

Pioneer Intros Flagship UDP-LX800

Written by Marco Attard
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Pioneer follows on the UDP-LX500 4K UHD Blu-ray player with a flagship universal disc player--the UDP-LX800, a player the company says is "purpose-engineered to provide a new state-of-the-art benchmark for 4K UHD Blu-ray and SACD playback."



As the step-up model from the LX-500, the LX-800 promises not only superior playback but even sturdier construction, with a 4.6mm thick, double-layer steel and steel-sheet chassis and a rigid, anti-vibration paint coated case holding the Blu-ray drive. In addition, a rigid frame structure inside the player segregates the power supply, processing and analogue sections in order to reduce electromagnetic interference. The result? A heavyweight player at 14kg (the LX500 weighs 10.3kg).

The chassis lacks ventilation holes in the top and side panels in order to limit noise leakage from the transport mechanism, while a spring-damped tray isolates the disc. Pioneer says it managed to reduce digital noise on the main printed circuit board, and it makes the most of the high-speed signal capabilities of UHD Blu-ray discs.

Connectivity comes through x2 HDMI outputs, with a "Transport" function cutting power to the analogue audio transformer circuit when connecting with HDMI in order to further improve the signal-to-noise ratio. A "Direct" function turns off the digital audio and video circuits, allowing users to enjoy high resolution audio sources and CDs with "enhanced purity."

The player supports SDR and HDR content, as well as Dolby Vision and PQLS (Precision Quartz Locking System), the system improving the accuracy of information sent to compatible Pioneer AVRs. It handles SACD playback, with analogue audio hardware borrowed from the flagship PD-70AE SACD/CD player with the same circuit layer and a pair of 32-bit, 8-channel Parallel Drive ESS Sabre DACs.

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Pioneer still has to announce when the LX800 hits the market.

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