

GoldenEar **Triton Seven** **£1,400**

This innovative American floorstander design offers rather a lot of bang for your buck

DETAILS

- PRODUCT**
GoldenEar Triton Seven
- ORIGIN**
US/China
- TYPE**
3-way floorstander
- WEIGHT**
14.5kg
- DIMENSIONS**
(WxHxD)
184 x 1,010 x 280mm
- FEATURES**
 - HVFR tweeter
 - 2x 133mm mid/bass drivers; 2x 203mm radiators
 - Quoted sensitivity: 89dB/1W/1m (Bohm)
- DISTRIBUTOR**
Karma-AV
- TELEPHONE**
01423 358846
- WEBSITE**
karma-av.co.uk

This US brand is unknown in the UK, but famous across the pond for its co-founder Sandy Gross, formerly of Definitive Technology and Polk Audio. The company's *raison d'être* is to make affordable, high-performance speakers, so it should find many prospective purchasers here. The least expensive in its mid-price Triton floorstander range, the Seven fields three drive units – a tiny High-Velocity Folded Ribbon tweeter and two 133mm mid/bass drivers. Two side-firing 203mm passive radiators provide additional firepower; a novel feature at this end of the loudspeaker market, albeit a well-known way of getting better bass. Higher up the Triton range, these are actively driven but not in the Seven.

Another unusual feature is the fabric wrapped cabinet, which doesn't look as sassy as piano gloss but should do the sound no harm at all, giving it a sonically inert surface that helps to

damp reflected soundwaves. The narrow front baffle – which deliberately isn't parallel to the rear baffle to reduce standing waves – sees the drivers being mounted D'Appolito style. Although well screwed together, this speaker doesn't feel as solid or well finished as the others here.

Sound quality

One of the less sensitive speakers in the group, it still proves an easy load for the Exposure 3010S2 amplifier, and is exceptionally easy to position. Suitably warmed up, the Triton Seven sounds very pleasant, not too far off from the Q Acoustics, aside from a slightly warmer and looser upper bass with just a dash of cabinet coloration. Bass isn't as strong as many here, but certainly goes down low and is wonderfully even and effortless for a smaller capacity box. Midband is clean, likely aided by that ribbon tweeter, and treble exquisite for precisely the same reason. It makes most others in the test sound quite coarse up top, and is wonderfully smooth too in the presence region, as its handling of Kate Bush's vocals on *Misty* shows.

Indeed, the GoldenEar comes over as a very capable speaker, in its way. Its obvious failing is a slight lack of grip at the bottom end, which means the bass guitar on the Madness track sounds more rounded than it should. Yet the star quality of its midband – which manages to be both very detailed and enjoyably musical – can't be denied. And the further up you go, then better; the hi-hat cymbal on the Love track is beautifully carried. There's also a pleasing sense of space to the soundstage that makes you want to peer deeper into the music. It hangs instruments back in the mix where they should be, yet can project forward of the plane of the speakers when needed.

Kraftwerk's *Neon Lights* is most enjoyable. Although this speaker doesn't handle dynamic accents as well as some, its wonderfully relaxed quality, allied to real delicacy and insight, charms you in another way ●

SUB BASS RADIATOR

The Triton Seven features an interesting complement of drive units, and the High-Velocity Folded Ribbon tweeter is certainly a highlight. The DALI shares a similar thing, but no other speaker here has passive bass radiators – or Auxiliary Bass Radiators (ABRs). These have been around for a long time – the popular Celestion Ditton 15 carried one nearly 45 years ago, for example – but it's rare to see them on speakers in this price range, especially in pairs. Effectively, they increase the sound radiating area of the bass drivers, taking low-frequency extension down lower than would otherwise be the case. It gives similar results to transmission line loading in practice, but GoldenEar claims better transient performance and control too. These ABRs certainly influence the sound, giving this speaker bass extension that no other rival in this group can quite match.



The GoldenEar makes rival models coarse up top

HifiChoice

OUR VERDICT

- SOUND QUALITY**
★★★★★ **LIKE:** Smooth, relaxed but detailed sound; great treble
- VALUE FOR MONEY**
★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Slightly loose and warm upper bass
- BUILD QUALITY**
★★★★★ **WE SAY:** Slender and unique floorstander with a big sound
- EASE OF DRIVE**
★★★★★

OVERALL

