

One sunny morning in August 1977 we opened the doors to a shop under the name of Guitar Village. We began with largely vintage instruments: Gibson, Fender and Gretsch.

Later on we returned to the absolute beginnings – the acoustic guitar. For twenty years we focused on prestigious names such as C.F. Martin & Co from Pennsylvania, Collings from Texas, and Jose Ramirez and Amalio Burguet from Spain. Thirty years and thousands of guitars later we are still hanging in there. How can such a small hole in the wall survive synthesizers, dollar exchange-rates and disco-trends?

When China opened her doors for extended foreign trade a previously unknown handcraft tradition was discovered. These craftsmen learned very quickly what the western world wanted and could deliver to competitive prices that were previously unheard of.

American craftsmen found strong competition in the high level of craftsmanship and precision that some of the Chinese factories presented.

[We say 'some' of the Chinese as the majority fell short of the mark, making instruments that can only be regarded as decorative.]

Besides the known makes as mentioned we started to import the American/ Chinese Blueridge line of guitars. Their founder, my good friend Richard Keldsen in San Francisco has helped us with our selection. Californian design and Chinese workmanship. The sound of these guitars is so striking that Paul McCartney has been seen playing Blueridge. And he of all people can afford golden machineheads.

The road to creating our own guitar line was already mapped out. The Tool appeared and several guitar enthusiasts became partners in our firm now called Guitar People.

Today we build hand made guitars from 6,000SEK to 38,000SEK under the brand name TheTool. Our instruments have all the qualities of the great guitars, selection of wood and fine sound without having an expensive brand name on the headstock. Our instruments are quality control checked and finely adjusted. Not only our own guitars but any guitar that passes through our hands receives the same adjustment and care.

We hope this is why we are still around in Södermalm, Stockholm and hope that even more enthusiasts find their way to our oasis, the opposite of big corporate music ventures.

Not only have the most known of Swedish guitarists passed through our doors with a guitar in their hands but even the youngest generation have started to discover the dream instrument. Take fifteen year old Rikard from nearby Nacka municipality, he has washed cars, shovelled snow, dealt out flyers and urged the relatives to chip in, so he could one day walk out of the store with a shining black Blueridge cut-away, with an in-built pickup, almost thirty three years to the day we opened the doors here. If we ever wonder about the meaning of it all, its there in the bright smiling face of a fifteen year old kid.

