

Wolf Cinema SDC-12

₹11,99,000

Even though 3D hasn't proved as popular as television manufacturers would've hoped for, as a concept, it has worked wonders for the projector market. Since they offer a much larger picture size and are able to fill up a larger field of vision, 3D content is a lot more effective and immersive on a projector-based system. Wolf Cinema originates in California and is distributed in India by Pune-based Sound and Vision, who are indeed proud of the feather in their cap. Not just because Wolf Cinema is based out of California but because of the magic dust they shower upon a JVC projector. Using the D-ILA engine from high-end JVC projectors as a foundation, Wolf than tweaks almost every detail and calibrates every projector by hand, for both 2D and 3D modes!

The SDC-12 sits almost at the top of the SDC-range and features their pseudo-Ultra HD resolution V4K engine that can upconvert standard 1920x1080 sources to a resolution of 3840x2160 by merging two full frame 1080p images. But that isn't the only headlining feature on this projector. Wolf Cinema prides itself in pioneering the complicated subject of accommodating different aspect ratios without the need of an external lens. Using their own algorithms for zoom ratios and VariScope lens memory system, you can switch between 1.78:1 (16:9), 2.20:1 and anamorphic 2.35:1 and more at the tap of a button. Until now, this process was handled by an external lens system that was motorized and obviously involved more time until the optics were physically aligned precisely to create the desired aspect ratio. Wolf spends a lot of time perfecting every detail of the innards and the SDC-12 is no different. They have been smart in using the JVC D-ILA engine to begin with since it has some key inherent advantages. By design, D-ILA, which is a variation of the LCOS (Liquid Crystal on Silicon) technology, has pixels placed much tighter to each other than an LCD projector. This instantly shows up on the screen as visible improvements in contrast, brightness and an overall smoother "film-like" picture. Wolf then manages to tweak this proven engine with their own set of calibrations and improved hardware parts and the results are simply stunning.

The industrial looking chassis of the SDC-12 might not win it any design awards but there is a sense of purpose and intent in its glossy grey cabinet. Build quality is very high with a

thermal design that is said to be optimised for its Xenon lamp. They do generate more heat than comparable UHP lamps and sufficient space is definitely recommended around this projector for long life but its more accurate colour reproduction and almost instantaneous warm-up time makes it a videophiles delight. It even benefits from a flatter brightness curve, offering more output till the tail end of the lamp's life. At a rated life of 4000 hours under normal mode, this shouldn't be a concern for a long time to come! Of course, the truth of all this technology is in the viewing, so we leaned back, put on our active 3D glasses and prepared to drop our jaws.

Thankfully, our expectations weren't unfounded. *Prometheus* is no easy movie to reproduce, with its dark set scenes that can hide plenty of rich detail in the costumes and set design

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but the SDC-12 was marvellous at depicting the ship landing sequence in all its glory. It hits a home run with the special 3D mode that compensates hundreds of picture parameters to counter the inherent drop in brightness caused by activating the 3D mode in all displays. This mode is so effective at lifting the 3D experience to theatrical levels that you start wondering why more brands don't incorporate a similar feature. But this isn't as simple as bumping up the brightness levels as that would inevitably upset the gamma curve, contrast and wash out the colours as well. This is where the expertise of Wolf Cinema's engineers comes to the fore with many hours spent on each and every projector shipped out of the factory doors to ensure that the picture quality is always perfect and closes to the actual material as is currently possible. Upconverted content from 2D to 3D looks equally tasty, with enough depth and separation to tempt you into revisiting your DVD/Blu-ray catalogue.

Most viewing though, might still happen in 2D mode and it's here that the SDC-12 really shines. A clip from *Michael Buble Meets Madison Square Garden* left no room for an argument on its black level detail retrieval skills. The weave and glitter on Michael's jacket is so vivid that it adds a whole new layer of realism and takes the viewer that one step closer to the 'you are there' illusion

all great home cinemas aim to achieve. Whether its a concert, a documentary or a Bollywood blockbuster, the SDC-12 felt at home handling any kind of material without ever running close to its limits of performance. As usual, the amount of user adjustments on tap are immense and the local distributors stress upon proper calibration to get the best out of these capable machines. This is not to say the you won't get great picture right out of the box but if you really want to exploit the full potential of this product, you shouldn't hesitate in spending that little extra for ISF-grade professional calibration. Its multi-axis colour management tool allows you to adjust the colour gamut to dial in just the right amount of R/G/B/C/M/Y and orange colours and that is not something you would find on your 40in LED, so its best left to those who know. There's also an option of two fixed lenses that can be paired with the extended range primary lens. Other options include a 3D starter kit that includes an emitter and two pairs of active 3D glasses, an optional ceiling mount kit, LAN and RS-232 control and an outboard scaler. So it really is up to you to spec the SDC-12 as you deem fit for your installation. In any scenario though, it is bound to provide cutting-edge video quality.

The 1300 ANSI lumens brightness rating and the native contrast ratio in excess of 70,000 might not be earth-shattering but its the way this Wolf puts it all on the screen that matters. It's combination of stellar optics, proven light engine and the finest hand-selected components elevate it to an extremely high standard. It can easily compete with the best in its class and even a few above.

There are plenty of options in the projector marketplace but the Wolf Cinema holds its own. It isn't for the faint hearted in terms of its price or even its size but if you can find the space and the stash, then this is perhaps the best projector at anywhere close to its asking price.

Rating

FOR Natural picture quality, unprecedented control of colour, 3D accuracy

AGAINST Price and weight

VERDICT If you want a fatigue free 3D experience and a natural looking 12ft image, look no further!

TECH SPECS

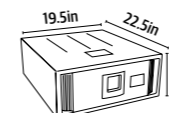
Brightness 1300 ANSI lumens **Contrast ratio** 70,000:1 **Display type** D-ILA 3-chip **Projection Lens** 1.45:1 to 2.78:1 **Light source lamp** UHP 230W **Resolution** 1920x1080 with V4K **Projection distance** 1.8m-12m **Weight** 28kgs



NEED TO KNOW

CONSIDER IF

3D movies are your priority and so is the finest picture quality



YOU'LL NEED

Plenty of free air space around the projector to ensure cooling

MAKE SURE

You get it calibrated from a professional to exploit its full potential

AVOID

Feeding it poor signals or anything less than 1080p or even beyond!

HIGHLIGHT?

Almost film-like picture from video sources a treat for movie lovers