

PS Audio Intros Stellar Strata Integrated Amp

Written by Frederick Douglas
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PS Audio announces the Stellar Strata-- an integrated amplifier pushing 200W per channel (into 4 ohms) the company says is balanced from input to output for sound quality and quiet operation.



The preamplifier stage features the PS Audio analog Gain Cell, a control centre eliminating the sonic degradation conventional volume controls can cause. The built-in DAC is designed by the PS Audio engineering team of Bob Stadherr and Darren Myers, and claims to deliver sound quality from any digital source. The amp feeds all digital signals in native mode into a proprietary 32-bit Digital Lens, a DAC component able to recognise the sample rate, re-clock the data, reduce jitter and apply other processing. The DAC delivers up to 384kHz digital audio depending on the source, with native DSD capability.

The Strata provides coax and optical digital, asynchronous USB and I2S inputs, plus three analog inputs including balanced XLR. A streaming module provides high-resolution audio up to 192kHz from streaming services, including Spotify, Tidal, Qobuz, Napster, iHeartRadio and DLNA. Users can control the streaming module using the PS Connect app and music server software such as JRiver, Bit Perfect, Amarra or Pure Music. The phone acts as a wireless controller, with the Strata receiving the audio stream directly from the internet via ethernet or

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wifi. A digital-filter-selection feature allows the listener to choose between slow, minimum and fast settings, and tailor the high-frequency response to personal preferences and program sources.

The output stage utilises an ICE high-current Class D module with the exclusive Gain Cell circuitry. PS Audio says it mirrors the sonic warmth of a vacuum tube while providing the power and control of solid-state. As mentioned earlier, the amp delivers 200W per channel into 4 ohms, or 100W into 8 ohms, and drives loudspeaker loads. It also features a built-in headphone amplifier, and adjusts the levels of each input to avoid large volume swings when switching between sources, phase and balance adjustments.

The Stellar Strata ships from June 2020 in a choice of silver or black colours.

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