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Simaudio Moon i-1

\$1500

Simaudio of Canada doesn't take short cuts, period. Perhaps this explains why we had to wait so long for its entry-level integrated, the Moon i-1. Well, the wait was worth it. Cosmetically the i-1 is all business, built on a rigid all-aluminum chassis and sporting a robust 50Wpc that doubles into 4 ohms thanks to an oversized toroidal transformer and a beefy power supply. As a result you not only get big-amp-scale dynamics but also a rhythmic liveliness, speed, and naturalism that are rare at this price. Also thanks to a very low noise floor there's a lack of electronic haze and hash, making the Moon i-1 one of the most purely transparent integrated amps in its class. (Reviewed by WG in Issue 185)



Pass Labs INT-150

\$6500

The INT-150 integrated amplifier might look like a Peterbilt, but its sonic bloom, dynamic bravado, and harmonic complexities suggest nothing less than vintage Petrus. Pass Labs' first foray into the ultra-competitive integrated-amplifier arena has brought us this 150Wpc powerhouse, notable for a neutrality that's tempered with a pleasing warmth. The INT-150 has an ease and fluidity that are not euphonically tube-like but emblematic of solid-state with a strong Class A bias. It also has a sweetness and romantic quality in the midrange that are disarming. This integrated fleshes out vocalists and reveals the full physicality of power-singers, from deepest bass-baritone to lilting coloratura. Audiophiles who maintain LP and SACD collections will be especially rewarded by the INT-150's wealth of micro-dynamic detail, fluidity, and spatiality, which really play to the strengths of these enriched formats. (Reviewed by NG in Issue 184)

