

# DEKONI BLUE



Who doesn't love a good synergy story—a story of two renowned audio manufacturers combining forces to make something greater than the sum of its parts? The Blue headphone marks headphone accessories specialist Dekoni's debut into the headphone market and the firm astutely enlisted the help of Fostex behind the scenes to add expertise. The Dekoni Blue is happy to present itself as a down-to-basics planar magnetic headphone that is sensibly priced at \$299 and is going to pack a lunch and work hard every day to earn your respect sonically.

Until now, Dekoni has been best known for its aftermarket ear tips and ear pads that offer what many consider to be best-in-class quality, comfort, and sound isolation. Accordingly, Dekoni developed a new hybrid ear pad for the Blue headphone that features a sound isolating sheepskin outer ring, an ultra soft velour face, and fenestrated sheepskin interior. As for the rest of the headphone, the Dekoni Blue is a planar magnetic, semi-closed back headphone that borrows much from Fostex's T50RP MKIII starting with its retro shape and using Fostex's proprietary 38mm orthodynamic driver units.

The Fostex drivers incorporate "regular phase" technology and are said to achieve the comparatively sharp, precise audio reproduction so prized in the pro audio market where Fostex made its reputation. The RP drivers use copper foil etched polyamide film diaphragms driven by powerful neodymium magnets. Combined with newly designed inner baffles, detachable 2m signal cables fitted with a 6.35mm plug, a padded headband, and distinctive blue ear cups, the traditional T50RP MKIII now emerges as the Dekoni Blue. The Dekoni Blue is also built like the proverbial brick house. The hard plastic ear cups, the no frills headband, and the locking cable attachment inspire confidence and give the impression they can stand up to occasional accidental drops or inadvertent rough handling.

The Dekoni Blue has a unique sonic signature that takes a moment or two to get adjusted to and a new listener will be well served to allow multiple hours

of break-in time before drawing any conclusions. I found the Dekoni Blue's really didn't even start to get their sea legs under them until they were given a more than 48-hour-long run-in session. However, once they were ready it was quite eye (and ear) opening to hear how much the Dekoni Blue's sound blossomed as compared to their initially closed-in sound straight out of the box. After run-in, an initially clunky bottom end mellowed out nicely, the sound stage widened considerably, and detail resolution improved to a remarkable degree.

After satisfying myself the Blues were ready for a proper audition, I tried out Anna Burch's new 2018 album *Quit the Curse* [Polyvinyl] which has been on heavy rotation lately around my house. "Asking 4 a Friend" chugs along like a steam engine throwing in some perfect '90s throwback pedal effects at every bend. It presents sumptuous midrange textures and details, which the Dekoni Blue knocked out of the park. The Blue's did an excellent job with the deceptively simple layering of the track and presented a deep and detailed sound stage. The Blue's gave the music a weighty presentation that felt solid and substantial.

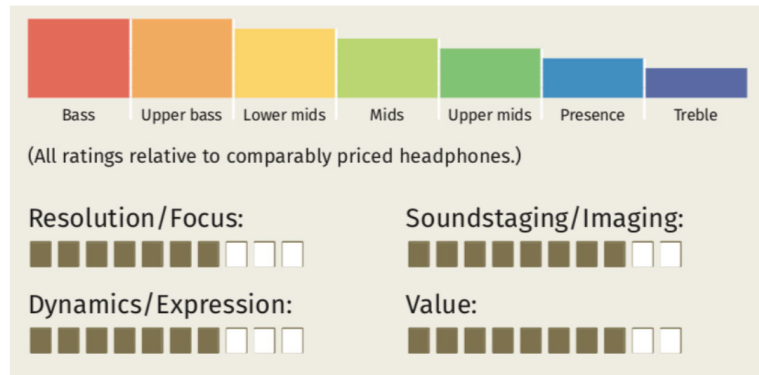
On subsequent forays into some classical favorites, however, I found that the treble response of the Dekoni Blue was notably subdued (bordering on drab), while the bass response, though very powerful, lacked the finesse and articulation that higher-priced headphones often can deliver.

Given the Dekoni Blue's moderate price, though, we should not be unrealistically critical. The Blue is an enjoyable all around performer whose easy-to-like sound never caused ear fatigue. Just be aware that the Blue's sonic signature offers elevated bass, neutral mids, and somewhat downturned highs. Even so, there is no doubt in my mind that the Dekoni Blue offers excellent value for money for those wishing to keep their headphone investment under \$300.

**Buzz Hughes**

# SUMMARY

**VOICING:** Downward tilt: Elevated bass, neutral mids, recessed or down-turned highs.



## PROS

- Build quality.
- Spacious midrange.
- Extremely comfortable; no fussy adjustments needed. Priced fairly.

## CONS

- Loose bass might detract from listening experience for some.
- Treble gets lost in presentation.
- Buyer cannot choose colors; styling might not be for everyone

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

**Type:** Planar Magnetic

**Frequency response:** 15Hz-35kHz

**Sensitivity:** 92dB/mW

**Impedance:** 50 ohms

**Accessories:** No Additional Accessories Supplied

Price: \$299

## MANUFACTURER INFORMATION

**Dekoni Audio**

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