



Sigma 35mm f/1.4 DG HSM A

£670, \$900

One of the first lenses in Sigma's recently introduced 'Art' line – and nearly a masterpiece

Based on typical UK retail prices, this Sigma is about half the price of the Nikon AF-S 35mm f/1.4G, which costs £1300/\$1700. There's nothing cheap about the build, however. When it was launched, Sigma claimed that it set a new benchmark for performance. Posh glass includes an FLD element, which is similar to top-grade fluorite glass, along with four SLD (Special Low Dispersion) elements. Externally the standard of finish is impeccable, although there are no weather seals.

Like other recent Sigma lenses, this one is compatible with the company's optional USB Dock, which can be used

to apply firmware updates and to fine-tune performance. The HSM (HyperSonic Motor) AF system is also fast and accurate, and as it's a ring-type system, full-time manual focus override is available in Single AF mode.

Performance

Like its newer, bigger brother, Sigma's 50mm Art lens, the 35mm delivers superb sharpness and contrast even at its widest aperture. Especially impressive for a wide-angle optic, excellent sharpness is retained right into the corners of the frame when using wide apertures. Compared with the Samyang 35mm lens that's on test, bokeh is rather smoother and more appealing.



Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG HSM A

£700, \$950

For a 50mm f/1.4, it's a big lens that costs big money to buy, but it's worth every penny

Compared with the diminutive, lightweight Nikon 50mm f/1.4G (see page 98), Sigma's new 50mm Art lens is a monster. It's physically longer than the 85mm lenses on test, measuring 85x100mm, and it's the heaviest lens in the group at 815g. It's therefore not ideal if you want a 50mm prime to squeeze into a small corner of your gadget bag, or for shooting unobtrusively. Indeed, it's about the same size, and slightly heavier, than the Nikon AF-S 24-120mm f/4 zoom lens. The Sigma isn't cheap either, costing more than twice as much as Nikon's 50mm f/1.4G.

The good news is that, as with Sigma's 35mm Art lens

that's also on test, there has been no compromise made in the design and build of this lens. It's beautifully crafted, solidly put together, boasts fast and highly accurate autofocus, and is compatible with Sigma's optional USB Dock.

Performance

This lens delivers exceptional sharpness and contrast, even at its widest f/1.4 aperture. Despite this, defocused areas look wonderfully creamy, and the transitional regions between focused and defocused areas follow a particularly smooth progression. There's practically no distortion and overall image quality is simply stunning.



Even at wide apertures, stellar sharpness is retained right into the corners of images

NPhoto VERDICT

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| FEATURES | ★★★★☆ |
| BUILD QUALITY | ★★★★★ |
| IMAGE QUALITY | ★★★★★ |
| VALUE FOR MONEY | ★★★★★ |

OVERALL ★★★★★

WE SAY... Superb images. A bargain compared to Nikon's equivalent lens.



Immaculate image quality is assured at any aperture setting with this lens

NPhoto VERDICT

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| FEATURES | ★★★★☆ |
| BUILD QUALITY | ★★★★★ |
| IMAGE QUALITY | ★★★★★ |
| VALUE FOR MONEY | ★★★★★ |

OVERALL ★★★★★

WE SAY... The best thing about this lens is its performance. It's a stunner.