

Power Projection

EPSON EMP-TW600 LCD PROJECTOR \$3499

The battle lines have now been drawn. Joining the luscious Panasonic PTAE900 (reviewed in December's *Tone* 43) in the war against the DLP invaders is the latest LCD hot rod from Epson, the EMP-TW600.

The family resemblance to Epson's other home theatre projectors is obvious: this fashionable beast is clad in a designer coat of swoopy silver and white ABS plastic, so in terms of looks, the EMP-TW600 is the Miss Universe of the projector world.

But that's not all; the Epson has been created to match or exceed the performance gauntlet laid down by other highly rated projectors.

So let's talk about the technology involved. Another projector to use a very handy lens-shift function, the EMP-TW600 also uses an Auto-Iris system where both gamma and light are adjusted automatically to ensure the best picture at all times. Analogue Device's Noise Shaped Video chipset has been employed to increase the S/N ratio and linearity of the video signal, while Epson has introduced the ETORL lamp to vastly improve light output efficiency. A new generation 1280 x 720 widescreen panel is employed to make your movies, sports and music videos that much more enjoyable and realistic. Connections provided on the EMP-TW600 are comprehensive, with composite/s-video and component, and the now important HDMI connector for digital signal transmission. Last of all is Epson's 10bit-drive Dream5 LCD system, capable of reproducing 1.07 billion colours for rich expression and smooth gradation. All this means a stunning contrast ratio of 5000:1, with not too shabby a light output of 1600 lumen. Not bad at all.



Luckily for me I had the services of Pioneer's stunning new DV-989AVI DVD player for a top class signal, and this fed its flawless imagery via the HDMI output into the EMP-TW-600. And what a picture!

Outputting at 720p, the images were rich and detailed, with real 3-dimensionality and an excellent colour palette. Blacks were well defined and had a genuine depth to them (black resolution is an area LCD projectors generally struggle with), while motion was seamless and realistic.

The Fifth Element (Superbit) astounded with vibrant colours and lack of digital artefacts, and I seemed 'locked' to the screen, such were the brilliant images on display. Equally impressive was the lack of the dreaded 'screen door' effect, so often a hallmark of projectors of lesser pedigree. Later on, I slapped on the 'slacker' comedy *The Wedding Crashers*, which was stunningly reproduced through the EMP-TW600 with fabulous detail and vibrancy. And remember, this is no \$10,000 device - rather an entry level (but upmarket) projector offering film magic for the masses.

It's an excellent effort from Epson, and most definitely a rival for anything else out there. ■ GARY PEARCE

DETAILS

CONTACT

www.epson.co.nz

SPECIFICATIONS

16:9 1280x720 LCD home theatre projector
HIGH CONTRAST RATIO: 5000:1
BRIGHTNESS: 1600 ansi-lumens
VIDEO: HDMI (x 1), component, s-video, composite video
FAN NOISE: 26dB (whisper mode)
WEIGHT: 5.2 Kg

FEATURES

- AUTO IRIS
- 10 BIT COLOUR PROCESSING
- INPUT/OUTPUT CONNECTIONS

PLUS

- ✦ Fabulous, high quality images. Why bother with a plasma?

MINUS

- ✗ Er, um? Nothing

VERDICT

Magic pictures for an amazingly reasonable price

Aesthetics	95%
Performance	90%
Features	95%
Functionality	95%
Price Value	95%
Overall	

