



## The 16th Annual Positive Feedback Writers' Choice Awards for 2019

11-29-2019 | By [Editors at Positive Feedback](#) | Issue 106

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Michael Corsentino



### Levin Design Sandwich Vinyl Mat \$295

My reference turntable mat for the last two years has been SPEC Corporation's SPEC Analog Disc Sheet AP-UDI. This Japanese made lacquer-encased aluminum disc is the one all others have been judged against. That's why when Levin Design contacted me with news of their new Sandwich Vinyl Mat, I was excited to see how it would stack up.

German based Levin Design does a masterful job creating must have turntable accessories that not only do a great job but also look sexy as hell doing it. Case in point their luxurious line of designer record cleaning brushes. Everything Levin creates looks like it's right out of the Museum of Modern Art's gift shop. I'm a sucker for beautiful design so that's a good thing!

Levin Design Sandwich Vinyl Mat is a clever two sided, three layer design comprised of Napa leather on top, high tech resonance dampening material in the middle, and a layer of anti-static carbon on the underside. These 29.5cm diameter discs are available in three Napa leather designer colors: yellow, red, blue and black. I opted for red to add a splash of color to my otherwise monochromatic turntable color palette.

When you're not using the Levin Design Sandwich Vinyl Mat you flip it over so that the carbon side and etched Levin logo are face upward. This keeps the Napa leather side clean, dust free and ready for your next spinning session.

In terms of sound quality both the SPEC mat and the Levin Design Sandwich Vinyl Mat do a superb job and cost roughly the same. With the Levin I noticed a lower noise floor compared to a bare platter and comparable compared to the Spec. I also heard an added sense of sonic stability, increased coherency, wider imaging, heightened detail, and deeper bass. In other words everything you want from a mat.

When it comes to style The Levin wins hands down. The Levin also delivered a slightly more relaxed sonic presentation compared to the Spec, not a bad thing and probably due to its softer Nappa Leather top. In terms of it's anti-static properties I did notice a reduction in static so we can check that box too.

The Levin Design Sandwich Vinyl Mat does everything a best in class turntable mat should do and it does it with a lot of style! At \$295 it's not cheap, but in my opinion as with all as with all things Levin its well worth it! It's my new reference.