

True Historic

The closest you can get to owning an original vintage Gibson



- *Only 200 1956 Les Paul Goldtops*
- *Only 300 1957 Les Paul Goldtops (100 Aged)*
- *Only 200 1957 Les Paul Customs*
- *Only 300 1958 Les Paul Standards (50 Aged)*
- *Only 800 1959 Les Paul Standards (150 Aged)*
- *Only 200 1960 Les Paul Standards (25 Aged)*

In 1993, Gibson Custom embarked on a mission: to recreate the beauty, feel, and tone of the original Gibson electric guitars from the 1950's, whose legacy has been cemented in guitar history. To truly achieve this goal, we would have to deliver an ownership experience that rivaled that of an original Gibson from the era. Through the years since that journey began, the Historic Reissue range of electric guitars from Gibson Custom has continually evolved through a collaborative effort between the engineers and craftsmen at Gibson Custom, and some of the most noted collectors and musicians worldwide. By studying the materials, manufacturing techniques, and the specifications of original vintage Gibson guitars, the Gibson Custom team has been able to continually improve the accuracy with which we recreate these rarities. In 2013, several key and long-awaited specification changes were made, making the Historic Collection even more accurate to the original guitars from the 1950's. In 2015, the accuracy reaches extraordinary levels.

Today, Gibson Custom announces the next leap in its Historic Reissue guitar range: True Historic. With updated appointments and obsessive attention to detail, True Historic is an entirely authentic ownership experience placing the beauty, feel, and tone of an original 1950's Gibson in your hands.



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A Fanatical Obsession with Details: The latest in the evolution of Gibson Custom Historic Reissue guitars represents a fine-grain attention to detail. From the scientific analysis of materials to determine their original formulations, to the hands-on study of countless vintage Gibson guitars and their nuances, the commitment to getting everything right is exhaustive. Once again using all available resources including the vintage community, players, and original engineering data, Gibson Custom started with the simple assumption that nothing was impossible and everything must be explored.

New Materials, New Processes, and New Skills: True Historic guitars feature re-formulated plastics based on lab analysis of original parts that were provided for study by the vintage guitar community. Each part has been recreated with the sole purpose of being exactly the right color, made from the right materials, and to look, feel, and perform as if they were plucked from an original 1950's Gibson guitar. Even the tooling marks and original part numbers are recreated.

In recreating an original Gibson, it takes more than materials: over the decades, the way a guitar is built has changed. Processes changed with materials as efficiencies were discovered, and the evolution of machinery moved some skills out of the hands of craftspeople. Gibson Custom has introduced several key processes and re-trained selected team members in order to handle the challenge of recreating the most accurate reissues ever. Getting every detail right adds time and labor to each guitar, but the goal has never been to see how fast or efficiently a Historic Reissue can be made. With True Historic, the concept of efficiency isn't a luxury that can be afforded - not when the goal is to recreate the world's most sought after electric guitars down to a level so meticulous that it borders on forgery.

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The Details:

"True Historic" Plastics: Based on lab analysis of original Gibson plastics from the 1950's, the plastics on the True Historic range, including the Toggle Washer, Cream Jackplate, Cream Pickguard, Pickup Mounting Rings and Toggleswitch Cap, have been re-formulated and re-engineered to the original specifications of their vintage counterparts. Even the tool marks, where applicable, have been recreated in exceptional detail. Turn over one of the pickup mounting rings from a True Historic Les Paul, and you'll see the part numbers, tooling marks, and manufacturer mark just as you would find on an original mounting ring from a 1950's Gibson.

As another example of the attention to detail invested into a True Historic Les Paul, the knobs are now made from the same materials as the originals and are hand-painted in a two-part process by filling the numbers from the inside of the knob in one pass, then the knob's color in a second pass - both steps by hand. The re-engineered True Vintage knobs were designed so the splines from the knob line up properly to fit the shaft of the CTS potentiometers. All of this required completely new engineering and tooling.

Pickup Covers: Gibson pickup covers from the 1950's had many unique subtleties due to the manufacturing process used to create the cover. The pole piece holes were punched from the underside, then the pickup covers were sanded from the top before plating. This process was a contributing factor in the final look of the cover. True Vintage pickup covers capture these "imperfections" and inconsistencies in their entirety.

Double-Carved Top: To recapture the top carve profile of original Vintage Gibson Les Pauls, all True Historic Les Pauls are double-carved by CNC, with the final shape of their dish carve achieved through a hand-sanding process. This replaces the single-pass carving and "slack-belted" process previously in place, and retains the more prominent dish carve and softer edges as found on Les Pauls of the 1950's.



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Neck Carve: Like the new top carve process, the necks on all True Historic guitars are double-carved and then hand-sanded to achieve that legendary vintage Gibson neck profile; the "beefy", solid feel of a beautifully hand-crafted Les Paul that rests in the player's hand like no other guitar.

"Broken" Peghead Edges, Smoother Edges Throughout: The peghead profile of an original 1959 Les Paul has a nearly imperceivable rounding to its outer edges. You'll notice the same characteristic throughout the fine edges of the True Historic range, including the pickup cavities, neck, and body. To recapture this subtle detail, Gibson Custom has updated its build processes with new hand-sanding procedures, insuring that every True Historic Les Paul gives off the aura of an original at the deepest level of detail.

Original, Thinner Holly Peghead Veneer: Original Les Pauls of the 1950's featured a thin peghead veneer, with "Gibson" proudly inlaid into it before being fixed to the headstock. In the decades that followed, subtle material and dimensional changes began to occur, and the veneer grew slightly thicker. True Historic Les Pauls feature the original 50's thin peghead veneer and, of course, the inlaid pearl "Gibson" logo that stands for the pride and authenticity of the World's Finest Guitars.

A Complete Finish Overhaul: All True Historic guitars from Gibson Custom are sprayed with thinner finishes, as were the original 1950's guitars. As changes were made to the finishing processes in the post-1950's era, finishes became thicker to allow for more aggressive buffing and sanding with handheld pneumatic "buzz" sanders. To recreate the thinner, vintage-style finish on True Historic guitars, Gibson Custom has incorporated new processes including revised spraying techniques, as well as dry and wet sanding by hand. The difference is brilliantly exhibited in a lush depth and authentic vibe that is undeniably vintage Gibson.

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Playability: Of the utmost importance to any guitar is its playability; the feel of the neck, frets, and strings when in use. True Historic Les Pauls feature updates to the fret and fingerboard dressing process to achieve the feel and performance of their 1950's counterparts. Like a vintage Gibson, True Historic Les Pauls have a soft roll to the binding edge, making the feel of the neck exceptionally comfortable, with no sharp edges. To make the neck feel complete and authentic, the fret wire has just the right amount of height for a distinctively smooth touch.

Scraping Process: An original vintage Gibson's neck binding has little to no scraping line where the binding meets the body, resulting in a smooth, uninterrupted playing feel. At the same time, a vintage Gibson's body binding will typically have a deeper scraping line. For True Historic guitars, Gibson Custom has made sure that both of these distinguishing features are recreated in precise detail so that the experience of owning a vintage Gibson Les Paul is complete, even in the tiniest details.

Hide Glue Top Construction: In 2013, Gibson Custom re-introduced the use of hide glue neck construction in its Historic Reissue guitars - a very old-school technique and material that had long since been replaced by synthetic glue for its faster set time and ease of use. While it may sound simple, it represented a major learning curve and reset of the neck fit area and team. In 2015, Gibson Custom extends the use of hide glue to join the back and top of every True Historic guitar, just as it was done in the 1950's.

Finally-The Last Step Is Just as Important as The First: The last step in the crafting of a True Historic Les Paul is the build out and set up. For our finest guitars, we strive to bring the rare joy of holding and playing an original vintage Gibson within reach of more players. Steps have been added at the end of the line to guarantee the best build out and set up; completing an initial set up process as well as tensioning the neck for a greater amount of time before another, secondary and final set up. This final step is our promise to bring you the experience of holding and playing a real vintage Gibson. Pick one up and we believe you'll agree that we've done just that with Gibson Custom True Historic guitars.

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New True Historic Parts Include:

- Gold and Black Top Hat Knobs
- Pickup Covers
- Pickup Rings
- Black Toggle Washer ('57 Custom Only)
- Cream Toggle Washer ('57, '58, '59 and '60 Les Paul)
- Backplate ('57, '58, '59 and '60 Les Paul)
- Cream Pickguard ('57, '58, '59 and '60 Les Paul)
- Cream Toggle Cap
- True Vintage Peghead Veneer

New True Historic Processes Include:

- Thinner Lacquer, Wet-Sanded by Hand
- Softer Vintage Edge Profiles Throughout
- Double Carved and Hand Sanded Top
- New Neck Carving Process
- Hand Filed Rolled Fingerboard Binding
- New Scraping Process
- New, Multi-Step Set Up Process