



Luxman P-750u \$4,995

luxmanamerica.com

Breezing through George Benson’s “This Masquerade,” via the Focal Utopia, Audeze LCD-2, and Abyss Diana Phi phones, (thanks to three headphone outlets on the front panel of the Luxman P-750u) it’s easy to make quick comparisons.

It’s even easier to get lost in the clarity that these premium phones produce via this incredible headphone amplifier. A lot of talk goes on when setting speakers up in a room, with one of the main goals being to make them disappear in the room. Achieving a VTA setting that is close to perfection with a tonearm and cartridge makes the turntable get out of the way of the reproduction chain and let the music flow. A great audio system, set up to the best of its potential goes a long way to help you concentrate on the music and forget about the gear. At least if that is the experience you are predisposed to.

If you are a music lover that enjoys not thinking about your gear, I hope you will agree that a great headphone system is the same way. Even the finest headphones played through a mediocre or overly colored headphone amplifier still feel like you do have cans on your head. A great headphone amplifier makes it easy to forget you are wearing headphones, and the Luxman P-750u is one of the best.

Sans cans (and tubes)

We’ve had the good fortune to listen to a lot of great headphone amplifiers from a number of manufacturers over the last year or two. Many high-performance audio enthusiasts are enthralled with vinyl, but the upper end of personal listening has grown as much, if not more. Five years ago we had precious few four figure (and even five figure) headphones or amplifiers – today it’s commonplace.

Luxman’s P-750u goes out the door for \$4,995. By no means inexpensive, but nothing like some of the examples we’ve seen. Much like their class-A integrated amplifiers, the overall sound is slightly saturated tonally, very dynamic and extremely quiet. The P-750u is all solid-state, so in addition to being silent, you will never have to chase or roll tubes. Considering that a number of the world’s finest headphone amplifiers feature tubes, factoring never having to replace tubes makes the P-750u an even better long-term value proposition. If you listen to your headphones a lot during the day, this can get costly in a hurry.

Thanks in part to the massive power supply and resulting current reserve, the sheer dynamic ability of the P-750u not only goes a long way to make your favorite phones disappear, it does so with a wider range of phones than anything we’ve yet taken for a test drive.

If you’ve ever been at a hifi dealer or show, where they’ve used a massive power amplifier to drive relatively inexpensive speakers (with tremendous result) the P-750u performs the same miracle. Connecting my vintage Grado SR60s is a revelation through the P-750u – they sound like \$1,500 phones now, and the big Grados have lost their harshness. This adds a degree of versatility to your headphone choices that few amplifiers offer.

Powerful feature set

You can get all the fine details and specs from the Luxman site here:

<http://luxman.com/product/detail.php?id=7>

However, the P-750u’s ability to drive any phones you can connect really makes this headphone amp a pleasure to use. With your choice of a standard ¼-inch output jack, a stereo balanced output, and individual L/R balanced outputs and 3 sensitivity settings, it’s a breeze to completely tailor the amp to your phones. Much like trying multiple output taps on a tube power amplifier, if you have the cables, give balanced a try to your standard phones, you might be surprised.

Around back, there are two sets of balanced XLR inputs and one set of RCA inputs too, so you can easily connect a DAC, phono stage and maybe a tape deck. This leads to the only complaint with the P-750u – at this price, a set of variable level outputs would be incredibly nice so that it could be used as a two-channel linestage too. That might make it easier to justify the cost to some buyers, and is becoming more and more popular in higher end headphone amplifiers.

Especially considering how much of the standard design and build features that go into Luxman’s top components are all present here, from the huge power supplies, premium individual components and the fine casework. And it begs being mentioned again to those unfamiliar with Luxman components – even the packaging is fantastic. This amplifier is built and boxed with extreme care.



Casework is typical Luxman, with the best front panel screen printing in the industry, combined with a level of machining that would be right at home on a fine wristwatch. Even the cast iron feet on the bottom of the chassis are produced with the same level of excellence, as is the inside of the chassis. This is industrial art at its finest.

More listening please

The P-750u is almost hallucinogenic in its delivery of musical information, yet not overdone. Whether sitting at a desk working, or lounging, the soundfield generated is large in all three dimensions, coming the closest to sounding like a pair of great monitors somewhat nearfield as anything I’ve yet used. A few of the top (i.e. 5-figure) headphone amplifiers have painted larger pictures, but it’s always felt unrealistic. If you’ve ever had the chance to experience a pair of the 9 foot tall Sound Labs electrostatic speakers, it’s incredible, but the sense of scale is overblown. The Luxman amp gets it just right, and the wider range of other headphone amps you’ve heard, the more you’ll appreciate this one.



A similar experience is had with vocal heavy tracks. Often, even with the finest headphone amplifiers, certain vocal tracks can sound as if the singer is performing right inside the middle of your head, instead of sounding in the middle of your speakers. This was another area that the P-750u really excelled at: preserving the sense of scale and placement of vocalists within the soundfield.

The beauty of this amplifier is in the details, the fine details to be exact. Listening to whatever your favorite bass heavy tracks are, the extension offered, combined with a level of LF texture that you won’t notice until you go back to what you were listening to, is uncannily good. And the top end presentation is detailed, refined, and controlled. The Grado P2000s and the Utopia phones both can get strident with the wrong amplifier, yet the lack of harshness through the P-750u is the best I’ve heard on these phones.

Best of the best

Much as I despise that word, especially in the context of reviewing gear, the Luxman P-750u is one of the finest headphone amplifiers I’ve had the pleasure to experience. It reveals as much music as any of the five-figure amplifiers we’ve auditioned here, and for most that would be more than enough. When you add the versatility and level of sheer craftsmanship to the mix, it’s easy to see why this one is such a favorite.

