



Rotel RDV-1060

A great mid-market DVD player with excellent image quality that's almost as good with CDs

There's not exactly a shortage of DVD players on the market these days. As

befits the fastest-growing consumer electronics format of all time, the choice of machines is pretty staggering, from £30 supermarket specials right up to the likes of the amazing Bel Canto PLayer (see page 22). For the Rotel, placed firmly in the mid-market, the competition comes from another quarter: the same money will buy you an all-in-one DVD player/recorder, perhaps even with a built-in hard disk to give even greater time-shifting flexibility.

So the Rotel needs to be pretty special to justify its price, and I'm pleased to say it is. It may lack the very latest DVD player technology – there's neither a digital video output nor SACD playback capability – but where this DVD-V/A machine scores is in its superb picture quality, along with impressive playback when music discs are loaded and the analogue outputs connected.

The Rotel certainly looks the business – opinions are divided, but I rather like the combination of cool silver and matt black detailing in the form of the 'grab handles' either side of the fascia. This styling makes it a perfect visual match for the RSX-1056 receiver, and the build quality lives up to that of the partnering amplification, giving a feeling of solidity that eludes less expensive machines. This is anything but another anonymous player, from the two-line display to the rigidity of the disc-drawer and the quality of the rear socketry.

The design draws on both Rotel's upmarket RDV-1080 DVD player and the company's CD hardware, and uses a high-capacity power system with separate supplies for each section of the machine. Three Cirrus Logic/Crystal

NEED TO KNOW...

ROTEL RDV-1060

Price £695
Disc formats DVD-V/A, CD, CD-R/RW, MP3
Onboard decoding Dolby Digital, DTS, DVD-A, MP3, stereo
Audio DACs 24-bit/192kHz
Video DACs 12-bit/108MHz
Progressive scan Yes, PAL/NTSC
Video outputs composite, component, S-Video, RGB Scart
Audio outputs stereo, 5.1-channel
Digital outputs Electrical, optical
Control connections RS232, 12v trigger in, external infrared
Accessories supplied Remote handset
Dimensions (h x w x d) 9.2 x 43.2 x 33.6cm
Weight 5.1kg

Made by Rotel, Japan

Distributed by B&W Loudspeakers Ltd, Dale Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 2BH
Tel 01903 221800
www.rotel.com
www.bwspeakers.com

Semiconductor 24-bit/192kHz digital-to-analogue converters are used to handle audio, which is fed out via stereo connections (from CD or when using downmix) or a 5.1-channel analogue feed from DVD surround soundtracks or DVD-Audio discs. There are also electrical and optical digital outputs.

On the video side, the player uses 12-bit/108MHz digital-to-analogue conversion, while the component video outputs offer the option of both PAL and NTSC progressive video. Completing the

photography of James Cameron's *Ghosts of the Abyss* very well: the high-quality pictures, shot using the IMAX system, spring to life on this machine, and when Cameron overlays his 'ghosts' on the documentary footage it's hard not to gasp at the technical accomplishment of the movie.

The audio quality from the digital outputs is excellent, and that from the analogue outs is also very good: the player works well with DVD-A discs, Dolby Digital and DTS soundtracks from DVD-V discs, and above all with CDs. I'd put it

This machine scores with its superb picture quality and impressive music playback

connections are an RS232 for computer control, a 12v trigger input and a connection for an external infrared receiver, all designed to make the player easier in a multiroom or custom-install set-up.

Setting up the Rotel is easy, thanks to basic but clear onscreen menus. The sound from the analogue outputs was a bit thin and hard straight from the box but filled out and gained authority after a couple of days' use. There was no need to wait for the basics of DVD playback to improve, however: from new the player delivered pictures of superb quality even through the RGB Scart into a standard TV, and got even better when progressive scan was enabled and the signal fed out to a high-quality projector. When tested with the latest *Lord of the Rings* DVD the detail of the big, sweeping battle-scenes was immediately apparent.

The mix of rich, clear blacks and fine shadow detail, allied to fine colour control and sharpness, also serves the underwater

almost on a par with Rotel's budget CD player, the RCD-02, which is no mean feat: the 02 is one of the very best CD players in the competitive sub-£500 arena.

As an all-rounder, the Rotel might seem at a disadvantage by not playing SACDs, but for the majority of buyers this will be no problem: this is an excellent DVD player for sensible money, which happens to be a rather good CD player, too.

Andrew Everard

Rotel RDV-1060 £695

The score

92%

Home Cinema verdict

An excellent no-frills player designed to perform, and almost as fine with CD as it is with DVDs