



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guitar Center Unveils the 2026 Exclusive Crossroads Guitar Collection Ahead of Eric Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festival

The exclusive collection celebrates Eric Clapton's legacy and continues Guitar Center's longstanding partnership with the iconic guitarist

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif., Aug. 26, 2026 — Guitar Center today unveiled the **2026 Exclusive Crossroads Guitar Collection**, a lineup of signature guitars and accessories created in collaboration with Eric Clapton and industry-leading brands Martin, Fender, and Ernie Ball. Launching ahead of the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Festival, the limited-edition collection builds on more than two decades of collaboration between Guitar Center, Clapton and the Crossroads organization. Proceeds from the collection support Crossroads Centre Antigua, the addiction treatment center Clapton founded in 1998.

Guitar Center's relationship with Eric Clapton began in 2004, when the company purchased several of his most legendary guitars at the 2004 Crossroads Guitar Auction, including his iconic Blackie Fender Stratocaster, the Cream-era Gibson ES-335 and George Harrison's Martin 00-21. Those historic instruments are now part of Guitar Center's renowned Legends Collection, a one-of-a-kind archive of historically significant instruments on display at its flagship Hollywood store. Their acquisition laid the foundation for an enduring collaboration with Clapton and many of the world's most respected guitar manufacturers, resulting in some of Guitar Center's most coveted artist recreations and exclusive Crossroads Guitar Collections.

"For more than two decades, we've partnered with Eric Clapton and the Crossroads organization to create iconic instruments, with powerful stories behind them, and put them in musicians' hands," said Gabe Dalporto, CEO of Guitar Center. "The 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection continues that tradition, with every one sold supporting a cause Eric has championed for decades."

Guitar Center's exclusive Eric Clapton collaborations have long been among the company's most sought-after releases. The recreation of Eric Clapton's legendary Blackie Stratocaster sold out in just four hours in 2006, becoming the company's fastest-selling guitar launch at the time. More recently, Guitar Center's exclusive Gibson Custom Eric Clapton 1958 Les Paul sold out in less than 12 hours following its 2025 debut. Since then, Guitar Center has continued its decades-long partnership with Eric Clapton through a series of exclusive Crossroads Guitar Collections, offering musicians first access to many of the collaboration's most coveted releases.



Spanning handcrafted acoustic guitars, faithful recreations of Clapton's most iconic electric instruments, and premium accessories, the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection offers something for every type of player - from exquisitely crafted collector pieces to signature models designed for everyday musicians. Developed in collaboration with Martin, Fender, and Ernie Ball, each product celebrates a defining chapter of Clapton's career while supporting the mission of Crossroads Centre Antigua.

"Music has always been my most reliable source of inspiration, or salvation," said Eric Clapton. "These guitars are sacred things to me."

As the exclusive retail partner of the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Festival, Guitar Center returns to support the event and its mission to benefit Crossroads Centre Antigua. This year, Guitar Center will bring its presence to life through **The Guitar Center Experience**, an immersive destination at Austin's Moody Center where fans can explore the new 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection, connect with leading guitar brands including Fender, Gibson, Martin, PRS and Ernie Ball, and engage in hands-on interactive experiences throughout the weekend. Guitar Center will also offer on-site retail, giving attendees access to the exclusive 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection and other festival merchandise.

In addition, PRS Guitars will support the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection in partnership with John Mayer, whose limited-edition PRS Silver Sky "Crossroads" model will be available exclusively through Guitar Center and make its first public appearance onstage with Mayer at the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Festival.

Complementing the new Crossroads Guitar Collection, **The Guitar Center Experience** will also feature a rare showcase of iconic guitars from Guitar Center's renowned Legends Collection, including Eric Clapton's legendary original Blackie Stratocaster and his Cream-era Gibson ES-335.

Fans will have a rare opportunity to view two of the most iconic guitars in rock history up close, while Guitar Center continues its legacy of honoring music's most influential figures by inducting Paul Reed Smith, founder of PRS Guitars, into the famed Guitar Center Rockwalk during the festival.

Crossroads Guitar Collection Highlights

Martin Custom Shop 000-42 Eric Clapton Brazilian (\$24,999.99)

The centerpiece of the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection, the Martin Custom Shop 000-42 Eric Clapton Brazilian represents the pinnacle of Eric Clapton's more than 30-year relationship with Martin Guitar. Limited to just five instruments worldwide, the guitar is handcrafted with rare Brazilian rosewood back and sides, a solid Adirondack spruce top and Clapton's preferred 000



body shape - the same style made famous during his legendary *MTV Unplugged* performance. Each guitar is personally hand-signed by Clapton and includes a Certificate of Authenticity, making it one of the most exclusive Eric Clapton signature guitars ever offered by Guitar Center.

Martin Custom Shop 000-42 Eric Clapton Ziricote (Natural & Sunburst) (starting at \$9,699.99)

Joining the collection's flagship Brazilian rosewood model, the Martin Custom Shop 000-42 Eric Clapton Ziricote pairs Clapton's preferred 000 body shape with ziricote tonewood, prized for its rich sound and striking natural grain. Limited to just 50 guitars in each of two finishes, 1935 Sunburst and Clear Natural, the handcrafted Custom Shop model features a solid Adirondack spruce top, Golden Era 42-style appointments and an ebony fingerboard with an "Eric Clapton" signature inlay. Each guitar includes a printed Certificate of Authenticity and is available exclusively through Guitar Center.

Fender Blind Faith Telecaster (\$4,999.99)

Inspired by the iconic guitar Eric Clapton assembled on his kitchen table in 1969 and debuted at Blind Faith's legendary Hyde Park concert, the Fender Eric Clapton Blind Faith Telecaster faithfully recreates one of the most recognizable instruments of his career. Limited to just 130 guitars worldwide, the production model combines a Telecaster Custom body with a replica 1956 "Brownie" Stratocaster neck and period-correct details, while including both modern electronics and a vintage "Woof Tone" wiring kit for players seeking an authentic recreation. Available exclusively through Guitar Center, each guitar features a unique "EPC" serial number honoring Eric Patrick Clapton.

PRS John Mayer Silver Sky (\$3,750.00)

Developed in partnership with John Mayer, the limited-edition PRS Silver Sky "Crossroads" features a unique Incline Blue finish, rosewood fretboard with a custom "Crossroads Sun" inlay at the 12th fret and a "Crossroads Guitar Festival 2026" neck plate. Limited to just 70 guitars, the model will make its first public appearance onstage with John Mayer at the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Festival.

Martin 000-13E Eric Clapton (Natural & Sunburst) (starting at \$1,899.99)

Designed to bring an authentic Eric Clapton signature Martin to more players, the Martin 000-13E delivers Clapton's signature acoustic style at the most accessible price point in the collaboration's history. Inspired by the smaller-bodied 000 guitars Clapton has favored on stage and in the studio for decades, it features a spruce top with ziricote fine veneer back and sides, along with a built-in soundhole tuner and Martin E1 pickup—the first time those features have been offered together on an Eric Clapton signature Martin. Available in Antique Toner Natural and 1935 Sunburst finishes, the guitar is available exclusively through Guitar Center in the U.S. through Jan. 27, 2027.



Ernie Ball Eric Clapton Strings (\$29.99)

Celebrating nearly 50 years of Eric Clapton's relationship with Ernie Ball, the Ernie Ball Eric Clapton Signature Strings mark the first-ever signature string set created in collaboration with the legendary guitarist. Packaged in a collectible commemorative tin containing three sets of Ernie Ball Slinky 10–46 strings—the gauge Clapton has relied on throughout much of his career—the limited-edition release gives players the opportunity to experience the feel and tone trusted by one of music's most celebrated guitarists. Limited to 5,000 collectible tin sets and available exclusively through Guitar Center, the strings complete the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection.

The 2026 Crossroads Guitar Collection will be available beginning August 26 at Guitar Center stores nationwide and online at guitarcenter.com, and will also be available for purchase at The Guitar Center Experience during the 2026 Crossroads Guitar Festival.

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About Guitar Center:

Guitar Center is the leading retailer of musical instruments, lessons, repairs and rentals in the U.S. With more than 300 stores nationwide and one of the top direct sales websites in the industry, Guitar Center has helped people make music for more than 60 years. Guitar Center provides a range of musician-based services, including Guitar Center Lessons for players of all ages and skill levels, GC Repairs, an on-site maintenance and repair service, and GC Rentals, offering easy access to instruments and gear. Guitar Center's family of brands includes Music & Arts, which operates more than 250 stores specializing in band and orchestral instruments for sale and rental, serving teachers, band directors, college professors, parents and students, and Musician's Friend, a leading direct marketer of musical instruments in the United States. Guitar Center Business Solutions is the company's commercial division, delivering professional audio, video, lighting and integrated technology solutions for businesses, institutions and creators nationwide through a portfolio of brands including AVDG (Audio Visual Design Group), GC Pro and Custom House at Guitar Center. The Guitar Center Music Foundation is a national nonprofit that expands access to music through instrument donations and support for communities in need.

About 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 halfway house in Antigua called the Bevon House and facilitates various ongoing recovery initiatives on the island of Antigua and in the Caribbean. For more information, visit <https://crossroadsantigua.org>.



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