

£3,800

Fujitsu P50XHA58EB

Designed to handle SkyHD feeds, Fujitsu's new plasma is stuffed with expensive processing

DESPITE BEING THE FIRST company to sell plasma TVs in the UK back in the Nineties, it's now quite rare to see a Fujitsu screen on the high streets. Head into an independent dealer or book a full custom installation, though, and the chances are the latest Fujitsu TVs will be on the menu.

From one of the few companies to eschew LCD technology to deal exclusively in plasma TVs, this 50in is the star of Fujitsu's new Plasmavision 58 series, one that also encompasses the 42in P42XHA58EB. Fans of big screens will remember our fawning review of the 63in P63XHA51ES in the last issue of *What HDTV*, and this plasma comes from the same stable.

Big buckler

Big screens for big bucks, that's what Fujitsu is all about, but inside this 50in screen is where that outlay is really being spent. Available in silver or black, the latter a new style for the brand, the P50XHA58EB features the latest generation of Fujitsu's

picture engine, the AVM (advanced video movement) II processor.

In these days where full HD screens are hitting the market, it might disappoint to find that this plasma's resolution is 'just' 1366 x 768 pixels, but consider its other claims. Measuring 900cd/m² brightness and boasting a 3000:1 contrast ratio, we're expecting to be blown away by its pictures.

The P50XHA58EB is certainly dressed to impress. Uncluttered by too many controls or ugly speakers, the frame holds just basic power and volume commands. It's not so streamlined round the back, where twin HDMI and component video inputs sit alongside three audio inputs and those that are assigned for composite and S-video. That means there are three HD feeds – one analogue and two digital – from, say, a SkyHD box, Xbox360 and an HDMI DVD player (or soon a Blu-ray/HD DVD player), that can be fed simultaneously, and permanently, into this plasma screen.

Just remember that with no TV tuner, one input, whether it is HDMI or a simple Scart,

will need to be occupied solely with a set-top box of some kind or other.

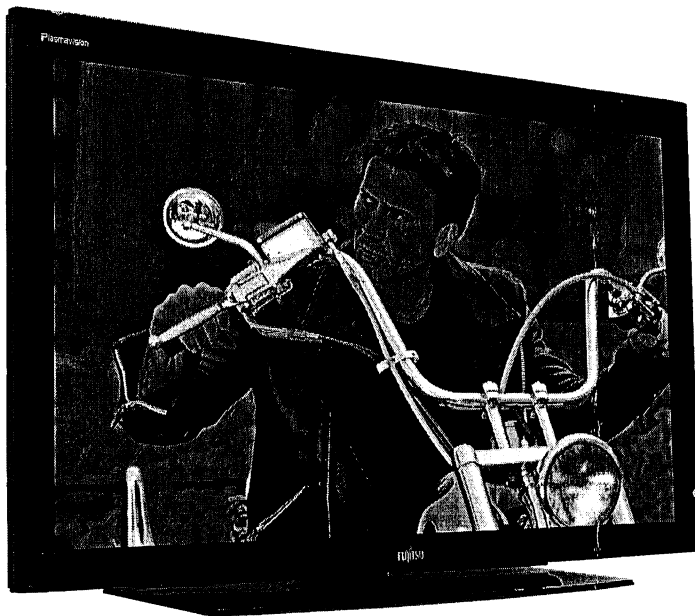
Networkers paradise

So if HDTV fans are happy, so should those who have a penchant for expensive automated home networks, because also around the rear is found a RS-232C socket for connecting the TV to a computer network, while a D-Sub VGA connection is also supplied for hooking up a PC. All of these individual inputs can be selected via the functional, if rather bland looking, remote control.

This kind of connectivity does make things rather easier and it is certainly worth the extra outlay. Few plasmas at this price range have got this advantage.

If the connectivity means less messing about, happily that can't be said of the on-screen menus. A picture tweeker's paradise, there's full access to a range of picture modes as well as individual settings that can be saved as user defined presets.

These cover everything from brightness and black levels to colour temperature,

**Key Features**

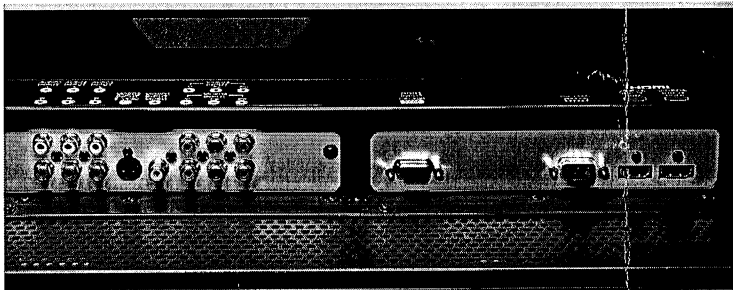
- No analogue or digital TV tuner
- Optional speakers
- AVM II picture processing engine
- Image Adaptive Processing
- Natural Colour Tuning
- Natural Light Sensor
- Image noise reduction
- 1366 x 768 resolution
- 900cd/m²
- 3000:1 claimed contrast

Connections

- Two HDMI inputs
- Component video inputs
- S-video input
- Composite video input
- VGA PC input

Dimensions

- 1,216(w) x 726(h) x 100(d)mm



sharpness and even colour focus, the latter designed to adjust individual colours such as skin tones. For the over ambitious there's also a get out clause in the shape of a 'return to factory settings' feature. Phew!

Ooh tweaky!

If you've got the feeling that this telly is aimed at the more discerning (for which read: wealthy and/or a home cinema nut) you'd be right, but that's not why we love it.

That's left to AVM II, which has been tweaked to suit HDTV viewers in the UK. Because Sky HD and Telewest provide HDTV pictures in the 1080i format, screens which have less than 1080 lines – like the P50XHA58EB with its 768 lines – can suffer from a loss of detail. The P50XHA58EB must de-interlace this 'i' format, and it does this with aplomb.

No jagged edges or blurring are apparent on our test footage from BBC HD's *Planet Earth*, which looks stunningly detailed. Colours are treated with care and shots of landscapes and close-ups both enjoy realism

and a sense of tremendous depth.

For standard definition material, if you must watch it, Fujitsu provides a Faroudja DCDi chip that gives a relatively clean result from upscaling footage, to fit its larger resolution screen.

Although struggling to match HD footage for clarity, DVDs are displayed with some grain and noise. Nothing new there then. HD-ready plasmas adept with such material are few and far between – as are screens that hit the HDTV heights that the P50XHA58EB scales.

That the PSP1000H speakers are optional (factor in another £180) is another indicator that this is meant to form the centrepiece of an expensive home cinema set-up and the company expects few to take it up on the offer. In fact, the audio prowess of this plasma is only limited to basic bass, treble, balance, and loudness settings.

So armed with an HD set-top box, a separate sound system and this Fujitsu plasma's advanced processing power, a slice of high-def heaven awaits. ☺

Verdict**Fujitsu P50XHA58EB**

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Web www.fujitsu-general.co.uk

HIGH DEFINITION	★★★★★
STANDARD DEF	★★★★★
SOUND	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
EASE OF USE	★★★★★
VALUE	★★★★★

VERDICT It's not 1080p and demands some patient tweaking, but this 50in gives among the finest performances with HDTV that we've seen from an HD-ready plasma.

Overall ★★★★★