



AS SEEN IN THE
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EDITION OF **T3**



Hard disk heaven

Hi-tech hi-fi for the iPod generation

RUNNING OUT OF shelf space for your music collection? Relax: Cambridge Audio's Azur 640H lets you retire your CDs to the attic. Its 160GB hard disk means your hi-fi stack can hold 30,000 songs, without a jewel case in sight.

With its familiar, CD-player looks, this isn't an intimidating machine, but there's a lot going on beneath those brushed-aluminium lines. Aside from the CD drive and hard disk, there's a 1GHz processor running Cambridge Audio's own AudioFile operating system, which is very simple to use with the remote.

Operation is via a small, front-panel LCD, although you can hook up a keyboard, mouse and TV for easier control. There's also an Ethernet port to hook it to the Internet for accessing the CD database (so you don't need to type in track information) and digital radio stations, whether by Ethernet cable or

over a wireless network (via a Wi-Fi adaptor, sadly not included).

For maximum quality, you can rip CDs uncompressed, or at one of four MP3 compression levels. The ripping isn't fast by PC standards, but tunes sound bright, detailed and almost identical to CD at the maximum 320Kbps compression, and perfectly passable even at 128Kbps.

It's incredibly easy to make playlists, pull music in from other sources on your network, distribute files to computers and burn CDs of your favourite tracks. The only downside here is it sounds like a vacuum cleaner when ripping discs!

Compared to Hermstedt's more expensive Hifidelio Pro (T3 120, 5/5), this is similarly intuitive, although there's no built-in Wi-Fi. It's well worth buying if you want to digitise your CD collection but aren't prepared to compromise on sound quality. **AS**

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO AZUR 640H £600

www.cambridgeaudio.com

TECH CD writer. 160GB hard disk. Internet radio. Plays MP3, AAC, WMA, WAV. Mouse, keyboard, VGA, Ethernet, 2xUSB ports. Coaxial audio, optical, composite, S-Video outs. Stereo audio in. 430x80x315mm. 8kg.

LOVE Simple interface. Versatility. Good value for money.

HATE Lack of built-in Wi-Fi.

T3 ★★★★★

WE SAY A stylish, versatile media server at a competitive price.