



Tech 21 Q\Strip

\$249 street

This is, quite simply, one of the most beautiful, exceptionally constructed, and extraordinarily powerful guitar-preamp pedals I've ever come across. It's like plugging your guitar into a high-end rack preamp in a professional recording studio. I've owned studios,

I've used those tools, and I'm not joking. The Q\Strip offers comprehensive tone shaping with *two* parametric midrange controls (and mids are where guitars live, right?), Low and High knobs, and high- and low-pass filters. You can route signal through an XLR jack (with switchable phantom power and a -20dB pad) to a mixer, a 1/4" jack (with a switchable +10dB boost) to an amp or DAW, and a parallel 1/4" output for the option of reamping guitar tones. The Q\Strip is super quiet, and the dual-midrange controls let you dial in, say, a chunky low midrange (150Hz) *and* an articulate snap (3kHz), or surgically diminish any offending frequencies (mud, bark, sizzle, etc.). I used the Q\Strip as a "set and forget" preamp to tailor my amp's sound for different club environments. I also deployed it as a kick-ass treble booster for solos, by cranking the Level control, and setting ferocious midrange and high-end frequencies. The "Q" is easy-to-use, musical, and a near-essential device for tone freaks. tech21nyc.com —MICHAEL MOLENDA