

BEST SYSTEM UNDER £1600

NAD



£975

THE NAD SYSTEM manages to take three five-star components and unify them into a package that's both convincing and thoroughly likeable.

The system's sweet-sounding, fluid presentation suits any musical genre and manages to keep you engrossed in the music until the very final note.

On the other hand, Marantz has a system that looks great on paper, but doesn't quite knit together in practice. And, while there can be no qualms about the electronics, the character of those Aviano 1 speakers (as good as they are) just doesn't sit well. Although this set-up undoubtedly excels in some areas, its inability to engage the listener makes it necessary to dock a star.

You can't ask for much more from Denon's one-make offering. It's a clear

step up from an all-in-one system, will work well in smaller rooms and represents fine value for money. But putting our critical hat on, we'd like a smidgen more weight and authority.

The Rega system is a big surprise and just goes to show that you don't

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necessarily need a collection of five-star components to create a very convincing system. It may be a bit out of left field, but the Regas are definitely worth a dabble.

So there's plenty to like from the more affordable systems, but the NAD proves to be a cut above its rivals.



NOW ADD THESE

INTERCONNECT
MERLIN MOZART



£ 40/m



This great-value interconnect produces a sound that's speedy, dynamic and detailed – making it an excellent match for the NAD electronics. At this price, it's a steal.

SPEAKER STANDS
SOUNDSTYLE Z2



£ 70

The Z2s do everything right at a reasonable price. Music gains more drive and there's a real sense of verve in tempo changes.



TOTAL SYSTEM £1085