

**We should take
the Chinese very seriously:
Mayson MS9/S**



It was really only four years ago that a Chinese luthier replied to my question about the wood of a guitar top by saying furniture wood! It was a time when only a handful of people from the Far East were able to produce acoustic guitars on a Western quality level. But oh, how times have changed ... and in our favor. Before one had professional excuses to buy 'expensive' American or European instruments. Are you a collector, then this is still valid. Although, it would not surprise me if for instance an exclusive Blueridge with Rio or an Eastman with koa wood will become collectibles. This time, we are startled by Mayson Guitars of Mr. Wang (how could it be otherwise!). In this way, we love to be awakened. Mayson Guitars offers quality, in a non-traditional form and with a quirky design. It leads to professional instruments, which remain very attractive in terms of price. Mayson guitars start at around 350 euros, never giving you the idea that these instruments were made in haste. No, the affordable models leave a big impression! Unusual, but for a change we opted for one of the most expensive models with an Alpine spruce top, an ebony fingerboard, back and sides of Madagascar Santos rosewood. Solid off course!
By NICKY Moeken.




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Rarely will you find such gifted luthiers as those of Mayson. But without any arrogance. They know a lot, listen to colleagues and are always willing to explain their views. One thing however they want to keep a secret: the bracing construction. They explain that they made it in a special way without revealing how. Anyway, the effect on the sound is impressive.

Quirky body shape
Mayson has named this model Marquis, not related in any way to Martin models from the fifties. It is the name for their body shape, which lies between a Grand Auditorium and Small Jumbo. Of course many variations with cutaway or electronics are to be considered. Their own preference is with LR Baggs or Fishman electronics. 🎸



In a glance

Mayson Musical Instrument Co., Ltd,
Hey Yuang Industry, Guangzhou, China
Model: MS-9S Auditorium / Small Jumbo
 variant called Marquis
Design and construction: Alex Wang

Retail price: € 1450, including case
 Left-handed and cutaway available

Main Features:

6-string acoustic model with a unique bracing construction and shape.

Wood species:

- Solid European (Alpine) spruce for the top
- Solid Santos Madagascar rosewood for the back and sides
- The neck is made of Sapele mahogany with an ebony fingerboard.
- The bridge is made of ebony.
- The headstock is made of Indian rosewood
- For the braces they used Sitka spruce
- Rosette has rosewood rings
- The bindings are composed of six strips of wood: rosewood and maple

Dimensions:

Total length: 103.7 cm
 Scale: 65 cm
 Nut width: 4.27 cm
 12th fret width: 5.27 cm
 Radius unknown

Electronics:

Optional and recommended L. R. Baggs Anthem

Hardware:

- Produced in Taiwan, Mayson designed closed machine heads with a ratio of 14:1
- A strap button

Accessories:

- 2 year warranty against manufacturing defects
- Luxury lockable case
- Care instruction
- D'Addario coated strings 0.012 Gauge

Extra:

- Double action trussrod with adjustment wrench
- Bone nut and saddle
- Cleaning cloth

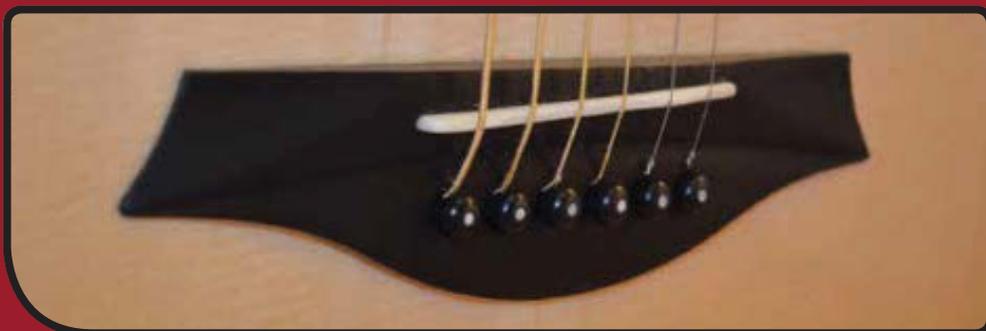
The MS9/S confirms being a bargain once you examine all materials. Looks like they're just on the verge of what is acceptable. Last month during the meeting in Thailand CITES raised rosewood from Honduras and Madagascar one level. This means, that these species can only be exported under special conditions. The next step is that we will need a passport for the instrument once we want to take it abroad, as decided last month for Rio and Koa. Read more about the latest CITES developments elsewhere in Guitar Plus.

Smiling over the word 'plastic'!

Our test sample has back and sides of solid Madagascar rosewood. To builders of reputation (Martin and company) this is the best alternative to Rio rosewood. Considering the reaction of environmentalists they are right, but success will have a short life. This wood will follow the path that Rio went fifteen years ago. Now more affordable, but ... So grab your chance.

I guarantee you that this Mayson's value will double in ten years.

Everything on this product is made of wood. We would show a grimace, the Chinese smile when you pronounce the word plastic. Please, NOT on a professional instrument. The same applies to their belief in bone for the nut and the bridge saddle, each part crucial for a balanced, strong sound.



Fingerpicker as well as the rhythm guitarist

What they do to the braces is unclear. It provides a dynamic, almost overwhelming sound projection, with a balance between high, medium and low that will startle you. The low E on our model sounds a little flat from the seventh fret onwards, but this can be adjusted during a good set-up..

The transition from E to E is smooth and convincing. The basses are deep enough to please the fingerpicker while the mid frequencies generate that famous growl to realize a fierce attack.

The high frequencies are never shrill and sparkle to your heart. Simply said, a wonderful sound that will never bore you.





Consistency!

What Mayson did, seems simple. They investigated what the professional player expects of his instrument. So they chose the better solid woods, wooden bindings and rosette, bone nut and saddles. The machine heads are always a reason for concern. When you mount a new set of strings, you usually need to stretch them about ten times to get a nice stable sound. Reasons for that can be found in the extensibility of the strings, the course over the bridge and nut and the (in-)stability of the machine heads. In the case of our Mayson the self designed Asian tuners gave no problem. After less than fifteen minutes, the tuning was stable and remained stable. The neck dimensions are rather mainstream, allowing you to quickly get used to this guitar as your favourite piece.

Accessories: Some background information about the company could be a fine addition. An adjustment pin for the double action truss rod is supplied in a neat guitar case.

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After one day

If you talk to guitarists and music retailers about the current production standard of Chinese guitars, you will find that about eight brands fight each other for a position on the shelves. However, I believe that the big brands like Martin, Taylor, etc. have to be careful. If you look at the range of Mayson Guitars, you can spend the rest of your life with them going from a starting model to their top model without missing out on anything you might desire. Secondly, Mayson doesn't copy. They have their own ideas and try to further develop them. Right now they already can be very satisfied and we can expect that they will further develop the sound and playability. Looking at MS9 we can say that this top model with Madagascar rosewood and an AAA spruce top at this price is serious competition for the big brands. Secondly, the playability is very comfortable and the sound is broad and balanced. We have to get used to the name, but the quality is the best promotion for this instrument. What an addition! ✓

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