

RED WITCH VIOLETTA DELAY

REVIEW BY **DAVID A. EVANS**

STREET PRICE **\$145.99**



The Violetta Delay is the new “analog flavored” delay pedal from New Zealand’s Red Witch. Although the Violetta isn’t part of the company’s Seven Sisters line of pedals, it nonetheless presents a bit of a genealogical conundrum. Is Violetta a sister from another mother? Is she a forgotten sister? Only Red Witch can say for certain. In the meantime, we will have to rest assured that Violetta offers up a wonderful, analog-like delay of up to 1000 milliseconds.

The first thing users will notice is that the Violetta Delay, like its siblings, is tiny. Red Witch claims that

the Seven Sisters line offers the “world’s smallest pedal board footprint.” Although I have no way to verify this claim, it’s easy for me to believe, because the Violetta’s housing measures a little over three inches long, just under two inches wide, and a little more than one inch tall. That’s small enough to fit in the palm of one’s hand, or even in a pocket, should the need arise.

The Violetta also offers rechargeable lithium-ion cell battery power. Charging the battery is easy enough with a standard nine-volt DC power jack. After an initial charge of 12 hours’

duration, the Violetta really needs only a four- to six-hour charge cycle the next time around.

Although I was unable to test the lifespan of the battery, I can say that lithium-ion batteries usually power today’s portable electronics. If readers have used smart phones, for example, they’ll likely have depended upon the reliability of the latest generation of lithium-ion batteries. As far as I know, Red Witch is among the first pedalmakers to employ rechargeable battery technology. The company ought to be applauded for its efforts to reduce

the numbers of single-use batteries which tend to be tossed into the garbage when spent.

As for the interface, Violetta's is about as streamlined as they come. Four knobs for delay time, mix, modulation level, and number of repetitions grace the pedal's mirror-finish face. (Perhaps the idea is that the pedal reflects back what you put into it.) The knobs are tiny, and might therefore present users who have fat or clumsy fingers with a bit of trouble. I, for one, had no trouble, though I imagine if the pedal were on the floor and I wanted to glance at the controls to verify their settings, I might then need to move closer to the pedal. As I mentioned, the Violetta is a tiny pedal. Control visibility is a minor tradeoff for a tiny footprint.

Last, but certainly not least, the Violetta's tone is warm like the best analog pedals out there. I was convinced the pedal actually was analog, and that Red Witch had somehow figured out a way to fit a bucket brigade

chip into the tiny housing. Only after additional research did I learn that the pedal is actually digital. I think the Violetta's emphasis on the "warmer" frequencies, or its "warm" equalization did the trick. I preferred this warmth to the frequently cold and sterile tone of so many other digital pedals. Tone hounds take note: the Violetta's a pedal for lovers of analog tone!

A tiny footprint, inviting sound, and a thoughtful design which incorporates a rechargeable battery are the pedal's merits. If for no other reason than that it will take up just a small fraction of pedal board real estate, readers ought to consider adding the Violetta to their bevies of effects.

WHAT WE LIKE

Warm, convincingly analog delay with a sweet, warbling modulation; a tiny footprint and high-quality lithium-ion rechargeable battery.

CONCERNS

The knobs were fairly small and might be difficult to read during a performance.