



**STEREO SPEAKERS**  
Sonus Faber  
Cremona Auditor M  
£2690



**CD PLAYER**  
AccousticArts  
Drive 1 Mk2/DAC 1 Mk4  
£2990/£3195 Page 72



**HEADPHONES**  
Audio-Technica  
ATH-W1000 Sovereign  
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# Temptations

**THE WORLD'S MOST DESIRABLE KIT**

STEREO SPEAKERS  
SONUS FABER  
CREMONA  
AUDITOR M



£ 2690

**FOR**

A beautifully balanced sonic performance; lovely build and finish; visual elegance of speakers and dedicated stands

**AGAINST**

The Auditor Ms are smallish speakers, so the deepest bass notes are off the menu

**VERDICT**

These Sonus Fabers are exceptionally likeable speakers with the kind of sound you can enjoy for years to come

Four years on, Sonus Faber has updated its small but wonderful **Auditor M** speakers. The result? Head-turning Italian beauties that raise the style and sound stakes

**SONUS FABER REMAINS** the best-known Italian speaker brand in this country. Its products are always stylish and built to very high standards. They usually have an extra touch of class to the finish too, and a visual flourish that most of the high-end competition can't quite match. More than that, the company's products tend to strike a well-judged sonic balance, treading the fine line between analysis and listenability brilliantly.

We reviewed and liked the original version of the Auditor back in February 2004. It was, and the M remains, the entry point into Sonus Faber's middle-market Cremona range.

The two generations of Auditor are pretty much the same size, shape and style, but the M version has a new mid/bass driver, re-engineered tweeter and re-profiled baffle. These changes make an already good speaker even better. For all its strengths, the original had a slightly veiled sound that traded outright insight for overall sweetness. The new version hasn't lost any of the musicality but is capable of digging far deeper into a recording. You'll hear more of the layered instrumentation on Ravel's *Bolero* and keep hearing more as the piece gains in complexity. Dynamics are stronger and there are gains in speed, punch and agility.

**Small but mighty**

These speakers are great all-rounders, sounding as happy with the likes of Kanye West as they do with a Shostakovich string quartet. Stereo imaging is precise and focused allowing the Auditors to disappear in a truly out-of-the box

soundstage. These speakers do serious bass and high volume levels for their size, too. Integration between the drivers and overall refinement is top class, just as you'd hope for at the price.

Though they'll work on any decent stand, we would recommend going for the dedicated supports. These cost a hefty £575 but are worth every penny for the way they make the most of the Cremona's visual elegance, and optimise the speakers' acoustic output.

These are small speakers, but don't place them close to a rear wall or – even worse – on a bookshelf. Similarly, don't cut corners on the system front: you should budget at least three

grand on the source and the same amount again on the amplification. If you've got the resources, spend more, because these baby Sonuses are mighty revealing. They're a thoroughbred speaker: pamper them and they'll shine.

Shortcomings? We've come across speakers that time with more crispness and make more of rhythm tracks. That said, the Auditors don't come near to spoiling the music's message, so we won't make too much of this.

At more than £3000 for the speakers and dedicated stands, these Sonus Fabers are a big investment. Some won't be able to look past their petite dimensions or the relative lack of bass depth when compared to equivalently priced floorstanders. We don't share that view.

For us, these are some of the finest standmounters around – the kind of product you can grow old with. That's why the Auditor Ms richly deserve the full five-star rating.



**TYPE** Standmounter  
**SENSITIVITY** 88dB/W/m  
**IMPEDANCE** 4 ohms  
**FREQUENCY RESPONSE** 50Hz-30kHz  
**POWER HANDLING** 150 watts  
**BIWIRE** No  
**DIMENSIONS (HXWXD)** 35 x 20 x 37cm  
**WEIGHT** 9kg each  
**FINISH** Maple/black leather front baffle



