

# A STRUM TO SERENITY



To most non-musicians the guitar is simply an instrument but to people who live and breathe music it is a six-stringed companion, always there to create sound waves in resonance to that person's state of mind, a wooden base with a sound hole to collect all sorts of emotions, but most importantly a medium to express oneself and to communicate to the outside world through music.

While some say it was originated from the lute, and some from the Greek kithara, there are speculations. However, one thing we are sure of is how grateful we are for its invention in the first place. This instrument which dates back to almost 4,000 years, is one of the most important parts in creating music be it rock, jazz or blues.

However, the guitar comes in many shapes and sizes and they all have their own distinct tune.

## ACOSTING ACOUSTIC

When it comes to acoustics, they are mostly used in cases of folk and country music. It is that one instrument you will find in every musician's house, for it is the ABCs of guitars. Amongst the different kinds of acoustics, you will find Spanish or Classical with their nylon strings often used to produce classical music. These cost around Tk3,000 if domestic, and around varies between Tk4,000 and 6,000 if imported from India or China.

Then comes the Hawaiian guitar, which

would cost somewhere around Tk10-12,000.

Acoustics may not have as much variations as an electric, but they are very versatile when creating music and can be used to play lots of different genres from jazz to blues to folk. The sound of an acoustic depends highly on how it is plucked or strummed, by hand or by pick, the frets and fret board, and also the wood used in making it.

Rosewood fret boards are pretty common and available plus they help in producing a clean sound. Amongst acoustics one will also come across electro acoustics, with the body frame of a typical wooden acoustic but with plug-ins to connect it to an amplifier.

Some of the best acoustics available here are the Yamaha F310, Yamaha X series, and APX 500 at medium price ranges. Gibson Guitars, on the other hand, produce some of the best acoustics too; they are on the higher price end and have to be pre-ordered in stores for the original. If that is not the sound you are looking for, go electric.

## ELECTRIFYING GUITARS

One thing that highly impacts sound quality of an electric guitar is the pick-up. These tiny electromagnets literally pick up the vibrations which creates the sound, while the amplifiers amplify, and voila! Different sorts of music require different

types of pickups. EMG pickups are one of the best found in markets. The Fernandes Vortex is a good choice of guitar for heavy metal or thrash metal music, however it can be used to create other genres of music as well. Another great guitar that works with all kinds of music from heavy metal, rock and even jazz are the Gibson Les Paul Guitars; however, these tend to stretch on the higher end when it comes to both quality and price.

Professionals tend to favour lightweight electrics and basses because they make movement easier, hence performing easier, and if you are one to dive into the music and indulge all the way with head-bangs and high jumps, look for the lightest you can find.

Even though most electrics come with 21 frets, there are ones with 24 and even 27 to create those solos, bendings' and vibratos which make your music richer. Double necked guitars with 12 strings are also good options for the extra oomph and crazy solos. Look for dense frets for a clean sharp sound, and tall frets for high speed playing. The James Hetfield Snakebyte is an excellent guitar for heavy metal music.

## FEELING THE BLUES

For music genres such as Blues or Jazz, some preferable guitars are Reverend and many Fernandes' too, with Seymour Duncan pickups and Marshall MG amplifiers. Since pickups play such a big role in

creating the sound they can be customised, changed and combined according to needs, even though it is hardly needed as most good guitars already come with the best ones.

ESPs are good quality guitars especially for metal songs costing around Tk120,000, with a lower cost version of the same company called LTD costing around Tk20,000. Basses Fenders are good on the higher end price, and the lower cost version of the same company named Squier.

Commonly found sounds here are Ibanez, like the Ibanez 370 and 420 and Music Man such as JP6 and AX40 guitars costing around Tk55,000 on an average.

However, a guitar shouldn't be your end game. There are numerous accessories to go along with it. First pick your baby and then get ready to dress her up.

If one is keen on feeling that rush, look no further than Guitar Centre, Shop #50, Block A, and Shops #62 and 63, Block D, Level-6, Bashundhara City for the most authentic guitars, commonly referred by guitarists of our country; World Music, Shop# 33, 34, 47, 48, Block A, Level-6 Bashundhara city, or their website: worldmusicbd.com for a variety of higher end guitars; and Melody and Co, Shop#91-94, Block D, level-6 Bashundhara city and Store#1/A-B, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi.

**By Anisha Hassan**

**Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed**