

## Press release

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Above: Quad Artera Play+ with silver front panel

## Artera Play gets upgraded

**New version of the CD player/DAC/preamp from Quad's Artera Series adds features and improves performance, whilst also lowering the price**

*Cambridgeshire, England* – Quad has replaced the original Artera Play source component with a new version called the Artera Play+. Like its predecessor, which launched in 2015, the Play+ is a CD player, DAC and preamplifier combined in a single compact chassis. But while its form is familiar, the 'plus' suffix denotes a range of improvements that broadens functionality and enhances sound quality.

The first addition is the inclusion of aptX Bluetooth, enabling users to pair smartphones, tablets and computers and stream music wirelessly. Also new is a front-mounted headphone output, positioned discreetly beneath the fascia and coupled to dedicated circuitry that is designed to do justice to even the most capable of cans.

But the Play+ isn't just about adding convenience for music streamers and headphone users. It also enhances the overall sonic performance of the already highly regarded Artera Play.

Despite its attractive simplicity, the Artera Play+ sports cutting-edge sophistication beneath the skin. At its heart nestles an ESS Sabre32 Reference – the eminent 32-bit, eight-channel hybrid multi-bit Delta-Sigma DAC chipset – expertly implemented by Quad’s renowned electronics engineers. External sources benefit from this DAC’s exceptional quality via a range of digital inputs, handling PCM data up to 32-bit/384kHz as well as DSD64/128/256. This ensures the Artera Solus is fully equipped to make the most of today’s hi-res music formats, as well as future advances in ultra-high-definition digital sound.



For CD replay, a slot-loading mechanism buffers data from the disc before feeding it to the asynchronous DAC section. Four digital filter options enable users to tailor the sound from both CDs and external digital sources, to suit personal taste and the nature of the source material.

In comparison to the original Play, the Play+ improves the post-DAC analogue filter circuit with a refined topology and superior op-amps that were carefully selected for their synergy with the ESS Sabre32 DAC. The power supply circuitry has also been redesigned, with a larger toroidal transformer and independent low-noise power supplies feeding all critical stages to keep interference to a minimum. These changes contribute to greater sonic clarity and expression, with increased dynamic headroom and crisp, engaging musicality.



The Play+’s preamp section mixes minimalist design with high-quality components to ensure short, direct signal paths that preserve sonic purity. Volume is digitally controlled in the analogue domain, feeding single-ended RCA and balanced XLR analogue outputs. The signal path between the DAC and XLR output is a further improvement over the original Play, the four-channel volume control and fully symmetrical topology ensuring the Play+ makes the most of the performance advantages that balanced XLR connection to a power amp can bring.

Other cable connectivity options are plentiful. Five digital inputs – two coaxial, two optical and one USB Type B – cater for external digital sources (there’s also a USB Type A socket for software updates) while a pair of RCA phono inputs handle analogue sources. Two digital outputs (optical and coaxial) and a 12V trigger output complete a comprehensive connectivity array.



The new Play+ joins the Stereo power amplifier and Solus all-in-one system in Quad’s Artera Series. The Play+ and Stereo are perfect partners – the latter sports the latest version of Quad’s famous Current Dumping topology to deliver a captivating combination of dynamic power, vice-like grip and sumptuous sonic detail from a compact, cool-running power amp.

All Artera Series components share the same compact 32x32cm footprint, with a crisp, clean aesthetic that both evokes Quad’s past and looks forward to the future. The housing provides a rigid structure that exudes quality and resists interference from external vibrations, with a textured aluminium front panel, thick glass top and CNC-routed heat sinks on either side. The sleek appeal of the Artera components is further enhanced by intuitive touch-sensitive controls built into their circular OLED displays; a fully featured remote control is also provided.



In light of the additional features and circuit improvements, perhaps the most surprising thing about the Artera Play+ is its price. In 2015, the original Play launched at an RRP of £1,399.95. Thanks to increased production efficiencies, Quad has been able to deliver this enhanced component at a significantly reduced RRP – just £1,199.95.

The Quad Artera Play+ is available from late August, with a choice of black or silver front panels.

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# QUAD

Of all the British high-end hi-fi brands, Quad boasts the longest and most distinguished history. The company has been at the cutting edge of audio since 1936, continually pushing back the boundaries of performance with technologies both new and established. In 1953, the Quad II valve amplifier was launched, setting new standards for audio amplification, and three years later Quad invented the first full-range electrostatic speaker – later known as the legendary ESL 57.

Throughout the ensuing years, Quad products have continued to win worldwide acclaim, building a reputation for excellence that bears comparison with the most distinguished brands in any field. Quad has been part of the International Audio Group (IAG) since 1998, following its acquisition from the Verity Group (alongside Wharfedale). The company's design and technical support teams and much-admired servicing department continue to be based in Cambridgeshire, England, supported by key personnel who have worked with Quad for decades.

IAG's exceptional resources and unrivalled audio manufacturing facilities ensure that Quad's current range boasts many award-winning products, including the latest generation of ESL electrostatic speakers, class-leading valve amplifiers, dynamic 'box' speakers, planar magnetic headphones and a range of solid-state audio electronics that fuse high-end performance with elegant, versatile design. More than 80 years after its formation, Quad continues to be driven by the philosophy of its founder, Peter Walker, to produce "the closest approach to the original sound".

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