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## Brian May Bass £715

Unexpected bass is a real grower

CONTACT: The Bass Centre PHONE: 01276 453079 WEB: www.basscentre.com

Unlike the obvious Strat/Precision or the SG/EB-3 pairing, the Brian May Bass seems a somewhat curious design choice. However, seeing it in the flesh and, indeed, playing it, proves its worth. A short 800mm (31.5-inch) scale length means it's visually well proportioned, with a set neck construction and a cherry-red,

fully bound mahogany body, mahogany neck and ebony fingerboard. It has 20 frets, Hipshot tuners and the bridge is a high-mass, raised-tail design. Although the bass is made in Korea to keep the costs trim and is less electronically complicated than the Brian May guitar, it's a very nicely put together instrument.

### Sounds

Passive circuitry provides individual volume controls for the huge Gibson-style humbucker and the skirted Burns-like single-coil set, alongside a master tone control. Curiously, the humbucker does not dominate the sound, so it's easy to get a good balance between the two. Rolling back the tone control reveals an almost parametric slant for the very last section and produces a great throatiness to the overall sound that is both unexpected and rather good. Backing off both volume controls a little actually unleashes the best hollow tones, too.

### Verdict

Full of sound and visual appeal, the Brian May Bass is a little too pricey for the beginner, but if you want something off the beaten track, this has a great deal to offer. It's delightful to play, with its own character and sounds – recommended. [RN]

### The Bottom Line

**We like:** Well styled and nicely built; unexpected variety of solid sounds  
**We dislike:** Chrome knobs would suit the guitar better

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★