



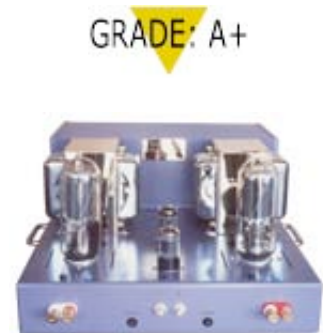
WYETECH TOPAZ 211A SINGLE-ENDED TUBE AMP

An \$11,000 single-ended stereo tube power amplifier from Wyetech Labs, a small Canadian company, the Topaz 211A is very impressive. Rated at 18 watts per channel and weighing in at a backbreaking 106 pounds, this amp is a marvel of build and parts quality. It uses one of my favorite output tubes, the carbon-plate 211, which has a directly heated thoriated-tungsten filament. Other parts used in the Topaz include AudioNote output transformers, Solen polypropylene capacitors, and Holco and RCD resistors. Many of the components are mounted to turret terminals plugged into Vector circuit boards, with short wires beneath the boards connecting the terminals.

The Topaz 211A's sound matched its build quality. Used with a pair of Tannoy's highly efficient (and highly revealing) Churchill speakers, the Wyetech amp sounded very relaxed and natural. It had great dynamics, inner detail, and space, and the bass was very powerful, tuneful, and extended. This is one of the best single-ended amps I have ever auditioned.

(Wyetech Labs: c/o North Country Audio, Cadence Building, Redwood, N.Y. 13679; 315/287-2852; www.cadencebuilding.com.)

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