

**What you see** is what you get: a beefy-looking amplifier that delivers a truly massive sound. And it's great value too



# Roksan

## K3 £1250 ★★★★★

**The Roksan K3** has some big shoes to fill. Up until a few years ago, its Kandy K2 stablemate was one of our favourites at the price. The K3 is hoping to score a similar success, but at a new price, jumping from just under £1000 to £1250.

It does have a few new tricks up its sleeve. For a start, while it resembles its little brother visually, the audio path has been completely redesigned in a desire to offer a clearer stereo performance, while the power supply section has also been enhanced to increase efficiency.

As with the K2 BT, Roksan has also squeezed in aptX Bluetooth to the K3, opening it up to use with streaming services and portable devices as well as all your analogue sources.

### Ins and outs, front and back

On the back of the K3 you'll find five line-level ins and a moving-magnet phono stage. There's also a single set of pre-outs and a bypass input, allowing you to route the left and right channels of a home cinema set-up through the K3 by bypassing the pre-amp. On the front is a Bluetooth button for switching the amp into pairing mode, and a 3.5mm headphone jack.

There's more elegance to the K3's look compared with its cheaper sibling, its brushed aluminium available in 'charcoal', 'anthracite' or 'opium'. It's a slick, clean design but we would like a little more solidity to the controls – the volume control wobbled on our sample.

### This is a powerhouse of an amp, but it also knows how to convey the softer, more fragile moments

Roksan has managed to get even more output from the K3 compared with the K2 BT, with 150W into eight ohms – which makes it the perfect companion for blowing away some cobwebs.

It delivers a really big and confident sound – probably the largest we've heard at this price – with a wide soundstage that reaches to the very edges of the room. If you're lucky enough to live somewhere you can really push the volume up high, this amp will take it without ever losing control.

It's punchy too, the bassline in Drake's *Underground Kings* sounding solid and controlled, and there's texture and detail on offer too, delivering extra depth and insight.

It's this bassline that showed up the Technics SU-C700's poor timing, but there's nothing of the sort here. The melody and bassline weave together with agility and drive in a very cohesive and fluid presentation.

The wide soundstage allows instruments and vocals plenty of space to breathe, and detail

retrieval is excellent too, though we'd say the Rega Elicit-R tells you just a touch more.

Dynamically it's superb too. This might be a powerhouse of an amp, but it also knows how to convey the softer, more fragile moments in music – something the Arcam A39 falls down on. India Arie's sultry *Ready For Love* has an emotional depth that is not lost on this amp.

### Bluetooth ability

Switch to Bluetooth and the Roksan's well-balanced character deals well with the drop in quality, never sounding hard or harsh. Of course there's the expected drop in standard, but it's a forgiving, perfectly listenable performance.

Roksan is back on its A-game with the K3, which is a nothing short of a superb amp for the price. You'll get the very best in timing and subtle detail from the pricier Rega Elicit-R, but for a fun, lively amp that can't fail to keep you entertained, the Roksan K3 is one to consider.

### Rating ★★★★★

**FOR** Big sound; punchy, agile bass; strong rhythmic drive; lots of detail; expressive; well-balanced

**AGAINST** Volume dial wobbles in operation

**VERDICT** An excellent all-rounder that not only delivers big sound, energy and texture in spades, but does so for a very reasonable price