



# Greze Mendocino

GuitarPlayer  
EDITORS'  
PICK

TESTED BY ART THOMPSON

**MADE IN PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA,** the Mendocino is the latest “standard” model from builder Barry Grzebik. Far from just a guitar maker, however, Grzebik was previously the Director of Engineering for Apogee Sound and now is an Acoustical Consultant and AV Systems Designer. How all this pro-sound experience has impacted his guitar building is a good question, but the Mendocino certainly demonstrates a high degree of craftsmanship in an interesting design centered around a *one-piece* mahogany semi-hollow body and neck, with a top of beautifully grained, solid old-growth redwood. The body’s width of 13.25” and depth of 1.75” makes this guitar feel very compact, and even even though the neck has a fairly thick profile, the overall weight is a mere 5 lbs—that’s acoustic guitar light!

The gloss nitro finish is glass smooth, and, while not a highly decorated instrument, the Mendocino features ivoroid binding around the

top, a black headstock facing, wooden knobs, and a stainless-steel tailpiece with “Greze” laser cut into it. The Lollar Gold Foil pickups bring their own nifty vibe to the visual brew, giving the Mendocino a little high-end “pawnshop” flair, while also giving it a sound that leans in an alternative direction (Lollar Imperial humbuckers are also available at no extra charge). The small clay-colored dots don’t show up too well in dim light, but they do further the guitar’s minimalist aesthetic.

Pulled up to pitch with the smooth Grover tuners, the Mendocino played very easily thanks to a nice setup, perfect string spacing, and polished jumbo frets. The Macassar ebony fretboard’s 25” scale affords a bit more string tension than the standard Gibson length, and the intonation was sweet in all positions. With its warm, open acoustic sound, the Mendocino gave up good clean jazz tones on the neck and middle settings through a Deluxe Reverb, and it delivered

fat grind pushing an EHX Operation Overlord pedal. The medium-output Gold Foil pickups have a zesty sonic character with great clarity and treble presence, and they work really well with this guitar’s naturally woody sound, imbuing it with a bright edge that’s cool for blues, rock ‘n’ roll, and just about anything else where you want to go from clean to mean with a twist of the Volume knob. The Mendocino’s girthy sparkle also stands out well alongside standard humbucker and single-coil guitars, making it handy for tracking in the studio.

An impressive guitar by any measure, the Mendocino is definitely worth investigating if you’re looking for something different in the boutique market. From my perspective, it’s always fun to review something that *isn’t* simply trying to be a better Tele, Les Paul, or what have you, and the Mendocino scores high enough solely on the originality scale to net it an Editors’ Pick Award. ■