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FEATURES

DMM/DMI modes; picture-in-picture; motorised stand; auto-tuning; high-def and prog scan; AV box on rear; HDD with four recording qualities and pause live TV; teletext; noise reduction; Virtual Dolby; timer functions; multiple aspect ratios; audio presets; picture rotate; loudness mode; Dolby Digital decoding; black level booster; contrast 800:1; brightness 450cd/m2

CONNECTIONS

DVI (HDCP), component video in, Scart x2 (1 RGB); S-video in, composite video in, stereo audio in, VGA in, RF in, stereo audio in x2; IR-link in; RC5/RC6 remote in; Loewe System Link; 5.1-channel line outs; digital audio in x2; digital audio out; PC audio in; System link; control jack; headphone jack

CONTACT

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'It's the Masterpiece's suppression of noise that most impresses compared with other LCDs. There's little sign of grain or dot crawl, and edges are well defined'

# Loewe R37 Masterpiece

## THE FLAT FACTS

- 37IN 16:9 LCD TV
- £5,800
- RESOLUTION  
1366 x 768
- DIMENSIONS  
W: 992  
H: 1100  
D: 90 (mm)
- SPEAKERS: YES
- TV TUNER: YES
- SCARTS: 2  
(1 RGB)

Trying to find a Loewe TV at a discounted price is like looking for a piece of hay in a pile of needles, and this 37in LCD is unlikely to be found in a bargain bin anytime soon. That it is laden with advanced features and HDTV-ready specs shouldn't surprise us, because Loewe has never been a company to skimp on its flatscreen TVs.

Not only does the R37 Masterpiece manage to carry every future-proof connection our heart desires, it's also presented in a gorgeous glossy black casing that comprises screen frame and floor-stand in one. The fact that it's among the thinnest screens we've ever seen does seem a little wasted, because it sits on a hydraulically powered circular pedestal that rotates left and right from the remote control – so it's never going to be wall mounted. But for almost £6,000, we want opulence.

Of course, we don't let first impressions last long: it's that 37in screen we're most interested in. So does it live up to its name?

### Digital delights

Glancing at the connections, the reasons for that high price start to unravel. Housed in a multimedia tuner box vertically positioned in the stand's rear is a DVI input with HDCP (high-bandwidth digital content protection) – essential if you plan to take advantage of Sky's HDTV transmissions. High-definition and progressive scan footage can also be carried by component video inputs, and there are two Scarts, two coaxial digital

audio inputs, a coaxial digital audio output, PC audio input, two infra-red link jacks, a VGA input and a 9-pin control jack. Six audio line outs for the on-board Dolby Digital decoding complete an impressive roster.

Ever the modular type, Loewe has set up this TV to take add-ons, such as a TV online module for those who want surf in luxury (£499), a multimedia kit for connecting a PC (£395), a VGA Module (£65) and a wireless home automation kit (TBC).

### Added value

There are plenty of surprises already built-in, such as a hard-disk recorder that allows you to pause live TV and record at different quality settings on its 100GB HDD. On its highest setting, pictures are identical to the source, while even the medium setting impresses beyond our expectations. Other features comprise a 'movie mode' for DVDs, noise reduction and Virtual Dolby sound. The remote is a little complicated, but luckily there's an on-screen instruction manual to walk you through this set's many features.

The dark, suspense-filled action and well-lit indoor scenes of *The Ring* provide a workout for any LCD. Nevertheless, the R37 passes with flying colours, with an almost unsurpassed black level response – there was plenty of depth of field and contrast in the creepy lingering close-ups and camera pans through the gloom.

This strength allows colours to shine while remaining natural-looking, but it's the

Masterpiece's suppression of noise that most impresses compared with other LCDs. There's little sign of grain or dot crawl, and edges are well defined. This applies to progressive scan DVD, digital TV and high-def: analogue tuner pictures are obviously more susceptible to picture foibles.

Audio performance on this Loewe is in keeping with its siblings. That is to say, it's replete with bass without threatening the treble and mid-range, which sonically makes movie-watching an absolute dream.

The R37 faces stiff competition in this test, particularly from the bigger Sharp screen. The Loewe is better at noise suppression, the Sharp at showing detail – but we're really splitting hairs. A complex operating system doesn't help Loewe's cause, but for once we don't doubt the 'masterpiece' marketing slogan. **WP**

## RATINGS

PICTURE .....	★★★★★
SOUND .....	★★★★★
CONNECTIONS .....	★★★★★
FEATURES .....	★★★★★
EASE OF USE .....	★★★★☆
VALUE .....	★★★★☆

## VERDICT ★★★★★

A pricey but great-performing LCD screen that lives up to its name