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The design of the Luxury Drum Bags offers benefits from both hard and soft case designs.

Le Blond Luxury Drum Bags

£155 | Le Blond's new Luxury Drum Bags are a neat sandwich of soft drum bag with a hard case filling. **Adam Jones** gets packing...

When it comes to protecting your gear, the two main solutions, until now, have been soft bags or rigid cases. However, in the hope of providing a third option, UK case manufacturer Le Blond has created an intriguing fusion of case and bag. Christened Luxury Drum Bags, Le Blond reckons that they incorporate the best of both options; ie the softness of bags combined with the strength of cases.

The new Luxury Drum Bags are initially being marketed in five-piece kit bundles, though individual sizes are available on request. They resemble any other drum bags, but there is an optional sheet of polypropylene that can be inserted between the exterior and the lining of the bag. The sheet follows the curve of the drum bag, round three quarters of the cylinder. This imparts structural rigidity to each bag, offering greatly improved resistance to side and downforce impacts. You may have seen Le Blond's advertisement in *Rhythm* featuring a rabbit appearing from an open drum bag that someone is standing on. As the bag is obviously empty, you get an idea of the sort of stiffness that a complete bag possesses.

Fully furnished

Company manager Alison Higham explains that part of the inspiration behind the Luxury Drum Bag design has been the changing circumstances of the average drummer. Hard-shelled cases are great for gear whose life is spent being tossed around in the back of a van. Nowadays though, drummers are just as likely turn up in a well appointed estate car. Repeated use of hard cases in such a vehicle will inevitably lead to a wearing effect on the upholstery, which in turn could alter the resale value (and leave your parents not best pleased). Drum bags are a great deal gentler on car interiors, while their fluffy filling makes them equally kind to the drums stored inside.

The bags are made from polyester and lined with a thick inner coat of synthetic fur. Each bag sports three handles along with a shoulder strap and the chunky zips fitted work smoothly. Buried among the interior fur is another zip, through which the inner compartment is reached. The sheets of polypropylene – sold separately as Hard Liners – are slid into the gap and zipped out of sight. The polypropylene is the

same material, at the same thickness (1.9mm), that goes into Le Blond's hard cases, so it's heavy-duty stuff.

With the Hard Liners fitted, the drum bags really do feel solid, even when there is nothing inside them. A direct hit from the corner of a 4 x 12 speaker cabinet into the centre of either head end might inflict some damage to the drum inside, but other than that the level of protection afforded will be not far off that of a hard-shelled case. **R**

ESSENTIALS



PRICES

Luxury Drum Bags: (Quick, Power, Fusion, and Rock sizes) **£155**
Five-piece pack of Hard Liners **£45**

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RHYTHM VERDICT

Le Blond's Luxury Drum Bags are an innovative design that seems obvious, but must have been the product of a fairly sideways look at drum protection. The fact that plans were hatched more than a year ago demonstrates the thought that has gone into them. Alone, the bags are very reasonably priced; adding the Hard Liners increases the cost, but they are the unique selling point. The range of sizes available could be better, but hopefully, initial success will persuade Le Blond to expand in this area and also to relax the emphasis on selling the bags in packs of five.



+ Very interesting and effective hybrid design, that makes perfect sense.

- Readily available extra would be good, as would the opportunity to buy the bags individually rather than in sets.

RATING

