



Martin D-X2E Brazilian 12-string

The X Series promises classic 12-string chime with a solid spruce top and onboard pickup/preamp and the look of the most sought-after tonewood of all time. But does it all add up?

By Chris Gill

▶ **IF YOU WANT** that “symphony orchestra in your hands” sensation that only a 12-string acoustic can provide, my mantra is “go big or go home.”

That usually means a jumbo or dreadnought model. If dreadnought is your preference, a Martin 12-string guitar is a wise choice as they not only invented and perfected the dreadnought acoustic but they’ve also been making 12-string acoustics longer than any other company on the market today – just over 60 years, as a matter of fact.

The Martin D-X2E Brazilian is an affordably priced 12-string acoustic-electric guitar that delivers incredible value and should induce serious consideration from guitarists looking to add some 12-string magic to their stage and studio performances.

You may have read the word “Brazilian” then looked at the price and wondered if Martin have lost their minds by offering a Brazilian rosewood guitar for less than \$700.

Actually, the back and sides are made of HPL (high-pressure laminate) formulated to provide performance similar to Brazilian rosewood as well as the uncanny look of Brazilian from its dark chocolate hues to distinctive stripe grain patterns.

The money Martin saved using HPL gave them more leeway to build the D-X2E 12-string with an upgraded spruce top featuring a satin finish and scalloped spruce braces.

Martin is more secretive about the material used for the neck, fingerboard and bridge, cryptically describing it only as “select hardwood,” but it looks and feels great and

“The perfect affordable choice for guitarists who want an acoustic 12-string with classic tone”

seems more than up to the job at hand.

Playability and sounds

The D-X2E 12-string comes strung with extra-light phosphor bronze strings, which play comfortably. The 25.4-inch scale length, 1 7/8-inch nut width and slim PA neck profile combine to provide comfortable playability with ample room between the individual string courses to facilitate clean chord fingering.

The Martin D-X2E 12-string delivers classic Martin 12-string dreadnought tone with full-bodied bass, rich mids, jangly treble and reverb-like resonance. It sounds equally great accompanying a solo folk singer as it does in a full band context adding sparkle when layered with an electric rhythm guitar, doubling melodic lead lines or taking an acoustic lead spotlight.

The built-in Martin E-1 electronics are uncomplicated and deliver clear, natural amplified tones. Volume and tone controls are concealed within the soundhole above the low E string along with a phase switch and switch for the built-in chromatic guitar tuner, with its display located below the high E string.

GUITAR WORLD VERDICT



The Martin D-X2E Brazilian 12-string is the perfect affordable choice for guitarists who want to add an acoustic 12-string with classic tone to their rig. The built-in electronics are an unexpected bonus that add even more value to the guitar’s studio and stage versatility.

PROS

- + HPL back and sides have the natural, organic look of real Brazilian rosewood.
- + String spacing is ideal for clean chord fingering.
- + Built-in electronics system with tuner is easy to use and provides warm, natural acoustic tones.

CONS

- Appearance is somewhat austere, but this model is more about performance and function instead of flashy looks.

SPECS

TYPE: 12-string acoustic electric guitar
TOP: Solid spruce
BACK/SIDES: Brazilian rosewood pattern HPL
BRACING: Scalloped X-Pattern
NECK: Select hardwood
FRETS: 20
FINGERBOARD: Select hardwood w/beveled edge and Style 28 dot inlays
SCALE LENGTH: 645mm (25.4”)
NUT WIDTH: 44.45mm (1.75”)
ELECTRONICS: Martin E-1

