



Oliver Wadsworth Luthier

20 Hill View Rd.,
St. John's,
Worcester.
WR2 4PJ.
England.

oliver@wadsworth-lutes.co.uk
www.wadsworth-lutes.co.uk

phone. 01905 424709
workshop 07986 517802

Vihuela Information Sheet

The vihuela presents something of a problem to the modern luthier since there is comparatively little surviving evidence to work with. There are three surviving instruments which are generally considered to be vihuelas. None of them seem likely to represent a 'normal' instrument that might have been played by your average vihuelist. In addition to these instruments there is a small amount of contemporary iconography and written description available.

The instrument below is based predominantly on the, so called, 'Chambure' Vihuela. It is the plainest of the surviving instruments and has more of the look of a musician's tool rather than a rich person's toy. It also presents the maker with the challenge of a back made of 7 ribs bent in 2 opposing directions. This technique is found on one other surviving instrument – a small guitar by Belchior Dias now in the museum at the Royal college of music in London.



Marcantonio Raimondi C.1510



Quite why the back is made in this way is a mystery but the resulting instrument does seem to work very well. It is a very resonant instrument that produces a mellow and even sound across its entire compass.

This 6 course instrument has a string length of 64cm and is pitched at f# (a' 440Hz). The Back and sides are made from cypress. The back is constructed of 7 double bent ribs. The sides are in 2 pieces separated with ebony lines. The neck and peghead are in cherry. Pegs and bridge are in plum. The fingerboard in ebony. The rose is two layers of pierced and carved pearwood backed by punched parchment. The edging is in holly and ebony.



The use of other woods, string spacing and decoration can be discussed at the time of order. The price of an instrument like the one illustrated is £3600