

Oppo Digital DV-983H DVD Player – The Rest of the Story

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DVD PLAYERS



Introduction

Last week, we published the Secrets DVD Benchmark™ data for the DVD player that a lot of consumers have been waiting for, the [Oppo Digital DV-983H](#). It was the first player ever to score perfectly on our tests.

Those tests were for the video. So what about the audio?

That's the subject of the current review.

The Sound

For the tests, I used the analog audio outputs, both in two-channel stereo and multi-channel surround sound. Associated equipment included a Lexicon MC12B SSP, Classé CA-5200 power amplifier, and Final Sound electrostatic speakers. Cables were Legenbug and Nordost.

Specifications

- Codecs: SD DVD, DVD-A, SACD
- Upsampling: 480p, 576p, 720p, 1080i, 1080p
- MPEG Decoder: Mediatek 1389/S
- De-interlacer: Anchor Bay Technology ABT-102
- Audio Frequency Response: 20 Hz – 20 kHz ± 1 dB

- Outputs: HDMI, Component, S-Video, Composite, Digital Coaxial, Digital Toslink, 7.1 Analog
- Dimensions: 2" H x 16.8" W x 10.5" D
- Weight: 5 Pounds
- MSRP: \$399 USA
- [Oppo Digital](#)

First of all, while I was testing the audio, I took the opportunity to enjoy DVDs as well, and I must say, I have not seen SD DVD look any better than this. I did not see any problems at all. So, it looks like this will be our reference DVD player for reviewing SD DVDs in the Movie Renter's Guide.



OK, on to the sound.

Here is a photo of the rear panel, showing the HDMI output, USB 2.0 port, coaxial and Toslink digital audio outputs, component and S-Video outputs, and the 7.1 analog audio outputs. Remote control is also possible through the connections on the far right.



Following the Benchmark review, readers asked about the logos on the top of the player that indicate codecs it will handle. Here is a photo of the top.



The remote control is shown below, which has all the necessary buttons for full use of the player. It is not backlighted though. It is the same size and layout as previous Oppo remotes, with a few new buttons specific to this player.



I connected the 5.1 analog outputs to the MC12B so I could listen to some surround sound SACDs, such as this Franz Liszt Telarc recording of the *Dante Symphony*. The music was astounding with its level of detail, and I could sense the rosin on the strings. Keep in mind this is with the 983 doing the decoding and outputting analog signals. We will revisit all of this once we have a reference SSP that decodes all the formats and we can use the HDMI output from the player. Of course, that actually means the player is just being used as a transport.



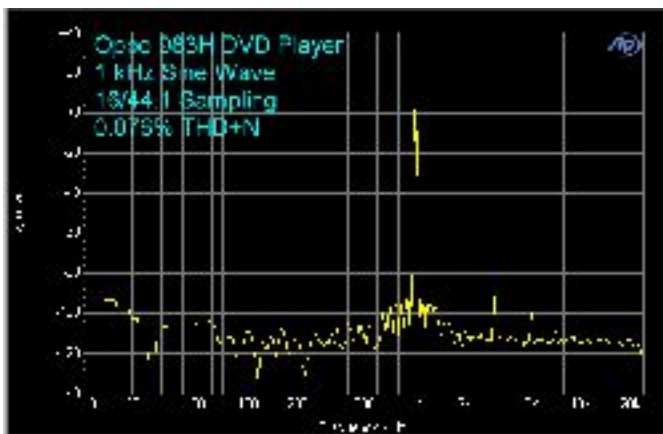
Regular old Redbook CDs sounded great too, but it is hard to listen to them right after having experienced high res discrete 5.1 music from SACDs. Anyway, take this EMI Classics CD of Schubert's Piano Sonata D958, with Leif Ove Andsnes at the piano. Well perhaps, in this case, since it was just one instrument, two channels were plenty, and the Oppo delivered everything the music was capable of presenting. Clear, detailed notes just hammering away, and making me feel that the pianist was sitting in front of me.



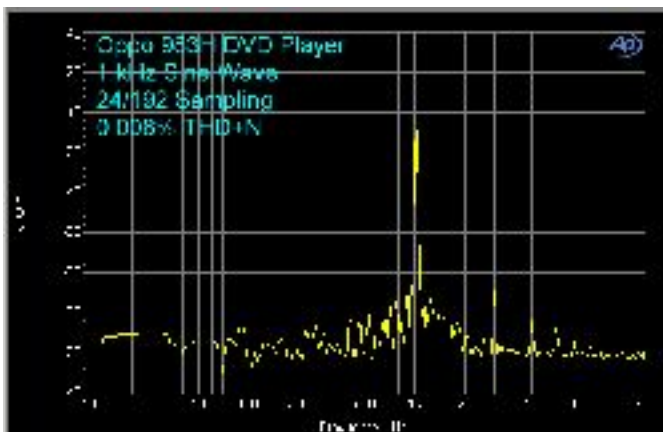
On the Bench

THD+N measurements were within an 80 kHz bandwidth. Sine waves were generated at -5dB and burned to CD (16/44.1) or DVD-A (24/192) for playback on the Oppo.

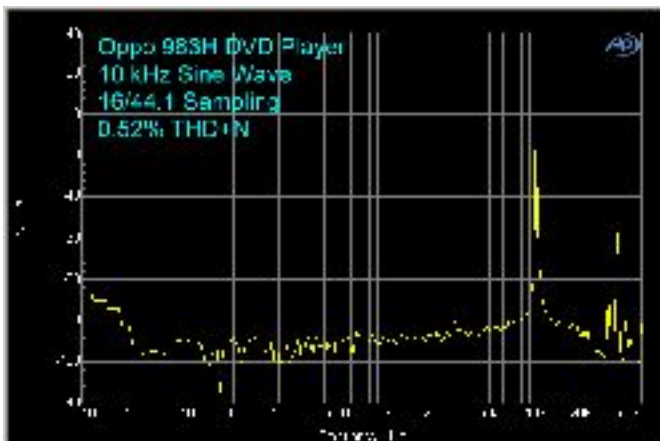
At 1 kHz, using a 16/44.1 sampled 1 kHz sine wave, THD+N was 0.08%.



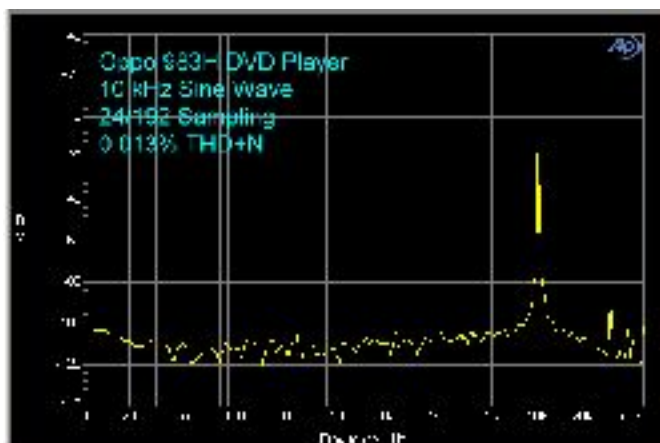
Using a 24/192 1 kHz sine wave, distortion dropped to 0.008%. So, at the high res rate of a DVD-A, THD+N is only 10% of what it is at 16/44.1 redbook sampling. That is a pretty clear indication that DVD-A is worth having in our recordings.



At 10 kHz, distortion was at 0.5%, using 16/44.1 sampling.

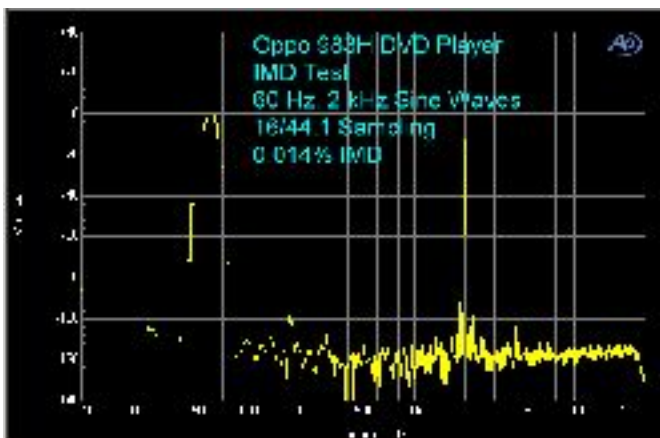


While at 24/192, a 10 kHz sine wave resulted in 0.013% THD+N. Again, it is much lower with the higher sampling rate.

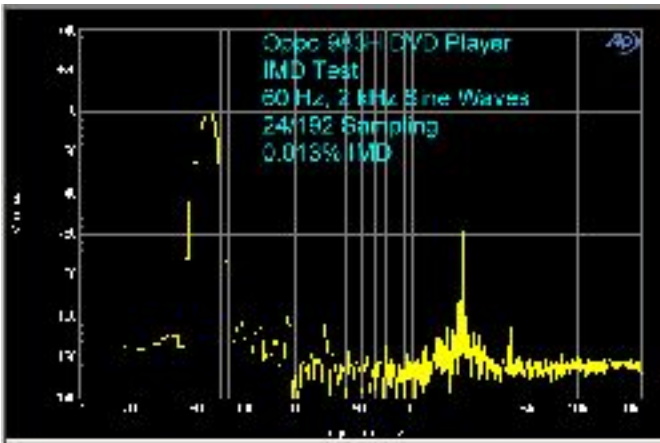


For IMD, the results were a little different.

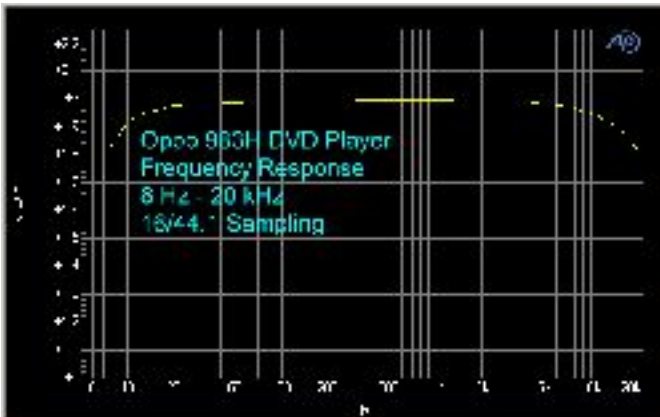
At 1 kHz, 16/44.1 sampling, IMD was 0.014%.



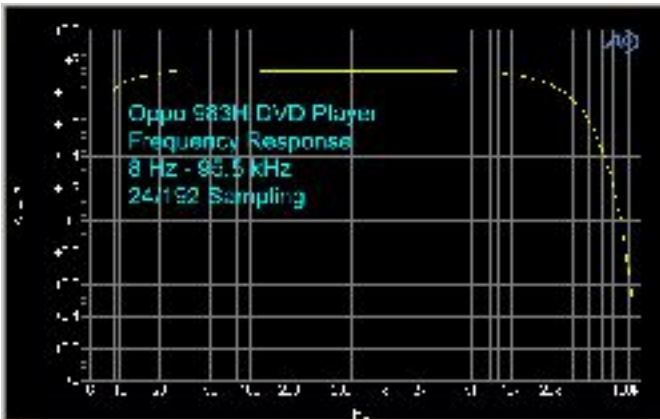
And with 24/192 sampling, it was less, but insignificantly so.



For frequency response, at 16/44.1 sampling, the response was down 0.2 dB at 20 kHz.



While at 24/192 sampling, the response was down 0.1 dB at 20 kHz. Both results (16/44.1 and 24/192) are good.



The player is due to be released on March 10, 2008 (next week). If you would like to see what the instruction manual looks like, you can download a PDF [here](#).

Conclusions

While it is likely we will all be using HDMI from our DVD players to send both audio and video to our SSPs or receivers in the near future, measurement of the analog performance of players is still an indicator of build quality, and the Oppo DV-983H is excellent in this regard.