

Black Beauty



EPSON EMP-TW1000 LCD PROJECTOR \$7999

In what is becoming a flood of 1080p projectors available in New Zealand, Epson has delivered a veritable tsunami with the new EMP-TW1000.

It's the only projector on the market to sport HDMI 1.3, and although this doesn't necessarily make the projectors from other manufacturers obsolete, the new version of HDMI allows for a far larger colour space than previous HDMI standards. We're talking billions of colours rather than millions, and at 30-, 36- and 48-bit pixel depth rather than the 24-bit depth utilised in HDMI 1.2. HDMI 1.3's 'Deep Colour' ability will also eliminate on-screen banding, increase the already impressive contrast ratio on tomorrow's display devices and provide a generally more realistic picture overall.

The only caveat is that you must have an HDMI 1.3-equipped source, and if you're routing it through a receiver this must also utilise the latest version.

When they become available, you'll then be able to sample such goodies as uncompressed high-bandwidth Dolby TrueHD and DTS-HD audio decoding, and having had the pleasure of uncompressed LPCM sound from both Blu-ray and HD-DVD, I can vouch for its superiority over plain old Dolby Digital and DTS.

So that's the intro done and dusted. For this test I had the Ed supply me with a brand new Sony PS3, currently the only HDMI 1.3-capable disc player on the market (it's real good folks), and I used both Blu-rays and DVDs.

Setting up the Epson is a breeze. Total flexibility is assured with the excellent lens-shift feature and booming 2.1x zoom, and I had an awesome picture in no time at all. Plugging the TW-1000 directly into the PS3 (my receiver is only HDMI 1.2) produced clean, dynamic images without tweaking the extensive colour management facilities in the menu (easy to use, I might add).

I didn't have any of the competing projectors to compare the TW-1000 with, but certainly the beautiful Epson produced stunning imagery that had no foibles or points of disdain.

Black levels were impressively deep and rich, while skin tones on movies such as *SWAT* and *The Fantastic Four* on Blu-ray were razor sharp, without any artificiality to the picture quality (except the bogus special effects on *TFF*).

Playing good old DVDs also proved rewarding, as the TW-1000 produced extremely clean, detailed imagery that belied the lower resolution of the format. *Children Of Men* and *Blade* played through the Epson had excellent contrast and colour, with impressive blacks and seamless picture quality.

It's a superb projector, and it left me pondering what spending more money would achieve. My advice? Buy this now, enjoy it for a few years and wait for some industry propellerhead to invent a 3D projector. There's the upgrade path!

So there are no weaknesses with the TW-1000 that I could find. In short, it's easy to accommodate due to its lightweight and compact dimensions, uses inorganic LCD panels (so they'll last for ages), has an excellent zoom lens with lens shift, and it looks great to boot. And it's (relatively) future-proofed with HDMI 1.3. All hail the new king! ■ GARY PEARCE



DETAILS



CONTACT

www.epson.co.nz

SPECIFICATIONS

- 16 x 9 LCD high definition home theatre projector
- HDMI version 1.3
- Contrast ratio: 12000:1 (with auto-iris on)
- Brightness: 1200 Ansi lumens (high brightness mode)
- Zoom ratio: 1.0:2.1
- Auto Iris
- 10-bit colour processing
- Native Resolution: 1920 x 1080
- Fan Noise: 26dB (whisper mode)
- Weight: 5.6kg
- Input / Output Connections:
 - 1 x HDMI
 - Component
 - S-Video
 - Composite video
 - Control I/O: D-Sub 9-pin x 1 / RS-232c x 1

PROS

- + Fantastic picture quality
- + Easy to use
- + HDMI 1.3

CONS

- ✗ (Shrugs his shoulders...)

VERDICT

Amazing performance at a great value price point

Aesthetics	95%
Performance	94%
Features	95%
Functionality	95%
Price Value	95%
Overall	

