

# ALEXANDER PEDALS

## GOLDEN SUMMER

REVIEW BY **ERIC TISCHLER**  
STREET PRICE **\$189.00**



The marketing copy around Alexander's Golden Summer Ambient Reverberator evokes a sense of nostalgia, invoking "mom" and "never-ending summer." Now, I was in my early 20s when Slowdive's *Souvlaki* came out, so maybe I'm older than the target audience, but "Ambient Reverberator?" That I get.

Golden Summer provides reverb—and gobs of it—but it doesn't go for a spring reverb vibe or a recognizable acoustic space (although it does very well at providing the latter, if not the former), but is based on a "virtual reverb chamber."

Plug in and, at almost any setting, you get lots of dreamy, shimmering space. How dreamy and how shimmering is determined by the pedal's deceptively elaborate controls.

Golden Summer offers the standard Reverb (depth of the reverb chamber), Mix (which controls that amount of the effect that's applied to your signal) and Delay (the amount of time between the initial clean note and the onset of the effect...usually; more on that in a moment). The Golden Summer then adds a three-way toggle for three

different settings, and a Tweak control that affects how those settings are applied to the signal.

In the Mod setting, Golden Summer offers its least shimmer (read: most traditional) setting with the Tweak knob at noon. However, as you move the knob in either direction, you add tremolo-like modulation to the trails; clockwise is slower, counter-clockwise is faster. With a distorted, busier part, there's a My Bloody Valentine-esque pitch-shifting feel with these settings that adds texture without calling attention to itself. With a cleaner signal

and a part that allows the guitar to breathe, the effect adds depth and more texture.

In the Shimmer setting, the Tweak knob adds an octave above the note in the trails as you turn it clockwise, and an octave below the root to as you turn it counter-clockwise. This octave below was difficult to discern, but the octave above was clearly present in clean settings, suggesting the more complex shoegaze tones of the bands that followed in My Bloody Valentine's wake, such as Verve.

In the Echo mode, Golden Summer provides a wonderfully rich Space Echo-type effect. The Decay knob determines the tempo for the repeats (getting slower as you move clockwise) and the Tweak knob controls the number of repeats (adding more as you move clockwise), while Reverb adds reverb to the signal post-delay. This effect is very clean, but can take on a wonderful Spacemen 3-like murk as you bring

in the reverb. Although it "only" offers 400 milliseconds of delay, it's easy to imagine the Golden Summer as a primary delay pedal, given the option to dial Reverb in or out. Oh, if only it had tap tempo.

All of the above features are easy to dial in; Golden Summer has gobs of reverb, so you can drench your signal or just add a touch of the effect, and sometimes "a touch" in a busy mix can mean more than you think, so the sensitivity and range of the controls are a real boon.

Additionally, there's a buffered trails option and, for better or worse, I found the buffer really added something to my signal, which is too bad because I think I'd prefer the "no trails" option in practice. I also found the more subtle elements of the various settings stood out a little better with the buffer on.

Finally, perhaps my favorite element of Golden Summer is that, unlike many reverb

pedals, it doesn't disappear in a mix. Your signal moves back into the space carved out by the reverb, but it doesn't sound smaller; that's a big deal to me, and just one more reason why Golden Summer is one to remember.

## WHAT WE LIKE

Lots of functionality, including several characteristics that enable it to work well in a mix.

## CONCERNS

For those who want more traditional, analog reverb tones, Golden Summer may not be the best choice, although it does a great job as a "straight-forward" reverb pedal.

