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# AVMAX

INDIA'S NO.1 AUDIO AND VIDEO MAGAZINE

## SHORT & HAPPENING

18 BOOKSHELF  
SPEAKERS  
TESTED

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Attention Please  
Spud In The Box  
Kai Po Che Amit Trivedi

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**PEACHTREE AUDIO**  
Decco65 Stereo Amp

### OPINION POLL

IS THE DEMAND FOR ACTIVE  
SPEAKERS ON THE RISE?  
Industry experts share their views



Review ▶ Peachtree Audio Decco65



## A Peach Of A Product

The Audio Decco65 forays into the land of home-entertainment and aims to deliver loads of value for money to the person who loves to listen to music with the best possible system. The Decco65 delivers a wholesome sound that will tempt you to take it home the moment you listen to it...

**P**eactree audio, has finally landed on Indian shores and audiophiles here can finally have the opportunity to lay their hands on their products. Peachtree Audio offers a number of audio solutions to enthusiasts who wish to use their desktop PC as a music hub. Their product line-up ranges from speakers, DACs, pre-amplifiers to power amplifiers and even integrated amplifiers with in-built DACs, which is a forte of the company. This month we have reviewed the Decco65, an integrated

amplifier that comes with a built-in DAC. Testing the integrated amplifier was quite a joy as we had a number of bookshelf speakers in the studio that were just waiting to be connected to the Decco65.

### OUT OF THE BOX

The Decco65 has a smooth, glossy finish and it stands on rubber feet that give it a good elevation above the ground level. This elevation allows the integrated amplifier to breathe as the passage of air underneath the amplifier also contributes to its cooling factor. The

Decco65 looks impeccable. Some people may perceive round, curvy edges for an amplifier as a little too soft, because we are so used to looking at big, and sturdy amplifiers with sharp edges and industrial finish. But the curvy edges and the piano gloss finish of the Decco65 stands out. The gloss finish of the amp (though prone to scratches) gives it a refined and a delicate look. Try not to get fooled by its design; the Decco is anything but delicate. Weighing a whopping 12 kgs, it implies that a whole bunch of serious electronics is at play here.



Adding to the beauty of the amp are the LED lights on the front face of the amplifier, colour coded with green (switch off) and blue (switch on); looks quite fancy we say.

### TECHNOLOGY

Over the years, we have seen bookshelf speakers incorporate analogue-to-digital converters in bookshelf speakers, making them smarter, just like the evolution of smartphones that is surrounding us today. The Decco65 proves that integrated amplifiers are also becoming smarter. The Decco65 is not just an ordinary integrated amplifier, in fact, it contains an ESS Sabre 9023 DAC in it. The DAC allows for an upsampling of 24 bit/192kHz, so if you connect your desktop PC to the integrated amplifier via a USB cable, you can directly play audio content through the amplifier and the ESS Sabre DAC will take over all the processing work. Thus jitter is eliminated at the source itself and the integrated amplifier is able to deliver a sonic output that is truly high in quality.

Apart from the USB input, the integrated amplifier also supports a pair of co-axial ins, along with an optical in and an auxiliary in. The auxiliary in allows you to connect your CD player or portable media player directly to the integrated amplifier. Now the ingenious Decco65 also allows you to use it as a DAC, so if you do not like the sound of the DAC that exists in your age old CD player, then

The amplifier delivers a well controlled sound without any loose corners and it keeps the treble sweet to the ears without sounding too harsh or bright in its presentation



you can simply use the co-axial or optical in and transfer all the processing responsibility to the internal DAC of the Decco65. Another USP of the Decco65 is its tube section that we quite like because of its sound quality. The Triode 6NIP has two active elements because it obviously supports stereo reproduction of music. The tube buffer allows listeners to enjoy the fruits of tube amplification right from the pre-amplification stage.

The harsh sound in MP3, digital files and all other low-resolution recordings is aimed to be driven away with this tube technology. Above all, when it comes to real power available from the integrated amplifier, the Decco65, with its high performance class D design, can deliver 65 watts of power into an 8 ohm load and 95 watts into a 4 ohm load. With such power ratings, it becomes quite evident that the Decco65 is also capable of driving not only bookshelf speakers but also floorstanding speakers. A majority of floorstanding speakers are capable of handling a power

inflow from around 30 watts to 150 watts and the Decco65 quite evidently falls in this category.

### REMOTE CONTROL

The controller of the integrated amplifier is uniquely shaped. From top to bottom the controller tapers inwards slightly to resemble a 'C'. This is done so that it can take the shape of one's palm and it also makes it easy to hold the remote control. The number of buttons on the remote control has been kept to a minimum, but all the necessary buttons are there at your service. The controller also features a tube button; this allows you to switch off the vacuum tube in the Decco65. With the vacuum tube off a considerable amount of warmth is lost from the overall sound, so it is best to avoid turning off the tube. In a way, this can also be seen as a tone control available for the Decco65, as you can add more warmth to the overall sound or listen to the music as it comes from the CD player.

### PERFORMANCE

With 65 watts of power we decided to use the Decco65 with a pair of bookshelf speakers, and since this month was the 'Bookshelf Speaker' special at AV MAX, we had a number of bookshelf speakers to pair them up with. I decided to settle down with the Boston Acoustics M25 and hooked them to the Decco65 with a pair of loudspeaker cables. The Decco65 has an instant, likeable quality about its sound and the integrated amplifier was well in control of the

M25 bookshelf speakers.

Through a variety of complex soundtracks like 'The Dark Knight', 'Prometheus', 'Tron: Legacy' and 'The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship Of The Ring', I noticed that the overall presentation of the amplifier was live and energetic. This portrayed the dynamic capability of the amplifier and it also conveyed that in terms of belting out continuous power this amplifier never ran out of juice. The sonic presentation was well presented and the overall extension in the low-end section was indeed good, the room was full of tight deep bass that had speed in it. The Decco65 had a good grip\* over the cone movement of the M25, there was no overhang in the bass and at the same time there was a high degree of precision in the sound. In fact, when I pushed the amplifier to some extreme testing levels with the album 'My Downfall' by Venetian Snares, the timing of the amplifier impressed me a lot. The album has a quick rise and drop of electronic elements that are very stressing for speakers, so much so, that, at times, you will literally notice the cones jump out of their suspensions.

What I liked the most about the Decco65 was its ability to handle such quick changes in the signal; it reacted fast and ensured that the drivers of the bookshelf speakers also had the correct timing in the way they presented the album. When we played Bjork, the Decco65 performed like a superstar in the way it handled the details in the album. 'Homogenic' is known for swift changes in the sound and its complex nature pushed the amplifier to the limits of its stress bearing capacity. But never once did the music sound strained or distorted. A common complaint with some integrated amplifiers is that the vocals tend to sound

### WHAT IS \*Grip

When we talk about the grip of an amplifier, we simply mean the control the amplifier has over the cone movement of the loudspeaker. This relates to the output impedance of the amplifier and the lower this number, the better it is for the speakers. One will be able to enjoy tighter bass and better transients if the amplifier has a powerful grip over the loudspeakers.

forward and this is a turn off for most audiophiles. This amplifier does not do any such thing. It portrayed Bjork's vocals brilliantly and her voice had a crisp centre focus that grabbed my senses and never let it slip throughout the album. Also, since you have the option to turn on the tube pre-amp, you can add warmth to the mid-range, this in turn makes the overall presentation sound much smoother to the ears. But for those who would love to hear the Decco65 playback some rock, drum and bass or hip-hop music, you wouldn't require the tube pre-amp to be turned on as these genres of music rely heavily on speed and immediacy in sound, which, thankfully, the Decco65 is also capable of delivering.

One way to describe the Decco65 is that it brings out the best in the loudspeaker that it is connected to. It delivers astounding detail in subtle musical passages and, at the same time, if you are looking for resolution in the loud sections of the music, the Decco65 won't let you down. I tried the Decco65 with the Dali Ikon 6 floorstanding speakers and the Amphion Helium 410, Wharfedale Denton, Elac BS 53.2 and the Energy CB-10 bookshelf speakers. After using the Decco65 with so many bookshelf speakers, I noticed that the Decco65 has an immense sense of tonal truthfulness. The integrated amplifier drove these bookshelf speakers brilliantly; its 65 watts of power was more than enough to drive them efficiently, but what is more important than power is that the Decco65 has a good grip over the loudspeakers. The amplifier delivers a well controlled sound without any loose corners and it keeps the treble sweet to the ears without sounding too harsh or bright in its presentation.

Lionel D'souza



### Specification

- POWER OUTPUT 65W@8Ω
- TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION <0.5%
- FREQUENCY RESPONSE 20Hz–50kHz ±0.1dB
- SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO NA
- DAMPING FACTOR NA
- WEIGHT 12.70Kg
- DIMENSIONS



Peachtree Audio Decco65	
PRICE	₹ 69,000
WARRANTY	1 Year
CATEGORY	Stereo Amplifier
AESTHETICS	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★
AUDIO	★★★★★
EASE OF USE	★★★★★
VFM	★★★★★
<b>WHAT SAY AV?</b>	
The Decco65 is an amalgamation of ease-of-use and value for money. You just can't go wrong when you connect the Decco65 to any speaker; it delivers exactly what it has been built to do. The tonal balance of the integrated amplifier is very good. Its musicality is warm and rich. In fact, it immediately grabs your attention once you turn the amplifier on. You don't need an audiophile's ears to tell the difference in sound quality. This integrated amplifier offers much more as compared to other products in the market. It is the best that you can get for your money and with a built-in DAC, you can just turn your desktop PC into a library of high-quality music.	
<b>OVERALL</b> ★★★★★	
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