

GEAR

# Inside the New Fender Custom Shop Lexus LC Stratocaster

The Lexus LC Stratocaster® brings one of Lexus’ proprietary paint colors — Structural Blue — to the Custom Shop in an extremely limited run of Stratocaster models.

By Mike Duffy

YOUTUBE



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The Fender Custom Shop is known for creating instruments that look as incredible as they sound, with a dazzling array of finishes consistently coming out of its Corona, Calif., headquarters.

And one of the latest creations to see the light of day is a true testament as to why the Custom Shop is called the “Dream Factory,” as the Fender Lexus LC Stratocaster is truly the stuff of dreams.

Created by Principle Master Builder Ron Thorn and limited to only 100 team-built units worldwide, this guitar boasts an omnidirectional Structural Blue finish, a proprietary color that took Lexus over 15 years to develop. It’s also the same paint used on the Lexus LC 500 coupe and convertible Inspiration Series, of which only 200 total vehicles were produced for the US.

Inspired by the brilliant blue wings of the Morpho butterfly, structural Blue is distinct in that it has a spectral range producing light metallic blue to deep midnight blue, depending on the angle in which it’s viewed. The paint actually doesn’t contain any blue material - it looks blue only because of the interference of light. Layers of colorless materials come together to generate the ultimate color, hence the name “structural”.

“Structural Blue is different than any other pigment out there,” said Michael Rowe, Principal Scientist, Toyota North America. “Most pigments just absorb and reflect light. What we’re doing is breaking the light up and grabbing that one color or group of colors that we want in order to create this type of effect.

“The areas that face you have this great right blue, but then on the curves you get shadows that almost aren’t there, but yet still give you that great contrast.”

The Stratocaster was an ideal body shape to highlight the shape-shifting properties of the Structural Blue, as its flowing contours give it a sense of movement in the hands of any player.

“Between the light electric blue to the deep midnight blue to the black shadows, it just dances. It’s alive,” said Thorn. “Every angle is a different color in the blue spectrum. The Stratocaster really highlights the intense beauty of the paint.”

The Fender Lexus LC Stratocaster carries many other premium features. The neck is fashioned from beautiful 3A flame maple and finished in high-gloss urethane, imparting a hint of Fender woodworking tradition in contrast with the instrument’s other advanced visual elements. The fingerboard is made of deep-blue polished Richlite, a composite material known for its tonal properties, structural stability, and resistance to wear and moisture, and used by the Custom Shop for the first time. The fingerboard has a flatter 12” radius and 22 medium-jumbo stainless steel frets. On darkened stages, the white Luminlay fingerboard inlays glow in vivid blue.

Additionally, the fasteners on the carbon-fiber pickguard are black button head machine screws that create a clean automotive appearance, while a trio of Fender’s latest Noiseless single-coil pickups are another first for the Custom Shop. To top it off, the headstock face is finished in Structural Blue with a chrome Fender logo while the custom case is wrapped in carbon fiber textured vinyl, with black leather ends and the Lexus logo embroidered inside the lid.

“Collaborating with Lexus to conceptualize, design and build the Fender Lexus LC Stratocaster has been an incredible ride,” said Mike Lewis, VP of Product Development of the Custom Shop. “The process our team took to design this Strat has certainly been a labor of love, as well as a source of inspiration and excitement around the shop.

“Our team is constantly building innovative products and this launch is another great representation of craftsmanship and creativity at Fender.”

Learn more about the Fender Lexus LC Stratocaster [here](#).

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