to get 'that tone'. His modded instruments eventually coalesced into the EVH brand, including the 5150 range of amplifiers, which proved so popular in the modern rock genre that they've become an industry standard. Now, under Fender's wing, the 5150 range was recently expanded to include the affordable Iconic series, to which EVH has just added this new 15-watt 1x10 combo.

Designed by amp guru James Brown, the Iconic 1x10's footswitchable Clean and Lead channels have boost functions, respectively called Overdrive and Burn, that are accessed from small push-button switches, with a third switch to change channels. An LED channel indicator glows green for Clean/Overdrive and red for Lead/Burn. The brushed aluminium control panel has two pairs of gain and master volume chickenhead knobs, feeding a shared three-band EQ augmented with Presence and Resonance knobs to tune the output stage's response. There's also a level control for the Iconic's digital reverb. Connection options include a series effects loop, speaker-emulated headphone/DI out and aux in jacks, together with an extension speaker socket and a handy quarter power switch. Plugging into the DI jack mutes the power amp and speaker for silent practice or recording.

In use, the Iconic 1x10 delivers all the 5150 tones we've come to know and love, from warm high-headroom cleans and fat touch-sensitive crunch to those huge, almost out of control lead sounds that Van Halen made his own, with endless edge of the pick harmonics and so much gain you can get strings to feed back at conversation volume levels. The Resonance control is key to dialling in the Iconic's low-end response and making this small combo sound much bigger than it is, while the analogue speaker-emulated DI does a great job of squeezing all that tone into a console for recording or live use. The Iconic's digital spring reverb is a minor disappointment; we'd have gone for a warmer hall model.

While it may not be the lightest and most compact 1x10 amp out there, the Iconic's huge tone more than makes up for it. Overall, EVH's new Iconic 1x10 combo is a worthy addition to the 5150 range, producing all the sounds that Van Halen fans chase after at a very affordable price. **G**



EVH 5150 ICONIC 15W 1X10 COMBO

PRICE: £639

ORIGIN: Indonesia

TYPE: Hybrid valve/solid-state preamp, single-ended Class A power amp

VALVES: 2x 12AX7 preamp, 1x 6L6 power amp

OUTPUT: 15W RMS

DIMENSIONS: 500 (w) x 260 (d) x 470mm (h)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 17.3/38.2

CABINET: MDF with ply baffle

CHANNELS: 2

CONTROLS: Channel 1 Gain, Channel 2 Gain, Low, Mid, High, Channel 1 master volume, Channel 2 master volume, global Reverb, Resonance and Presence. Switches for Clean/Overdrive and Lead/Burn boost functions

FOOTSWITCH: Single-button switch (supplied) toggles channels

ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

Digital reverb, series effects loop, DI/headphones out with analog speaker emulation, aux in, ¼ power output switch, extension cabinet jack with impedance switch

OPTIONS: Available in black or ivory vinyl

RANGE OPTIONS: Other Iconic combos include a 40W 1x12 (£799) and a 60W 2x12 (£969)

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PROS Relatively compact and portable; does a good impression of a full 4x12 stack; excellent speaker; clever baffle design; all the great Van Halen sounds

CONS Digital spring reverb model is very pingy and somewhat disappointing – we'd prefer a warm hall model for more authentic stadium tone

