The Dream guitar was designed as a Burns flagship model to celebrate the company's 50th anniversary and to satisfy the many requests of their customers for a more versatile professional guitar. Has it achieved its brief? Read on and watch the video to find out!

The main features of the Dream model are the figured maple top and neck and 22 frets instead of the standard 21. Available in four finishes, our sample came in Honey Burst with all gold hardware. Let's not beat around the bush here, the styling and finish on these guitars is, well, Marmite…(ie - for US readers - you either love it or hate it - Ed). Traditional/minimalists will probably hate it, guitarists craving something may well love it. All I will say is that the finish and attention to detail overall was top notch!

In terms of its abilities, the figured maple top body and neck combination gives great tone continuity and sustain, the maple fingerboard adding a bright sparkle to the top end. I will say that this is quite a heavy guitar but that assists the sustain and produces a fair amount of bottom end and depth even when unplugged. The Batwing headstock is a unique design feature and adds a fair amount of density to the guitar, but luckily doesn’t unbalance it, Burns own locking tuners keep everything in check, and make string changing a breeze.

The 24.75”, 22 fret neck was comfortable to play, with great action and good intonation throughout, although the back of the neck is varnished, which some players won't like as it can cause hands to stick once things get a bit sweaty! The body is a familiar comfortable shape, with a decent enough cut away for high end access. The bridge on this guitar is a substantial bit of kit, taking up a fair amount of the body, finished in gold and containing Burns engraving. It's also a part of the guitar that the eye is instantly drawn to. Set as a floating bridge, the action was smooth and consistent throughout its range. A retro looking tremolo arm operates it, and was fairly comfortable in use, once again there were no turning issues even after giving the whammy a fair amount of abuse.

As the name of this guitar would suggest, the Burns Dream comes fitted with noiseless pickups, designed by the leading pickup designer and all round guitar genius, Alan Entwistle. This will undoubtedly start a huge debate amongst single coil fans, some claim removing the “noise” that is inherent in single coils (especially in neck and bridge positions) also removes a certain amount of tone, sustain and attack. However, over the past few years great inroads have been made with noiseless systems and even the most hardcore traditionalist would be hard pushed these days to tell the difference in a direct A/B test. To Burns Rez-o-Matik pickups the company has applied ENR (Entwistle Noise Reduction) technology to a standard sized Rezomatik single coil, using exactly the same type of Alnico 5 magnets, and winding wire gauge. A specially wound smaller canceller coil sits directly beneath the original Rezomatik single coil. The result? I'm pleased to report that all of those vintage Rezomatik sounds are there but without the hum! For me this is the best thing about this guitar, classic '60s honky tones through to modern scooped leads are achievable on this instrument with the right pickup and tone selection, it really is very versatile.

One final thing to give a mention to is the Burns Gear-o-Matik Gearbox. First designed in the '60s by Jim Burns himself to allow fine neck setting, it couples to the steel truss rod tensioned through the neck to a gearbox with a hefty cog and worm which provides micro adjustment. It's a substantial bit of kit that once again adds more weight, but if you’re into micro-fine tuning your neck, then this is the thing for you!

The Burns Dream is a classic/vintage guitar given a fresh lease of life, with modern pickups and construction. Great sounds are available, as is easy playability. Sure, the styling won’t be to everyone's taste, but if you want to stand out from the crowd and be asked “wow, what's that?!” every time you open your case, then this could be the guitar for you!

It's also quite reasonably priced, especially given that it is a handmade guitar and comes with a high quality fitted case with a tool kit, strap and lots more goodies. You can pay more than this for a mass produced import.