



## **Guitar Center Partners with Eric Clapton, John Mayer, and Carlos Santana on New 2019 Crossroads Guitar Collection Featuring Five Limited-Edition Signature and Replica Guitars**

*Exclusive Guitar Collection Developed in Partnership with Eric Clapton, John Mayer, Carlos Santana, Fender®, Gibson, Martin and PRS Guitars to Benefit Eric Clapton's Crossroads Centre Antigua*

*Limited Quantities of the Crossroads Guitar Collection On-Sale in North America Exclusively at Guitar Center Starting August 20*

**Westlake Village, CA** (August 21, 2019) – Guitar Center, the world's largest musical instrument retailer, in partnership with Eric Clapton, proudly announces the launch of the 2019 Crossroads Guitar Collection. This collection includes five limited-edition meticulously crafted recreations and signature guitars – three from Eric Clapton's legendary career and one apiece from fellow guitarists John Mayer and Carlos Santana. These guitars will be sold in North America exclusively at Guitar Center locations and online via [GuitarCenter.com](http://GuitarCenter.com) beginning August 20.

The collection launch coincides with the 2019 Crossroads Guitar Festival in Dallas, TX, taking place Friday, September 20, and Saturday, September 21. Guitar Center is a key sponsor of the event and will have a strong presence on-site, including a Guitar Center Village where the limited-edition guitars will be displayed.

All guitars in the one-of-a-kind collection were developed by Guitar Center in partnership with Eric Clapton, John Mayer, Carlos Santana, Fender, Gibson, Martin and PRS Guitars, drawing inspiration from the guitars used by Clapton, Mayer and Santana at pivotal points throughout their iconic careers. The collection includes the following models: Fender Custom Shop Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster built by Master Builder Todd Krause; Gibson Custom Eric Clapton 1964 Firebird 1; Martin 000-42EC Crossroads Ziricote; Martin 00-42SC John Mayer Crossroads; and PRS Private Stock Carlos Santana Crossroads.

The 2019 Crossroads Collection is the result of a unique and significant history between Guitar Center and famed guitarist Eric Clapton, and continues in the spirit of the first Eric Clapton Crossroads Guitar, originally offered in 2005. Guitar Center has co-sponsored each of Eric Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festivals since 2004, and has been a strong supporter of the Crossroads Centre Antigua Foundation, having purchased several of Clapton's most famous guitars, including his "BLACKIE" Stratocaster and the CREAM Gibson 335 at the Crossroads Guitar Auction in 2004.

### **Giving Back Through the 2019 Crossroads Collection**

Not only is the construction of and history behind the 2019 Crossroads Collection of guitars notable, but also a significant portion of the proceeds from the sale of each of the guitars in the collection will be donated to benefit Eric Clapton's [Crossroads Centre Antigua](http://CrossroadsCentreAntigua.com). The Crossroads Centre was created to provide treatment and education to chemically dependent persons. Treatment is provided through residential care, family and aftercare programs. The pathway to recovery is founded on the movement toward a change in lifestyle.

“On the occasion of the 2019 Crossroads Guitar Festival, Guitar Center is proud to once again show our support for Eric Clapton, the festival and his Crossroads Centre Antigua,” noted Michael Doyle, Guitar Center Vice President of Guitar Merchandising. “We are honored to be invited by Eric to collaborate with him and the world’s finest guitar manufacturers to create these special instruments.”

The complete 2019 Crossroads Guitar Collection will be on display at the Guitar Center Village during the Crossroads Festival September 20 and 21 from 12:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. CT. Ticketed attendees can see each of the instruments in this collection, along with memorabilia associated with each guitar. Additionally, on display will be the Gibson ES-335 guitar used by Eric Clapton on numerous landmark recordings, including the enduring Cream hit and festival namesake “Crossroads.”

For more information on the 2019 Crossroads Guitar Collection, please visit <https://www.guitarcenter.com/Crossroads.gc>.

### **About the 2019 Crossroads Guitar Collection:**

#### **Fender Custom Shop Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster by Todd Krause**

In February 5 and 6, 1968, Clapton appeared with Cream in the Danish movie “Det var en lørdag aften” performing with a Fender Telecaster, a 1964 Fender Telecaster Custom (bound) in 3 Tone Sunburst, but fitted with a Stratocaster neck with rosewood fingerboard. This guitar, with modifications, would go on to be associated with his tenure in Blind Faith. Observant guitar aficionados have noticed something peculiar about this guitar during the Blind Faith era – its neck had changed to the very same maple fingerboard Stratocaster neck as Clapton’s classic “Brownie” 1956 Fender Stratocaster, played by Eric a few years later during the Derek & The Dominos era. On June 7, 1969, Blind Faith had their debut concert in front of more than 100,000 people at Hyde Park in London. Eric was seen playing what to most people was a completely unknown guitar – a sunburst Telecaster with a maple Stratocaster neck. This, of course, was the same guitar he was seen wielding on a few rare occasions with Cream, although the old rosewood neck was now gone. This neck was grafted on to the Telecaster by either Clapton himself or a guitar technician; either way, it suited Clapton’s playing style well and is among his most iconic instruments. For the first-time ever, the Fender Custom Shop Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster by Fender Custom Shop Master Builder Todd Krause offers a Tele body with a “Brownie” style Strat neck – a historic first that marks this guitar as a true rarity. This Fender Custom Shop Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster guitar will come with a Certificate of Authenticity signed by Clapton himself and a replica of the strap he used in 1969. The Fender Custom Shop Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster by Todd Krause will retail for \$11,999 MSRP.

#### **Gibson Custom Eric Clapton 1964 Firebird I**

A legendary instrument associated with both Cream and Blind Faith is Clapton’s 1964 Gibson single-pickup Firebird I with reverse headstock. Clapton purchased this instrument in 1968 in Philadelphia. This guitar subsequently appeared on the Cream farewell tour in late 1968 and served as a direct replacement of Clapton’s Gibson SG “The Fool” – which by that time lost a good amount of its custom paint job due to extensive use. The reverse-headstock Firebird I was used as one of Clapton’s instruments on the Blind Faith tour in 1969. The guitar obviously had no pickup switch, and therefore only two knobs (volume and tone) and was equipped with a wraparound tailpiece. This was also the first Gibson solid-body to feature a neck-through-body construction, with the neck itself being made up of five pieces of mahogany with four narrow strips of walnut mingled between them for more strength. The Gibson Custom Eric Clapton 1964 Firebird I re-creates this unique and iconic instrument using authentic construction methods and precise dimensions scanned from vintage 1964 Firebird models. Every Eric Clapton 1964 Firebird I guitar is outfitted with a newly-developed Alnico V Firebird pickup to recapture the scorching output and searing tones of the original. Each 1964 Firebird I will also feature an Eric Clapton signed backplate, a reproduction of the guitar’s original case, a Certificate of

Authenticity booklet and more. The Gibson Custom Eric Clapton 1964 Firebird I will retail for \$11,762 MSRP.

#### **Martin 000-42EC Crossroads Ziricote**

Martin's Eric Clapton signature acoustics have been popular for years. The Martin 000-42EC Crossroads Ziricote, exclusive to the 2019 Crossroads Collection, makes several unique enhancements to the standard 000-42. The guitar features a 000-14 fret body, Sitka Spruce "VTS" top and Ziricote back and sides. Martin's proprietary VTS (vintage tone system) process is a torrefaction / aging regimen, resulting in a particularly beautiful tone. The guitar also includes a titanium truss-rod which combines the light weight of a 1930's instrument with the adjustability of modern technology. This model will come with a Certificate of Authenticity signed by Clapton himself, and Chris Martin. The Martin 000-42EC Crossroads Ziricote will retail for \$12,999 MSRP.

#### **Martin 00-42JSC John Mayer Crossroads**

Martin's top-selling John Mayer signature model is the 00-42 "Stage Coach," featuring a slightly smaller body style. The Martin 00-42SC John Mayer Crossroads, exclusive to the 2019 Crossroads Collection, makes several enhancements to the standard Stage Coach, with upgraded sunburst finish and cocobolo back and sides, offering enhanced tone and exotic good looks. This guitar also comes with a Certificate of Authenticity signed by John Mayer himself and Chris Martin. The Martin 00-42SC John Mayer Crossroads will retail for \$9,999 MSRP.

#### **PRS Private Stock Carlos Santana Crossroads**

PRS Private Stock Carlos Santana Crossroads Paul Reed Smith guitars have been associated closely with Carlos Santana for several decades. In fact, before PRS achieved worldwide acclaim as a top guitar manufacturer, its founder and namesake was hand-building gorgeous instruments that would serve as the prototypes for his prestigious brand. One of these guitars was personally commissioned by Carlos Santana pre-1985, an instrument still owned and cherished by Santana. The PRS Private Stock Carlos Santana Crossroads is a tribute to this guitar, featuring original specifications combined with PRS's most current design elements to give serious players and collectors the best of both worlds. Specifications include a pre-'85 body shape and headstock (with eagle inlay), 24 1/4" scale, 24-fret Brazilian Rosewood fretboard, bird inlays, HFS and Santana humbuckers, and twin mini-switches for coil tapping. Only six of these instruments will be made and each will come with a Certificate of Authenticity signed by Carlos Santana. As with all PRS Private Stock guitars, a Certificate of Authenticity signed by Paul Reed Smith and PRS Director of Private Stock, Paul Miles, will also be included. The PRS Private Stock Carlos Santana Crossroads will retail for \$11,999 MSRP.

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#### **About Guitar Center:**

Guitar Center is a leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the U.S. With nearly 300 stores across the U.S. and one of the top direct sales websites in the industry, Guitar Center has helped people make music for more than 50 years. Guitar Center also provides customers with various musician-based services, including Guitar Center Lessons, where musicians of all ages and skill levels can learn to play a variety of instruments in many music genres; GC Repairs, an on-site maintenance and repairs service; and GC Rentals, a program offering easy rentals of instruments and other sound reinforcement gear. Additionally, Guitar Center's sister brands include Music & Arts, which operates more than 200 stores specializing in band & orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors and students, and Musician's Friend, a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. For more information about Guitar Center, please visit [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com).

#### **About Fender Musical Instruments Corporation:**

Since 1946, Fender has revolutionized music and culture as one of the world's leading musical instrument manufacturers, marketers and distributors. Fender Musical Instruments Corporation (FMIC), whose portfolio of brands includes Fender®, Squier®, Gretsch® guitars, Jackson®, EVH® and Charvel®, follows a player-centric approach to crafting the highest quality instruments and musical solutions across genres. FMIC is dedicated to unlocking the power of music through electric and acoustic guitars, amplifiers, pro audio, accessories and digital products that inspire and enable musical expression at every stage, from beginners to history-making legends.

#### **About Gibson:**

Gibson Brands, the world's most iconic guitar brand, has shaped the sounds of generations of musicians and music lovers across genres for more than 100 years. Founded in 1894 and headquartered in Nashville, TN, Gibson Brands has a legacy of world-class craftsmanship, legendary music partnerships and progressive product evolution that is unrivaled among musical instrument companies. The Gibson Brands portfolio includes Gibson, the number one guitar brand, as well as many of the most beloved and recognizable music brands, including Epiphone, Kramer, Steinberger and Gibson Pro Audio division brands Cerwin Vega, KRK Systems and Stanton. Gibson Brands is dedicated to quality, innovation and sound excellence so that music lovers for generations to come will continue to experience music shaped by Gibson Brands. Learn more at <http://www.gibson.com> and follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

#### **About Martin Guitars and Strings:**

C. F. Martin & Co.® has been Inspiring Musicians Worldwide® for nearly two centuries with their superior guitar and string products. Martin guitars and strings remain the choice for musicians around the world for their unrivaled quality, craftsmanship, and tone. Throughout the company's long history, Martin products can be seen and heard across all genres of music and in all segments of pop culture, from concert and theater stages to television and movies.

With an unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability and responsible manufacturing practices, Martin continually drives the acoustic guitar market forward, introducing innovative features that have become standards across the industry. These groundbreaking innovations include the introduction of X-bracing, the 14-fret guitar, and the "Dreadnought" size guitar.

Martin has also led innovations in strings, such as introducing the first high-tensile strength steel-string core wire; the first nickel acoustic strings (Martin Retro®); the proprietary Titanium Core strings; and now the groundbreaking, new Authentic Acoustic line, which offers unmatched stability, tone, comfort, and longevity. Learn more here: [www.martinguitar.com/aa](http://www.martinguitar.com/aa).

Connect with Martin Guitars and Martin Strings on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and YouTube, and via [www.martinguitar.com](http://www.martinguitar.com).

#### **About PRS Guitars:**

Paul Reed Smith Guitars is a leading manufacturer of high-quality instruments in Stevensville, Maryland and has provided some of the world's most renowned musicians with instruments since 1985. The PRS team of highly skilled craftspeople design and build a wide variety of musical instruments and gear for worldwide distribution, including electric, acoustic, and bass guitars as well as boutique-style guitar amplifiers. The PRS SE line of products complements the Maryland-made PRS line by offering highly approachable and more affordable electric, acoustic, and bass guitars. Carlos Santana, Neal Schon, John McLaughlin, John Mayer, Jimmy Herring, Tim Pierce, Orianthi, Mark Tremonti, Zach Myers of Shinedown, Brian Kelley of Florida Georgia Line, David Grissom, Martin Simpson, and Tony McManus are among the artists currently playing PRS instruments and/or amplifiers.

**PRS Guitars Info:** [www.prsguitars.com](http://www.prsguitars.com).

#### **About The Crossroads Centre, Antigua:**

Founded in 1998, Crossroads Centre, Antigua was created to provide treatment and education to chemically and alcohol dependent persons, their families and their significant others. Treatment is provided through residential care, family and aftercare programs. The pathway to recovery is founded on the 12 steps and a change in lifestyle. Crossroads Centre, Antigua also operates a 16 bed halfway house in Antigua called the Bevon House and facilitates various ongoing recovery initiatives on the island of Antigua and the Caribbean. [www.crossroadsantigua.org](http://www.crossroadsantigua.org).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

Clyne Media | 615.662.1616 | [pr@clynemedia.com](mailto:pr@clynemedia.com)

Guitar Center | 818.735.8800 | [media@guitarcenter.com](mailto:media@guitarcenter.com)

Edelman | 323.761.6523 | [GuitarCenter@edelman.com](mailto:GuitarCenter@edelman.com)