

# British Reserve

**MONITOR AUDIO BRONZE BR5 FLOORSTANDING SPEAKERS \$1299**

Way back in 1975 when I was but a youngster, I became interested in hi-fi. While others wanted raw power (JBL or Cerwin Vega), or were still into 3-in-1 systems, I wanted accuracy and subtlety from the speakers I aspired to buy. Apart from exotics like Quad Electrostatics or Daliquist DQ10s, which were way out of my budget (and still are), there wasn't much around. By chance I came across a new company, Monitor Audio, which had refined metal dome tweeters to be smooth sounding, and designed speakers that brought to life both classical and rock music with superb wooden cabinets. AND they were within the budget of someone just starting in the workforce. Thirty-two years on and Monitor Audio is still doing this with its Bronze series, which includes the BR5s.



The Bronze BR5s are a floorstanding design that is relatively unobtrusive, especially in the black pair supplied for this review (black really is slimming) and the cabinets are wooden and very well braced. Screw-on feet that hold the spikes (on carpeted floors) or rubber (for tiles, wood, etc) are supplied. The drivers are a 5.5-inch bass, a 5.5-inch mid-bass and a 1-inch metal dome tweeter. The speakers have

both front and rear ports and are designed for placement away from walls, but not by too much. Although designed for medium to large rooms, the Bronze BR5s are supplied with foam bungs for the ports to use in smaller rooms.

After running the BR5s in for a few days, I took over the lounge for some serious listening, starting with favourites at lower levels just to judge the character of the speakers for everyday use. These are not speakers that push themselves forward; nothing leaps out at you but the result is a sound that isn't tiring and doesn't detract from the music. This isn't to say that they are clinical or characterless. Instead they have a refined sound that I at first thought was a little lacking in the upfront power needed for rock. I then turned up the volume and the sound changed from a comforting background murmur to an alive, engaging one. The BR5s have good timing, and if they lack a little bottom end they make up for it with solid snap. For a small speaker they have a good extended bottom range and good deep notes. They don't lack in the mids and highs, either; although they don't sparkle, the BR5s are accurate and the result is a speaker that doesn't dominate a room. Acoustic instruments are reproduced with finesse, orchestral music has grandeur and rock can sound great too, if given the volume to do it justice.

The Bronze BR5s demonstrate that good quality hi-fi needn't be expensive, and with the range of amplifiers and CD players on the market today it would be possible to build a good system around these speakers. Monitor Audio produces matching speakers at a reasonable price for building a home theatre system, so you aren't limited to two channels. With understated design and a sound that never gets tiring, the Bronze BR5s show all that is good in British speakers from a company that has been getting it right for 35 years. ■ MYK FARMER



## CONTACT

www.denocaudio.co.nz

## SPECIFICATIONS

### CABINET DESIGN:

Floorstanding 2.5-way bass reflex with front and rear ports

**IMPEDANCE:** 6 ohms

**FREQUENCY RESPONSE:**

36hz - 30khz

**POWER:** 120W RMS maximum

## PROS

- + Neutral sound
- + Elegant, understated design and size
- + Great value

## CONS

- ✗ Not room shakers (if that's what you want)

## VERDICT

Understated British design and sound with plenty in reserve for a party

Aesthetics	89%
Performance	95%
Features	85%
Functionality	95%
Price Value	95%
Overall	

**92%**

