

1968 Gibson Super 400CN



Serial #: 526295

Body size at lower bout: 18" **Scale length:** 25-1/2" **Nut width:** 1 9/16"

Materials: Handcarved bookmatched fine grained solid spruce top; highly figured tiger flame maple back and neck; ebony fingerboard with mother of pearl block fingerboard and peghead inlay; 5-ply body, neck, head and pickguard binding, triple bound f-holes, polished bone nut.

Hardware: All original hardware, including engraved gold-plated tailpiece; compensated Brazilian rosewood bridge; truss rod cover with "Custom" imprint; factory correct quintuple-bound tortoise replacement pickguard installed.

Notes: Of all the details of the life of Mr. R. E. Getz of Chicago, Illinois, we know only this. On September 16th, 1968, he walked into Monti's Music Center in Maywood and bought the most expensive guitar in the store. How do we know this? Firstly, because this information is recorded on the original pink sales receipt, still sitting in the accessory compartment of the case. And secondly, because on that day there was no more expensive guitar to be had anywhere in the world than a brand new, blonde, cutaway Gibson Super 400.

The other thing we know is that Mr. Getz took good care of his toys. Very good care. Because this remarkable guitar remains in essentially the same condition as it did the day that receipt was carefully folded into it's case. Except, of course, the instrument is now 40 years old. And the amber blonde finish has aged to the color of a perfect piece of toast. This same finish which highlights one of the largest, and most highly figured slabs of bookmatched tiger flame maple ever wrested from the forests of northern Michigan. The pumpkin colored lacquer also does a lovely job of showcasing an impossibly fine grained carved spruce top, thoroughly permeated with crossgrain silk, and tighter in grain at its 18" margins than most violins are at the center seam. Quite simply, we've never seen another piece of tonewood anything like it, and don't expect to anytime soon.

We mentioned expensive. How about rare? Well, somewhere in the world, if they have survived fire, flood, angry spouses and clumsy barflies, there are two other blonde cutaway acoustic Gibson Super 400 guitars that left Kalamazoo that entire year. And if either one of them was half as pristine as this stunner, it would still be hanging in the store.

As scarce as the Super 400 is in the pre-Norlin years, rarer still is a design feature found on examples made between 1967 and 1969 only. Responding to the popularity of its famed slimline electric guitar necks, Gibson's craftsmen borrowed that speedy profile to create the fastest neck ever installed on a Gibson archtop. The result is a fingerboard that glides effortlessly through the palm, a contour that allows the player to switch seamlessly between this full-bodied orchestral archtop and the slinkiest electric neck ever. If you've been coveting the rich tone of a fat body jazzier but always balked at the big bat neck, this is your axe, cowpoke. It just plays itself.

So it's all here, complete with the blue Gibson Truss Rod brochure in the original black hardshell case with the orange plush lining. The fingerboard is straight as a string, and the original medium jumbo frets took a perfect polish. Even the famously fragile gold plating is in remarkably brilliant condition. It is rare indeed that we can describe an instrument as truly of museum quality, but here it is: not a single screw is unaccounted for. How often do they surface like this? Once a decade around these parts, maybe. In a good decade. Call now.

Setup: This instrument is strung with medium gauge nickel strings (.013-.056). The guitar will accommodate lighter or heavier gauge strings, according to preference. String action is set at 5/64" to 6/64" at the 12th fret, with moderate relief for acoustic playing with medium strings. The action may be lowered or raised to your requirements with the adjustable bridge.

Case: Original Gibson black plush hardshell case.



