



REVIEWS

Perlisten S7t Limited Edition loudspeaker review



MAY 2, 2025 BY **ANDREW SIMPSON**

While some emerging hifi brands take years, decades even, to settle into their stride in terms of fit, finish and sounds, Perlisten hit the ground running from the get-go. As despite being less than ten years old and [even newer to UK shores](#), this is a loudspeaker manufacturer that's released products which are every bit as fully fledged as the best in the business from day one, as we discovered when we [reviewed its R5t model](#).

And this is in part due to the combined experience of those at the brand's [top table](#), which draws on decades of working with a range of renowned global brands before forming Perlisten. That's all well and good, but it's how this experience translates into a brand's sonic capabilities that really counts.

We first got wind of this no-compromise S7t Limited Edition model at [last year's UK Hi-Fi Show Live](#), when the standard S7t (£19,000) was being driven with jaw-dropping results by multi-amped Primare electronics. This led us to sit down with both [Primare's Terry Medalen](#) and [Perlisten's Erik Wiederholtz](#), to chew the cud on what had gone into this stunning system. *"If you think these are good, wait until you hear the LE version"* quipped Erik, and wait we did, as these puppies have been in high demand ever since.



Perlisten S7t LE in 'Piano' black taking up residence at Audiograde HQ. Other finish options include cherry, black cherry, ebony and ebony high gloss

The S7t LE builds on the standard S7t, which was Perlisten's top speaker until these extra finessed versions arrived, and adds so much more to what was an already highly accomplished model. Almost every element has been upgraded. And when the chaps at Perlisten say "Limited", they mean it, with only 50 pairs being produced globally. Each pair comes packing its own set of individual measurements from personal testing at Perlisten's Wisconsin HQ by company top dog Dan Roemer, such is their exclusivity.



Carbon fibre side panels set the S7t Limited Edition apart from the standard model, upping its performance, looks and weight

Cabinet king

Starting with the most obvious upgrade, these LE models come sporting all new carbon fibre side panels which aren't just for show, as the speakers' HDF cabinets feature strategically placed vents, allowing the carbon panels to increase overall cabinet volume by 8%, while adding extra stiffening.



At almost 1.3m tall and 400mm deep, the S7t LE is a substantial speaker as you'd expect, although its more manageable size-wise than some rivals (including [DALI's Epikore 11](#), which add another 30cm in height)

At its heart the S7t LE remains a four-way passive tower, with a proprietary DPC (Directivity Pattern Control) high-frequency unit in the centre of a sculptured front baffle, flanked vertically by twin 180mm woofers above and below.

The high-frequency unit is Perlisten's trademark triple tweeter DPC array, which sports two 28mm TPCD (thin ply carbon diaphragm) Textreme domes north and south of a 28mm beryllium dome, with the latter operating above 4.4kHz. And while the sculptured CNC machined waveguide may look familiar, for the LE version it's formed from a 40mm billet of 6061-T6 alloy, that also allows it to operate as a heatsink, helping to maintain even temperatures across all three tweeters.



Milled DPC waveguide is precision cut to within 0.1mm tolerances, before being heat-treated and anodised

For midrange and bass duties, the S7t LE's quadruple cones have also been upgraded. As while the TPCD Textreme inverted domes may look familiar, behind them lives a redesigned voice coil with longer windings, new secondary aluminium shorting ring (to improve thermal management) and an external copper heatsink, which despite being buried within the depths of the speaker, is beautifully branded, just so you know.

And the electronics' improvements don't end here, as the crossover is also more finely tuned with all of its components tested to be within 1% tolerance, meaning each pair is personally matched to within 0.5dB of each other.



Anyone for Chess? Perlisten's carbon woofers' chequered pattern stands out from the crowd

Dancing shoes

Backing up the bass, the S7t LE's cabinet hosts twin down-firing reflex ports which exhaust via dark mesh covered panels at the rear and side of its lower flanks. Foam plugs are provided should this be too much (as the S7t LE extends down to a claimed 20Hz in room), but to me, this seems to undermine how the speaker has been designed to perform and I'd only be using them in extreme circumstances, or just buy a smaller speaker.



S7t LE's isolating feet are custom made by damping specialist [IsoAcoustics](#), offering stability and easy adjustment. Note the grille covered bass vent in shot

And speaking of the lower cabinet, the LE's supporting system is also worthy of praise, comprised of an 18kg, 20mm thick machined steel base plate hosting outrigger damping feet, specially designed by IsoAcoustics, which sport rose-gold trims that match the LE's gorgeous speaker terminals on its rear panel (see pic lower down).

Having [tested](#) IsoAcoustics 'standard' isolating feet in the past, the ones these speakers wear are much more substantial in comparison. And they need to be, as the S7t LE weigh in at a back-busting 84kg per speaker, which is almost a 25kg increase over the non-LE version, showing how much extra mass the former's upgrades add up to.



Saucer-shaped magnetically attached front grilles are well made. With ten in total, they look just the part should you want to protect those drivers from the elements

Another well thought out approach is Perlisten's approach to speaker grilles. I've lost count of the hi-end speakers I've reviewed with stunning finishes and cabinets that are then let down by full length grilles which look drab and dated, whereas the S7t LE gets individual metal dome grilles that can be magnetically attached in seconds without ruining the lines of the speaker's front baffle.

Performance

Whether it's due to the DPC's high-frequency 'acoustic lens' approach, the D'Appolito driver orientation, down-firing bass ports or all elements combined, these speakers aren't as sensitive as many to room positioning as many rivals. I recall the [R5t](#) being similar in this respect and for the S7t LE this flies in the face of hi-end loudspeakers which often sound great when roughly in position, but need hours of careful tweaking to make their performance truly exceptional.

It's also a welcome relief as shifting around the equivalent of two 13 stone blokes takes some effort, so with each speaker 60cm from a rear wall, 1.2m from side walls and toed in so that their directivity crosses over a little behind my seating position has both speakers sounding on song.



In full swing, being driven with ease by Primare pre and power amps

As distributor Karma-AV's review pair, these examples sound nicely run in straight from their crates. Partnering gear is initially my Michi X5 integrated, with Primare PRE35 Prisma and A35.2 pre/power amps waiting in the wings, as I was keen to see if my Hi-Fi Show Live memories were as accurate as I remembered.

Also in the system are [In-Akustic Referenz 2404 Air](#) loudspeaker and balanced interconnect cables, a brand I've always found work well with Primare gear, being exceptionally transparent to allow their smooth yet detailed character to shine through.

Sitting down to Dylan's seminal *Blood On The Tracks* album at 24-bit/96kHz via Qobuz highlights what these speakers are all about. From the first bars of album opener *Tangled Up In Blue* the soundstage is notably vast and all encompassing, being expansive as it is engaging as you're enveloped in a mix that's bursting with detail and energy. This presentation from the S7t LE is, in many ways as close to surround sound as two-channel gets (if that's not an oxymoron).

Mood swinging to the next track *Simple Twist Of Fate* underlines how versatile these speakers are, shifting focus from sit up and take notice grand dynamics to heart string tugging intimacy. Every guitar strum, subdued bass note and lyric has a clarity that's just a joy to experience, which when combined across the way these speakers present this album stops you in your tracks, to borrow from Bob.



In-Akustik Referenz balanced and loudspeaker cables worked well in this system and are more than worthy of audition

And then there's the bass. The way these speakers handle lower registers from music that isn't particularly notable in this regard shows how well balanced these speakers are. Take the last track for example, that slightly deeper note around 16 seconds in goes unnoticed on most speakers – even the best – but the added weight and depth the Perlistens afford it is pure class, and really brings the song to life.

Take it to the bridge

Swapping out the Michi for the Primare hardware highlights how much these speakers like to be pushed. While its 350W into 8 ohms is hardly puny, the S7t LE's 92dB sensitivity combined with a 4Ω load tells you they don't need loads of power to drive them, but they'll welcome as much as you can offer.

And with a pair of Primare 35.2 power amps operating in bridged mode as monoblocks for a whopping 800W per side means the Perlistens are in their absolute element. Everything opens up that bit more, and the control and precision these speakers muster is spellbinding.

Hearing Massive Attack's *Angel* on vinyl from their *Mezzanine* LP via my SME 20/2 with [AVID arm and cartridge](#) is a lesson in acoustic engineering done well. Bass has full force gut punch impact with exceptional clout, control and texture, as those four woofers drive my 30sqm listening room. Yet despite all this power, even with the volume up to council reporting levels, there's no sense of these speakers showing the faintest signs of fatigue.



This image doesn't do justice to how well made the massive chunky terminals are. Note the Limited Edition badge, telling you you're in the company of some seriously rarified hifi

Thanks to their large scale yet focussed voicing, these speakers really excel with live recordings, which is often where a true hi-end product stands and falls. Well produced music tends to sound like exactly that on any good system, but recreating an in the moment concert as though you're not only there, but trully enthralled to be so is a different challenge altogether. Hearing Tori Amos's 2024 rendition of *Cornflake Girl* from last year's *Ocean to Ocean* tour (Qobuz 24-bit/44kHz) is an experience to savour. The size of the venue is so well recreated that I'm looking to the stalls, so accurately do these speakers conjure scale. And when those ivory notes chime in it's nothing short of breathtaking. Wish I was there? This is the next best thing.

In summary

While these are a clear price hike compared to the model they improve upon, this is an uncompromising loudspeaker that offers exceptional performance from an already accomplished design approach. As a representation of Perlisten's ultimate loudspeaker intent, these are in fact easier to live with day to day than many rivals' statement speakers thanks to their sensible proportions, ease of positioning and abilities across all musical genres. For the lucky 50, these may be the only speakers you'll ever need.



Ideal for...

Generous listening rooms and capable systems. While they don't seem cheap, I've heard much more expensive speakers that cannot muster the S7t LE's magic.

Consider...

Only 50 pairs in existence, so if you've got the budget, audition them while you still can!

Specifications

Product type: Four-way bass reflex/acoustic suspension passive floorstanding loudspeaker

Driver complement: Flagship DPC Array 28mm Beryllium twin 28mm Textreme TPCD tweeters. Four 180mm Textreme TPCD woofers

Sensitivity (2.83V/1m): 92dB

Nominal impedance: 4Ω

Crossover frequencies: 500Hz, 1.1kHz, 4.4kHz

Frequency Response (+/-2dB): 80-20kHz

Frequency Response (-10dB): Bass reflex: 22-37kHz, acoustic suspension 32-37kHz

Dimensions (HxWxD): 1295 x 240 x 400mm

Weight: 84kg per speaker

Recommended amplifier power: 100-600W RMS

SPL capability (100-20kHz): 117dB peak <2%-2nd, 3rd Harmonics

Available finishes: 'Piano' black (standard) and cherry, black cherry, ebony, ebony high gloss (special edition)

THX certification: Dominus (large LCR)

Price

£30,000

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