



TURTLEBOX > GEN 3 > RANGER

by Brian Clark

Thanks mostly to an accident of geography, OTFM has been fortunate enough to have been part of the broader Turtlebox team for many years – their headquarters is just a few miles from ours, and we started operations around the same time. I’ve still got one of their Original Gen 1 speakers in my shower, believe it or not. If that sounds strange, the fact that I have teenagers should explain most of it, but I happen to agree with them about this one: if you aren’t blasting tunes in the shower, are you really living your best life?

We’ve followed the Original series through Gen 2 (IP-67, Bluetooth 5.0, stereo pairing mode, and a USB-C output to recharge other devices) and now into Gen 3 (Bluetooth 5.4 and Party Mode offering unlimited pairing). We’ve always appreciated that the speakers are waterproof and saltwater hardened, and, of course, that they’re really stinking loud. If the 6x9in woofer offered in the Original somehow isn’t enough, they’ve now introduced the Grande which brings a round 10in woofer to the party – see the opposite page.

Although both the Original and Grande models are very, very loud, it’s in extreme portability where the new Ranger shines. At just 2.4lbs and 8in by 3in by 3in square, it’s dramatically smaller and lighter than the other models. It fits easily into a carry-on bag (a non-removable Lithium-ion battery means that it can’t go into checked baggage), sits comfortably on the dashboard of a golf cart, and can even be strapped to a backpack using a large carabiner or the small integrated stainless-steel tie-down ring. The clever and useful deployment features don’t stop there: the Ranger also has powerful built-in magnets that allow it to be slapped (literally) onto car doors, refrigerators,

steel cabinets, metal poles, and many other surfaces, not a few of which have conveniently turned out to be adjacent to where we’ve wanted some music.

The Ranger isn’t quite as loud (105db rather than 120db from the Original) and lacks a tweeter, though we never found a need to even get close to turning it all the way up, and the sound quality is excellent for use outdoors. Unlike the Original and Grande models, the Ranger doesn’t float. Also, there are limitations on pairing across the generations; the Ranger will pair other Rangers as well as with the Grande and Gen 3 Original, but not with the earlier models.

The rugged build is perfectly suited to an outdoors life where gravity happens and gear gets dragged through water, mud, sand, and salty places. The Ranger is the perfect companion for such adventures.

MSRP US\$250
www.turtleboxaudio.com



TURTLEBOX > GEN 3 > GRANDE

by Brian Clark and Jay Bush

Thanks to the generosity of Jay Bush, a salty soul and long time friend of the magazine (and our very first print subscriber!), we’ve recently been able to spend some quality time with the Turtlebox Grande. As advertised and expected, it’s LOUD.

How loud? Loud enough to be heard comfortably over the engine and boat noise when running the OTFM skiff on plane at full speed. Loud enough that care must be taken to avoid being a public nuisance. But beyond the decibel difference, the sound quality afforded by the larger 10in speaker provides a full range of sound, making the Grande very enjoyable for listening at moderate volumes.

In addition to being loud, it’s also large and, at 18 pounds, quite heavy. Unlike the ultra-portable Ranger that could easily be slipped into a backpack or set on the dashboard, you’ll want to drive the Grande around in a motor vehicle or on a boat. Since two Grande speakers are capable of true left-right stereo and Party Mode pairing, using them as a wireless sound system covering a large area is entirely

plausible. They also accept wired microphone inputs, so they could even be used as a public announcement system for large events. Or karaoke, of course – just as long as you promise to sing Margaritaville at least once.

Note that there are some limitations in pairing across the models. As mentioned in the previous review, neither the Ranger nor the Grande will pair with Gen 1 or Gen 2 models. Also, while it’s possible to pair a Grande with a Ranger, they won’t provide true stereo sound like you’d get with two Grandes or two Rangers.

Like the Original models, the Grande is (IP-67) waterproof and saltwater ready, ruggedly built with robust rubber feet on both the bottom and the back, and with the same tie-down options. It’s heavy enough that it doesn’t bounce around or “walk” much even when conditions get sporty in the skiff, but despite the weight, it still floats!

MSRP US\$730
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