The lute is a beautiful instrument that makes an equally beautiful sound. Derived from the Middle-Eastern oud, the lute evolved and spread throughout Europe beginning in the 13th century. Flourishing in the 16th and 17th centuries, it was considered the most popular of all musical instruments. Around 1750, lutes began to fall out of favor as musical taste changed in the Baroque and later eras. However, interest in the lute was revived in the 20th century and attention to historical accuracy in lute construction as well as performance has grown continually to the present. Worldwide, there are skilled lute builders, an abundance of well-trained lute players, excellent lute teachers, and organizations that offer information, seminars, master classes, and even rental instruments.

The lute is alive and well!

An important first question that many people ask is, “How hard is it to play the lute?” The answer: The lute is no harder to learn to play well than the guitar, piano, or violin. If you want to learn to play the lute, you can do it.

Another question that people ask is, “Why don’t you see more lutes and people playing them?” The most important reason has been a lack of accessible instruments. Until very recently, virtually all lutes were made one-at-a-time by hand so they have been expensive for an entry-level instrument.

To help make lutes more accessible, The Lute Society of America is offering lutes to rent. Renting makes good sense: you can learn to play the instrument without having to purchase it. If you discover that the lute is something you want to pursue, you can use the knowledge and experience you’ve gained from playing the rental instrument to help guide you through the purchase of a new or used lute. On the other hand, if you decide that the lute isn’t appealing, you won’t have made a huge financial investment, and you won’t have the hassle of selling the lute. You’ll simply end the rental agreement and return the instrument. Either way, renting makes the process of trying out learning to play the lute risk-free.

The Lute Society of America rental program will not only rent you a lute—it will also help you find a teacher. (The teacher may either live near you or be available for lessons through Facetime, Skype, or other Internet services.) In the past, finding a teacher has been another major barrier to learning to play the lute; now Internet-based learning options have blasted through that old roadblock. You now have easy and inexpensive access to a lute and easy access to a teacher. There’s no reason not to learn to play the lute if you feel attracted to its beautiful sound and music.
Are you ready to take the next step?

Are you interested in learning how to play the lute?

If so, simply go to www.lutesocietyofamerica.org and click on the “Lute Rental Program” button.

You’ll quickly reach a page that will guide you step-by-step through the easy rental and teacher selection process.

Happy luting!

Learn the Lute