



Mandolins



F ALL YOU HAD TO DO WHEN SHOPPING FOR A MANDOLIN WAS TO CHOOSE AMONG BODY SHAPE AND FINISHES, YOUR JOB WOULD BE EASY. BUT IF you want the best quality mandolin for your money, spend some extra time and examine the instruments carefully.

As with any steel-stringed instrument, it is most important to examine the neck for twisting. A mandolin is strung under very high tension, and this is a vulnerable area. A twist of more than the smallest fraction of an inch will cause the instrument to sound out of tune. The necks of Alvarez mandolins are made either of solid rock maple or of Nato mahogany, and are specially cut to be highly warp resistant. While you are checking the neck, make sure that the fingerboard and the frets are smoothly finished. This is not only a sign of quality, but will make your playing a lot easier.

Alvarez mandolins have beautifully finished, mother of pearl or abalone inlaid fingerboards with rounded nickel-silver frets.

The next thing I check is the tuning pegs. They should turn smoothly but without slippage. Alvarez mandolins use high quality gold or chrome plated tuning gears with four-in-line butterfly buttons.

A910 Somerfield Florentine. Spirit varnished solid spruce top with oval sound hole and raised Florentine scroll. Solid maple sides and two-piece maple back. Gold plated hardware. Completely celluloid bound.



Barbara Mandrell

