

# Godin

# in the press

**5th Avenue** archtop acoustic

**GEAR** Bench Test

## Godin 5th Avenue

TESTED BY ART THOMPSON



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## Godin 5th Avenue

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IF YOU'RE OF A CERTAIN, AHEM, VINTAGE, then you may have learned to play on a guitar that looked a lot like Godin's new 5th Avenue. Of course, it would have had Harmony, Kay, or Silvertone on the headstock, sported painted on "binding," and its sound would have been way more funky than fabulous. Robert (pronounced Ro-bear in French) Godin must have been having a déjà vu moment when he came up with the 5th Avenue, which embraces the budget charm of those old mail-order acoustic archtops, while offering substantial upgrades in materials and workmanship, as you might expect from an instrument with his name on the headstock—a *gloss black* headstock no less! To wit, the 5th Avenue features such niceties as real cream colored binding on the body, a sweet-playing satin-finished neck with a rosewood fretboard, well-dressed frets, a nut that someone took the time to properly cut and fit, and a tortoise-colored pickguard and trussrod cover plate. The pretty Canadian cherry wood used for the arched top, arched back, and sides looks great, and the thin satin Cognac Burst

### SPECS |

MODEL	5th Avenue
PRICE	\$625 retail/\$519 street
NUT WIDTH	1.72"
NECK	Silverleaf maple
FRETBOARD	Rosewood, 24.84"-scale, 16" radius
FRETS	21 (14 clear of body)
BODY	Laminated Canadian wild cherry top, back, and sides
BRIDGE	Adjustable rosewood
TUNERS	Chrome-plated Kluson-style
FACTORY STRINGS	Godin Phosphor Bronze Light
WEIGHT	4.5 lbs
KUDOS	Quality construction. Great look. Fun to play.
CONCERNS	None



finish provides protection without hindering the resonance as a thicker gloss finish might (other colors include Natural and Black). The inside edges of the f holes are a little rough, and the binding work rates about a seven on a scale of ten, but these minor complaints pale in comparison to all the good things the 5th Avenue has to offer.

In particular, the setup feels excellent, the guitar intonates well and sounds musically in tune, and its voice is clear and sweet. There's a springiness and dynamic responsiveness to the 5th Avenue's tones that really makes it fun to play. Plucked lightly with the fingers, chords sound detailed and open, with supple lows and just enough crispy sparkle on top. Energized with a flatpick, the 5th Avenue retains its bright, balanced voice and doesn't get snarky sounding when you hank on single-note lines. You'd need to re-string it with flatwounds to make the 5th Avenue sound as jazzy as its name implies, but with its supplied phosphor-bronze wires it's a good candidate for styles where you'd reach for a standard flat-top. A singer-songwriter or a country blues picker



The 5th Avenue's rosewood bridge is height-adjustable.

could bond with the versatile 5th Avenue, and, with the addition of a pickup (which is factory installed on the 5th Avenue Kingpin model), this guitar could nudge into the acoustic-electric zone to cover everything from Charlie Christian-style swing to primordial rockabilly à la Charlie Rich. Besides being fairly priced, another cool aspect of the 5th Avenue is the Tric brand case it ships with. Molded

from high-density expanded polypropylene and secured with five stout nylon latches, this hip enclosure offers greater protection than a standard hardshell case, can withstand extreme climate conditions, yet weighs a feathery 4.2 lbs. Godin own the Tric name and is the only company using these cases, so kudos to our northern neighbors on that one, too. **B**