



Dynaudio Contour 20 Black Edition

HIGHLY COMMENDED
STAND-MOUNT LOUDSPEAKER £5K – £10K

You'd be forgiven for assuming these loudspeakers are all-black makeovers of the Contour 20i based on their name and look, but doing so would be a great injustice to the design and the engineers behind it. The Contour 20 Black

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Edition are indeed based on the excellent 20i platform, though everything from the drive units and crossover to the cabinet has been given a significant facelift.

They are one of the most affordable models to feature the Esotar3 soft-dome tweeter found in Dynaudio's flagships and thus benefit from the unit's improved airflow over the Contour 20i's Esotar2. The new 18cm MSP woofer's use of a Neodymium magnet over the 20i's larger ferrite one offers a much stronger magnetic flux. And the rear-firing port is much larger and extends deeper inside the cabinet for 'better' (rather than 'more') bass. What's more, the revised second-order crossover, which delivers improved phase response and dispersion characteristics, enabling both drivers to remain in positive polarity, is tantalisingly close to the Rosetta Stone of loudspeaker design.

Destined to become classics

The classic Dynaudio honest sound remains fully intact; the excellent linearity, dispersion, accuracy and fidelity that make the Contours enduring loudspeakers are all there. But the Black Edition introduces what Alan Sircom describes as “something new, precise and enjoyable” – specifically, a level of speed and musical immediacy that catches him by surprise. In comparison, the originals seem to slow down transients and blur beats. “Music is clean and extended well into the bat-eared regions, and the level of detail and stress-free listening it creates is striking,” says Alan.

While staying in the Contour 20i form-factor, the Black Edition is something very, very different and a bold departure from many Dynaudio designs, including those that also carry the Contour 20 name. Give the Black Edition models some amp oomph, buy the dedicated stands and embrace the noir essence of their deep, inky, stygian nature – you won't regret it.

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