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INSTRUCTIONS - HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR FLAMENCO GUITAR

The greatest threats to a premium, solid wood flamenco guitar are excessive and sudden changes in temperature and humidity. The perfect temperature to preserve the integrity of premium solid wood flamenco guitars is about 20,5° C and the ideal humidity is about 45% to 50%. That is why the relative humidity in the workshop of most flamenco guitar maker is 50%. High humidity levels, exceeding 70%, will soften the glues used in the construction of your guitar. The solid woods will absorb too much moisture causing the soundboard, sides and back to expand and rise, eventually evolving in loosing sound quality and increasing string action. If the humidity level drops below 40%, the evaporation of moisture in solid woods will lead to shrinkage, frets sticking out of the fingerboard and cracking, no matter how well aged the woods have been at the time when the flamenco guitar was made. Specifically during the winter, when we heart our homes humidity levels can drop dangerously low for solid wood guitars. Consequently, it is essential to keep your flamenco guitar in a room with a humidity level between 40%-70%. If dryness is detected in an early stage, usually, any experienced flamenco guitar maker can repair these damages. A small hygrometer is an easy and effective way to determine if your guitar is exposed to low humidity levels. Potential injuries can be prevented easily by a using a humidifier in the room where you keep your guitar or by humidifying your case. Room humidifier are sold in most household stores, good case humidifiers are the ones of Oasis or the credo precision 70 humidifier, often used in cigar stores. If your flamenco guitar is exposed to very low temperatures in the winter and upon entering a heated room, allow your guitar to warm up to room temperature while she remains inside the case. When your flamenco guitar is not in use, always store her in its case. Do not put your guitar near a heating radiator, a fireplace or direct sunlight near a window. Avoid car trunks which can fluctuate from hot to cold quickly. Do not hang your guitar in a wall, walls have lower temperatures than the air around them.

Flamenco guitars are finished with shellac or the French polish method. This beautiful shellac finish not only protects your flamenco guitar from moisture entering the woods and cracks from spreading, it also prolongs the life of your flamenco guitar and realizes the greatest sound potential of your flamenco guitar. Therefore, it is essential to keep the shellac finish and thus the solid woods in good condition. Shellac finish is very delicate, easily damaged by even skin perspiration, alcohol, heat, fingernails, shirt button or belts. When playing the guitar, always wear long sleeves preventing skin perspiration and excessive body heat. Do not wear shirts with buttons and remove metallic pens in your shirt pocket since preventing scratches to the back of your flamenco guitar. It is quite common that French polish or shellac finishes are refreshed with a new layer of shellac every 3 to 4 years. Never try to repair a shellac finish yourself, the skills required to do so are only obtained through many years of dedication and learning the art of French polishing.

To clean your flamenco guitar, removing fingerprints or sweat, always use a soft cotton cloth, never use cleaning products containing alcohol since this would dissolve the shellac finish, damaging and even removing the nice finish of your guitar severely. Never use car or furniture polish since chances are very high these products contain abrasives causing scratches. Although we do not recommend it, but if you need to use a specific cleaning product, use turtle wax or violin polish, but be sure it doesn't contain any alcohol alike ingredients and put it onto your cleaning cloth, never directly onto your guitar. If you clean you guitar strings regularly, never use the same cleaning cloth to clean your guitar, since the little metal particles, left behind in the cloth by cleaning the guitar strings, will cause scratches on your guitar. When passing the guitar to your friend, please hold the guitar by the neck and not by the body or the soundboard, a soundboard can be easily cracked by flexing the top.

When re-stringing never take off all of the strings at once since. Releasing all strings generates a sudden and tremendous amount of tension on the soundboard and bridge. Instead, remove the low and high E strings first, replaced them by a new one, next remove the A and B strings and replace them with a new one, next remove the D and G strings, replacing them with new ones. This minimizes the tension shock to the bridge reduces the risk the bridge from lifting of from the soundboard. When re-stringing put a small piece of antistatic plastic behind the bridge to prevent damages to the soundboard when a new string slips.