

GENZLER MAGELLAN 800+

A bridge between worlds? Cici Powell explores Genzler's new powerhouse of an amp

Back in 1984, a new bass amp brand was evolving in a garage in Phoenix, Arizona, where Jeff and Catherine Genzler, alongside engineer Scott Andres, came up with the idea of building powerful amps with innovation at the forefront and the gigging bassist in mind. In 2015, the Genzler company was born as a continuation of that philosophy.

Their latest amp adheres firmly to that original vision. Building on the existing Magellan 800, the 800+ head has all the features of the original, adding an adjustable high pass filter, dual concentric dials for the low and high mids, and a dual A/B contouring panel for individual adjustability. All this is wrapped up in a lightweight but heavy-duty aluminium chassis.

So what does it sound like? Selecting Contour A gives you a lovely combination of punchy highs and smooth, subby lows. It sounds pristine, but not glassy or harsh. Contour B has a bite to it: it's warm and nostalgic, but it can be aggressive if needed. Despite its warmth, every note is defined and it never seems to get muddy. You can adjust the intensity of either contour option to your liking, of course.

Adding drive to Contour A creates a cutting yet well-rounded tone for a subtle hint of texture, or go full-on for a thick, gritty sound that still has a crisp, modern edge. Pair it with Contour B and you get a grumbling monster of a tone, fit for both classic and modern styles. It's warmer, but no less defined. No matter the tonal selection, the drive sounds great with high all-around usability. It's a tone that you can really sink your teeth into.

The dual concentric dials for the mids do a fantastic job of cutting or boosting whichever frequencies are needed, depending on the environment you're playing in. While they offer rich, thumpy mids that never get too honky or unpleasant, couple them with the adjustable high-pass filter, and the tonal world is your oyster.

Every dial on the active EQ somehow manages to be perfectly useable right up to its maximum or minimum, offering tons of tonal options and control. The bass dial was particularly impressive to me, as cranking it allowed me to bring out even more of those aforementioned sub frequencies in a way that soothed the soul, rather than burst the eardrums. The drive and contour settings can also be selected via the dual footswitch, though note that this is sold separately.

In my experience amps either have clarity but no personality, or personality with no definition. This amp defeats that tendency with an incredibly clear performance that retains tons of character, almost in spite of its clarity. That alone is no mean feat, but coupling that with the ability to bridge both modern and old-school sounds, fantastic build quality, and lightweight portability is a rare feat.

OUR RATING

Build	●●●●●●●●●●
Sounds	●●●●●●●●●●
Value	●●●●●●●●●○

Technical Specification

£999

Genzler Magellan 800+
Price **£999**
Made In **Taiwan**
Feature **Class D amp with master volume, mute switch, pad switch, drive, gain, active EQ, adjustable high pass filter, dual concentric dials on low and high mids, dual A/B contouring panel for individual adjustability, power input, on/off switch, impedance selector, two speakon outputs, headphone output, effects loop, aux input, footswitch input, tuner output, DI with a dedicated interface including ground/lift, pre/post EQ, and line/mic level**
Weight **2.8 kg / 6.2 lbs**

WHAT WE THINK

+ **Plus** Astonishing sound quality
– **Minus** Cheaper options exist
• **Overall** While pricey, the breadth of capability, build and sound quality make up for it: a one-amp-does-everything situation

This amp makes me want to keep playing and playing, and what better compliment can there be?

Bass Direct
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