

## Rotel's frill-free DVD rewards

### Rotel RDV-995

DVD-Video player £700



**For** Stunning sound and vision with DVDs; none too shabby with CD replay, too

**Against** Lacks a Scart socket, so no RGB video connection; no onboard decoder

**Verdict** A cracking machine from the Rotel stable, and one of the very best players around



There are two approaches to DVD-Video player design: the first is to spatter the fascia with buttons, jog-dials, uplighters, downlighters and the odd bell or whistle, while the other is to keep things as simple as possible, and spend the money under the lid. Rotel follows the latter path, and as a result the RDV-995 is an absolute stormer.

Under the lid a dual pickup system ensures compatibility with CDs and CD-R discs as well as DVD-Video software and Video CDs. But this is more than

a makeweight – the Rotel produces a big-boned and detailed rendition of everything from Fatboy Slim to Fauré's *Requiem*. Dynamics excite, and the player displays fine speed and impact, while controlling treble to give a sweet yet crisp and open sense of presence.

It's with DVDs that the Rotel really shines, crunching out big action soundtracks yet having sufficient finesse for more demanding stuff such as the glorious THX-mastered release of *The Sound of Music*. Stop

laughing – the disc has a great Dolby Digital 4.0 soundtrack – while up to date discs such as *Gone In 60 Seconds* benefit from fine bass control and knockout midband and treble detailing.

As for outputs, there are both electrical and optical digital outs, plus composite, S-video and component video feeds. There's no onboard decoder – so no six-channel outputs – and no Scart, which means no RGB video connection, but the picture quality is still good, despite this handicap. In addition, although

it's a UK model, the RDV-995 played all our Region 1 discs with no problems at all!

The Rotel is a cracking DVD player and a perfect partner for the RSX-972 receiver in this month's *Supertest*.

**LEADING RIVALS** Pioneer DV-737 £700 ★★★★★

(Feb 2001) Outstanding pictures and extensive specification

Arcam DV88 £1000 ★★★★★  
(March 2001) One of the first all-Brit players and one of the best