

**PRICE:**  
TANGLEWOOD  
TWR SFCE  
£229

**PRICE:**  
TANGLEWOOD  
TWR TE  
£229



# TANGLEWOOD TWR SFCE AND TWR TE

Should these modestly priced Roadster Series electro-acoustics be taken out on the road, or crushed under the rear wheels in reverse? Russell Welton shifts gear...

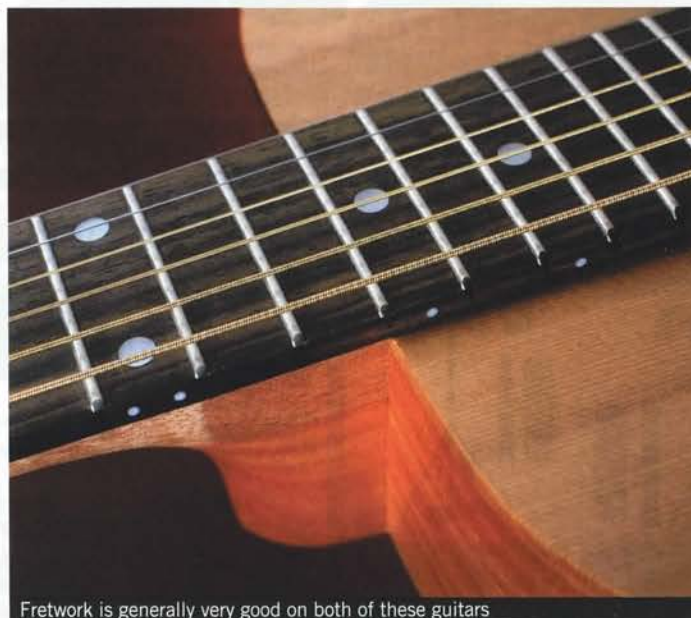
Part of the range within Tanglewood's ever more discerning portfolio is the new Roadster Series. With simple looks and perhaps even familiar silhouettes, will either of this pair become part of your shadowing performance entourage?

## Body & Neck

The body of the SFCE is Tanglewood's referral to a Super Folk Cutaway. Proportions are well thought out and well balanced in this, their own take on a bigger-volume folk instrument. It may not be radical but it is well poised and in no way cumbersome when you are sat with it. The back and sides are made from mahogany, although they do have a very light appearance which may deceive you upon first inspection. Looking closer at the neck we can see that it is made of just two pieces of mahogany, including the heel block, which terminates in a substantial, well-rounded and well-fitted heel cap. The fitting of the fingerboard is clean and free from any undue glue overspill. It is also very consistent in its grain spacing and it plays well. There is a tension to the light strings

which gives a good projection in volume while retaining a healthy dose of resistance for when you want to dig in a little more heavily. The neck profile itself has something of a mid-C depth which has a more traditional clout to it without being too club-like. The fret markers are very simple and similarly well seated on both of

these instruments. Looking at the TE model we are treated to more of the lightly coloured mahogany, both for the back and sides, and also the neck. Particularly noticeable on the bass side of the neck we have prominent flaming weaving across the neck's profile, sometimes reaching into honey-rich hues and transparent lustre.



Fretwork is generally very good on both of these guitars

There are no two ways about it – the TE is petite and compact in a way which fulfils a design brief to make a portable instrument both fun and responsive to your songwriting ideas for when you are on the move.

## Hardware & Parts

The finish of the guitars is completed with a natural matt lacquer which has a very transparent quality. You therefore have a very true representation of the tonewood grain which lies beneath, so there is no hiding behind any sun- or tobacco-burst finishes; this results in very honest-looking instruments which have been put together with a total focus on a no-nonsense ethic. There is a little bit of subtle detailing to be enjoyed at the rosette where a lightly green-coloured mother-of-pearl-style inlay has been used on the SFCE model. It's understated and quite smart. Generally there is not much in the way of visual contrast, so



The preamp is a nice addition

**GB REVIEW**

TANGLEWOOD TWR SFCE AND TWR TE





The headstocks are simple...



...but fit the aesthetic perfectly



The tuner is quick and accurate

this is a welcome touch.

Both guitars are also replete with white ABS bridge pins, intonated saddles and nut. The intonation on the SFCE once the strings have been well stretched in is particularly good, as the action has been set up so well. This is not to be taken for granted in this day and age of mass production, as so many guitars do not get delivered to the retailer set up to such a specific set of measurements. This is because it actually takes time and preparation to get the most out of the instrument. When a guitar comes

## Once you have dialled in your optimal tones you can then press in the pots

through set up this well you can think of it as a saving of 50 quid straight off the bat. This is a real-world, tangible, value-for-money aspect not to be overlooked, and one you can appreciate from the moment you start playing.

## Sounds

The SFCE and TE both share the same preamp unit, which to us represents a great-value-for-money feature on the smaller travel guitar, as Tanglewood has not simply economised here due to size. It's a very good preamp and simple to use. The TEQ-2BT is basic in layout and clear in its display. You are equipped with one bass and one treble pot control which are 'recessable', as is the master volume control, so once you have dialled in your optimal tones you can then press in the pots and prevent accidentally altering your tonal setup mid gig. This is particularly helpful if you are trying to maintain a specific response free of feedback in a tightly packed venue where you may be forced to sit right on top of your amps. Performing with confidence is key and the last thing you need is issues with your signal when you need good sonic integrity. The tuner on both models is similarly

dependable for a responsive and clear read-out within a lime-green backlit display offering bold read-outs of your pitch.

The SFCE's real forte is its definition in top-end clarity and tightly rounded off treble tones, which just beg for a fingerpicking approach. Rhythmically there is less tone separation than we anticipated until you start to play harder, but when strumming with the flesh of your thumb rather than with a pick the mellowness which sits alongside this bright response is beautifully balanced and makes for a quality of tone that hints at being somewhat magical. When you work this guitar harder its dynamics become the best advocate of its character. It would suit studio recording particularly well, likely mostly due to the spruce top and overall construction. Closing our eyes we would guess at maple featuring somewhere in its build because of the clarity, but this is not the case.

The TE, once plugged in, is transformed somewhat and gains much more dynamics and some warmth from the transducer. Dialling in a little bass and rolling off a little treble enriches the character where it is needed, and mellows it out a little too, and makes for a tone you should be able to entertain any audience with. It is a little quieter than its big brother but you can readily compensate for this with the amp volume.

## Conclusion

Unlike some models with a range of guitars which lack continuity of character, feel and playability, here with the Roadster Series you have two very complementary instruments, both of which offer that continuity, but some practical



## The Guitar Tech

For the latest guitar reviews check out [www.guitarbuyer magazine.com](http://www.guitarbuyer magazine.com)

## Technical Specification

**Price:** £229.95  
**Shape:** Folk Traveller  
**Top:** Solid Cedar  
**Back:** Mahogany  
**Sides:** Mahogany  
**Neck (Material):** Mahogany  
**Neck (Build):** Two Piece  
**Fingerboard:** Rosewood  
**Bridge:** Rosewood  
**Binding:** N/A  
**Saddle:** Abs White, Compensating  
**Nut (Width):** 43mm  
**Scale Length:** 580mm  
**Finish:** Natural Matt  
**Preamp:** Tanglewood TEQ-2BT

## Contact Details

**Tanglewood Guitars**  
**Tel:** 01937 841122  
[www.tanglewoodguitars.co.uk](http://www.tanglewoodguitars.co.uk)

alternatives also. They have both been extremely well set up and the labels attached reassure you of the quality of this work, which has been undertaken to a high standard. Neither is expensive, and both are rewarding in their playability and action, if ultimately plain-looking. Beauty need not only be skin-deep, however, when the voices of these respective guitars can be honed to produce lively and bright tones. **GB**

## What We Think

### What did our test results reveal?

**Pros:** Excellent setup, superb neck feel. Cleanly constructed. Minimalistic looks. Great clarity, good sustain.

**Cons:** Slightly anaemic aesthetic. Lack of richness in overtones.

**Ideal For:** Nothing original here but then that's a tall order. Rather, you have solidly built, functional and at times inspirational workhorse instruments with great clarity, on a budget.

## GB Rating

Rating out of five stars

**Tanglewood TWR SFCE** ★★★★★  
**Tanglewood TWR TE** ★★★★★

## The Guitar Tech

For the latest guitar reviews check out [www.guitarbuyer magazine.com](http://www.guitarbuyer magazine.com)

## Technical Specification

**Price:** £229.95  
**Shape:** Super Folk Cutaway  
**Top:** Spruce  
**Back:** Mahogany  
**Sides:** Mahogany  
**Neck (Material):** Mahogany  
**Neck (Build):** Two Piece  
**Fingerboard:** Rosewood  
**Bridge:** Rosewood  
**Binding:** N/A  
**Saddle:** Abs White, Compensating  
**Nut (Width):** 43mm  
**Scale Length:** 650mm  
**Finish:** Natural Matt  
**Preamp:** Tanglewood TEQ-2BT

## Contact Details

**Tanglewood Guitars**  
**Tel:** 01937 841122  
[www.tanglewoodguitars.co.uk](http://www.tanglewoodguitars.co.uk)