



©2013 Gibson Guitar Corporation

*Gibson*  
CUSTOM

1993 - 2013  
**20**  
Anniversary

#### The 2013 Historic Collection

1993 marked a significant milestone in the history of solid body electric guitars. It was in that year that Gibson Custom began its very ambitious quest to recapture the craftsmanship, performance and quality of an era that had passed more than forty years ago.

When the Gibson Historic Collection was presented to the world, it was met with excitement, as well as skepticism. At the time, we knew that we had created the most accurate replicas of Gibson's most sought after guitars from the 1950s, the decade in which Gibson cemented its place in guitar history. We also knew we had a long way to go.

Time moves on, and with it, materials become scarcer, the march of efficiency towards bigger, faster and better can take the place of extreme quality. Meanwhile, costs become prohibitive, and unique human skills become so niche as to be outdated. To move back in the past and recapture the essence of the most exquisite guitars ever made, there would be a continual headwind that would never give in or cease. Every day would see increasing scarcity of materials, increased pressure to keep very specialized skills and techniques alive and to accept that someday, no matter how intensely we may fight to keep this flame alive, it will end.

Today, we celebrate 20 years of our continued commitment as the torchbearers of, not only Gibson's legacy, but also American craftsmanship and the value of human ingenuity. We believe today, as we did 20 years ago, that there remains a place in this world for the best of the best; and that there is a beauty that extends far beyond the glossy sheen and gratifying weight of a finely crafted Les Paul.

In 2013, we bring the most discerning players and collectors in the World, the most refined collection of Historic Reissue guitars we have ever had the pleasure to craft. Through milestone achievements that reflect 20 years of a passionate commitment by Gibson Custom's craftspeople, engineers and players and collectors from around the globe, the 2013 Historic Series of Les Paul guitars is the most "evolved" yet.



# Goldtops

1954 through 1957

Gibson Custom has reformulated its Goldtop finish to match the original's deep, dark, gold luster. The Goldtop's back is also reformulated to match the original from the 1950s.

In the case of the updated Gold, you will notice a deeper, richer finish with a slightly "greener" cast. On the guitar's back, you will see a noticeable increase in the visibility of mahogany grain and a more severe effect on the final color that comes from the wood's individual personality. As it was in the 1950s, each guitar back results in a very individual look, based on the use of vintage finish formulations and application techniques, and the characteristics of each individual piece of wood.

(L-R) 1954, 1956, 1957, 1957 Gloss, 1957 Darkback

# 58

## Les Paul

The vast majority of modern guitar joinery techniques employ PVA (polyvinyl acetate), an "advance" of science from the 20th century, that was created to minimize manufacturing time and limit skill requirements, effectively increasing manufacturing efficiencies. Prior to its advent, and for a period dating back thousands of years, animal or hot "hide" glue was the preferred material for joining wood in furniture, art and industry.

Gibson Custom is ushering back the use of hot hide glue in its crafting of Historic Series instruments. This truly ancient process requires more time to be taken in the crafting of each guitar as well as more curing time to allow proper drying and adhesion. The result is a better join of hardwoods that prepares each guitar for a lifetime of use, care and recuperation from damage.

The 2013 Gibson Custom Historic series now feature authentic hot hide glue at the neck joint.

(L-R) Faded Tobacco, Washed Cherry, Iced Tea



# 59

## Les Paul

In 2013, Gibson Custom re-introduces the use of single layer rosewood fingerboards into its Historic series of Les Paul guitars. Following the challenge of meeting global standards for the legal harvesting and processing of fine hardwoods from outside of the USA, Gibson Custom returns to its traditional use of single layer fingerboards featuring the finest available materials sourced, not only in accordance with US and international law, but also Gibson Guitar Corp. even stricter standards.

All 2013 Historic Les Paul Reissues now come standard with historically accurate fingerboard dimensions that compliment updated binding and color.

Updates to the 2013 Historic Reissue Les Paul series include the accurate reproduction of vintage Kluson machine heads as were used on the original 1950s Les Pauls. With proper profiles, performance specifications and quality of materials, these recreations mark significant attention to detail. The original Kluson "Deluxe" machine heads are coveted for their smooth performance, vintage aesthetic and rugged reliability. Only one manufacturer in the world has earned the right to proudly label their tuners as "Kluson".

(L-R) Washed Cherry, Iced Tea, Faded Tobacco



# 60

## Les Paul

For decades, Gibson Custom has been studying the performance specifications of the original Gibson Humbuckers, consulting with vintage specialists, testing original examples and pouring through the limited amount of historical data from our company's own manufacturing history of processes and materials that shifted over time. As a result, we recreated the most accurate reproduction of Gibson's original pickup materials, average performance specifications from the 1950s, and the techniques used to create what eventually became the most sought after guitar tone across multiple genres and generations of music: The Custombucker.

Among the details to capture the original tone of our legendary Les Paul is the proper length alnico 3 magnets as well as its exact materials composition. We've also studied the minutia to recapture nearly fanatical detail including the original wire material, thickness and covering.

(L-R) Faded Tobacco (Custom order), Wasted Cherry, Iced Tea (Custom order)



# SG

## Standard

The fretboard of the original 1950s Les Paul has a very distinct cream binding and binding thickness that were displaced over the years, eventually drifting to a slightly thicker material and darker color.

To recapture the original look and feel across the entirety of the neck, Gibson has worked to recreate a proprietary binding formulated to our original specifications. While the change seems subtle, there is a noticeable difference in both the aesthetic of the guitar and feel of the fretboard.

L-R) Faded Cherry, Faded Cherry Maestro, Classic White



1995 - 2015  
**20**  
Anniversary

# 35

1959 & 1963

One of the many improvements to the original Les Paul design, was the addition of a "sock", a flexible tubing that surrounded the truss rod cover to prevent rattling within the truss rod channel and allow for an easier installation of the neck spline. In addition, the specification of the truss rod's washer, which secures the passage of the rod into the neck and provides a brace for the adjustment nut, was changed over the course of years. Finally, the anchor on the end of the truss rod, deep in the interior of the neck, was changed to a flat anchor. All these changes basically allowed the guitars to be built in a more efficient manner. In 2013, Gibson Custom returns to the original specifications of the 1950s era Les Paul by removing the truss rod tubing and re-engineering the truss rod, truss rod washer and anchor to its original form. While it's not a detail you'll see easily, our goal is to capture the original Les Paul down to incredible detail as much as is possible.

(L-R) 1959 Dot Vintage Sunburst, 1959 Dot Faded Cherry, 1963 Block Vintage Sunburst, 1963 Block Faded Cherry





# Aniline

Early in the 19th Century, using natural dyes made from organic materials such as roots, berries and even insects, was the popular choice for fine wood finishes. The primary benefit of these materials was that they allowed the beauty of the wood's grain to show through with striking clarity. However, these natural color agents were prone to fade quickly and were difficult to produce with consistency. In the 1850s, a British chemist accidentally produced a strong purple dye while working with aniline, a clear, oily, poisonous liquid. Of its unique characteristics, aniline-based dye produced superior clarity of wood grain and color. Gibson adopted the use of aniline dye to ensure that its finishes were the highest quality and most visually appealing. However, aniline dye was also prone to fade when exposed to light, an attribute that would inadvertently create a legacy of much sought after variations of Gibson "sunburst" finishes of the 1950s. Many of Gibson Custom's current finishes, such as Iced Teaburst, BourbonBurst and Faded Cherry are representative of various stages of color fade from the original Heritage Cherry Sunburst and TobaccoBurst finishes from the 1950's. Because of the manual nature of their application and their tendency to create fine, airborne dust in a woodworking environment, aniline dyes were abandoned for pigmented dyes, which result in a cloudier grain presentation but were not prone to substantial color fade over time and exposure to light. Today, Gibson Custom has invested in its manufacturing environment and training to facilitate the use of superior aniline dye finishes.

