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REVIEW

Bryston BCD-3 CD Player - Gives life Back to CD



o seu clube de hifi

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VALUE
MATTERS
SCIENCE
MATTERS

Are you a music lover torn between the nostalgia of vinyl and the convenience of streaming services?

Then the Bryston BCD-3 might be the CD Player for you—a high-end player which proves that CD tech-

nology still has a place in the audiophile world. With the Bryston BCD-3 you will enjoy your CDs like never before.

Investing in a high-end CD Player may seem counterintuitive at a time when many music fans are

Many Music Lovers Have Hundreds Of CD'S

returning to vinyl. However, Bryston proves that there is still a place for CD technology in the audiophile world.

If you are not a die-hard vinyl fan, the Bryston BCD-3 is worth considering. Particularly, if you have a large collection of CDs and want the best possible sound quality.

And even despite today's trend towards streaming services like Spotify, Tidal and Apple Music that offer a huge selection of music and convenient access from anywhere with an internet connection, the BCD-3 is still a valuable alternative.

Of course, it all depends on your preferences and priorities. It's nice to return to the old-school of physical media at times, throw a record on and know music is coming from something spinning inside for a change.

Don't get too excited when you find out that the BCD-3 has also Ethernet and USB ports on the back. These are for service purposes only (firmware updates). The Bryston BCD-3 CD player cannot play high-resolution audio files or be connected to a computer via USB or Ethernet for streaming.



Picture added by Bryston

The Bryston BCD-3 Is A Purist CD Player

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I have heard some good CD players in my day. But the level of detail this player produces is second to none.

THE DEMO
IS
EVERYTHING



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The Bryston BCD-3 is a purist CD player designed to deliver the best possible sound quality from your CDs.

However, it has top-notch build quality, a slim design and a full sound quality, making it an excellent choice for any audiophile looking for a high-end CD Player.

It is perhaps too expensive even for those who value the best sound quality and have a large CD collection. Still, it might be a worthwhile investment.

This is what we in the business call an "audiophile" level CD player. As much as some people say that all CD players sound the same, they don't.

You get what you pay for.

I have heard some good CD players in my day. But the level of detail this player produces is second to none. You will never need to upgrade to anything better than this player.

The digital design is very similar to the BDA-3 digital-to-analog converter and uses digital-to-analog AKM 4490 32-bit/384kHz DAC chips in a balanced configuration, albeit clocked to 44,1kHz digital bitstream only. The unit has a high-quality clock that ensures that the audio data is sent at the right time. Jitter is thus reduced, and distortion is kept to a minimum.

This CD player has a sound quality that can compete with even the most demanding vinyl setups and is well worth a listen.

Class A Analog Output Stages - Discrete Amplifiers

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The Class A analog output stage uses discrete operational amplifiers made in-house. Each of the analog and digital parts has its own power supply, so there won't be any interference that could affect the sound quality.

Nowadays, almost all CD players are equipped with DVD drives that can also be used as a CD transport. Since the BCD-3 is a purist CD Player, Bryston searched long for a drive clocked only to 44.1 kHz. And they found it in Austria. It was made by a company called Stream Unlimited, which is ironic for a CD drive manufacturer.

The CD transport drive used in the BCD-3 is designed to play only the original data on the disc and has some limitations regarding scratched and dirty CDs.



However, I put the CD transport through its paces with the Pierre Verany test disc and found that it complies fully with the Red Book standard (0.20 mm/0.154ms), but, hélas, not much beyond that, while some CD players (with DVD drives, admittedly) can easily compensate for dropouts up to 2.40 mm and even 3.00 mm!

Keep in mind, however, that this “compensation” is done through heavy interpolation (the correction circuitry calculates the missing data and puts it back in the data stream). This huge amount of computer work goes against Bryston's goal to play only the original data on the disc.

Designed Specifically For CD Redbook Playback

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Nevertheless, the BCD-3 sailed through SACDs (Red Book Layer only) and CD-ROMs with ease. And only two of the twenty-plus CDs I played had a few hiccups, which I fixed by cleaning the surface. So, no worries. Keep your CDs clean and in mint condition and you will be fine, as it will minimize the likelihood of dropouts.

The BCD-3 is one of the few on the market that still has a compensation circuit for pre-emphasized CDs, which is the equivalent of the RIAA curve on LPs. Many people do not know this, but in the past, many CDs were secretly encoded to emphasize the mid and high frequencies to improve the signal-to-noise ratio. And these special CDs sound too bright if the CD player doesn't have a de-emphasis circuit.

Have you ever wondered why "Brothers in Arms" sounds better on some CD players than on others? Or 'Tubular Bells'? Or, surprise, the original versions of 'Abbey Road', 'Dark Side of the Moon' and 'Thriller'? The list is long and it can be painful because the age of innocence is over when you find out the original edition may not be better only different. **The Bryston BCD-3 can find the 'Emphasis flag' in the bitstream and compensate it to deliver a flat response.** Note: Not all pressings of this album have pre-emphasis - only those mastered or pressed in Japan, as were most of the pre-emphasized CDs in the eighties.

The BCD-3 can accurately reproduce the subtle nuances of music with regular CDs or CDs that have been pre-accentuated. This is especially clear in well-recorded classical music, where the BCD-3 can show how rich and complicated orchestral arrangements are without tampering with the timbres of instruments. The player also has a neutral and natural tonality that allows the listener to hear the music as it was meant to be heard, without colouration.

The BCD-3 is a great audio device that can play back the sounds and nuances of different albums very accurately and in great detail. If you are looking for a CD player that delivers the best possible sound quality for all your CDs, the Bryston BCD-3 is worth considering. If you are looking for a device that can also play high-resolution audio files, this CD player may not be the best choice for you.

IN CONCLUSION:

the Bryston BCD-3 CD player is a highly specialized piece of equipment designed specifically for CD playback, making it a great choice for audiophiles who still have a lot of old and new CDs.

For more information, if in Portugal contact EXAUDIO