

Chad Smith : Pearls Of Wisdom From Chad Smith

"Guitar Center " (2001)

In 1988 Chad Smith joined the Red Hot Chili Peppers, funk/rock's most enduring quartet, thus creating one of the most distinctive rhythm sections in modern music. As a member of this Grammy award-winning band, Smith has helped define the role of the 21st century drummer. From his in-the-pocket groove to his intricate patterns and non-stop funk assault, Smith has been a steady presence within the wild musical and theatrical antics of his bandmates. Recently, Chad sat down with Guitar Center to discuss the past, present and future in Pepperland.

GC: What are you doing for fun now that the tour is over?

Chad: Chasing women and drinking.

GC: I know you also like to play softball.

Chad: Our softball team is taking a break for the winter. We did go to the city tournament. Now, some buddies and I got a basketball team together and are having some fun with that. You know, just hanging out shooting some hoops and having some beers after the game.

GC: What position are you playing?

Chad: I am playing power forward.

GC: In the great tradition of Dennis Rodman?

Chad: Yeah! I stand around under the goal and dig out rebounds. I usually foul out in the first 15 minutes. The games are fun but the hang after is even better.

GC: What other fun things do you do to keep yourself entertained?

Chad: I love to ride my Harley. I have a Road King. I stripped it down and it looks great. The weather stays nice out here, so I get a lot of riding time in. Riding is a great get-away. It is really relaxing. There are lots of really cool places to ride out here.

GC: What's up with the tour?

Chad: We have been out for over a year now, so the tour has pretty much wound down. I have enjoyed some vacation time and went home to spend time with my family for the holidays. This year, we all met at my sister's house in Chicago. Man, it was cold up there. I got in a little sledding with the kids and had a great holiday.

GC: Any more shows?

Chad: We are doing the Rock in Rio Festival. Man, do those guys know how to party. That will be a blast. We will do two other shows while we are there and then we come home to start writing for the next record.

GC: Is a new record next for the Red Hot Chili Peppers?

Chad: We will pretty much revert back to being a garage band. We will go into Flea's garage to jam and write and before you know it, we will have a new record.

GC: I bet his neighbors love that.

Chad: Yeah! But how many neighbors can say 'Yeah, that's just the Chili Peppers writing some new songs'?

GC: Is there anything new going on with you?

Chad: I just bought a new house. It's not far from my old house, same street as a matter of fact. Cary Grant used to own it.

GC: Congratulations. Are you putting a studio in?

Chad: I am thinking about it. It has a place on the lower level that would be perfect.

GC: Where will you get the gear for your studio?

Chad: Guitar Center, of course. Don't be ridiculous. The thing I like most about GC is that almost anywhere you go, you can find one, and they almost always have exactly what you need. I never have a problem finding anything from Pearl drums. They always have it in-stock or can order it for me. The best thing about GC's drum department is, of course, the Chad Smith Signature snare.

GC: We recently saw you in a Pearl Power Shifter Eliminator pedal ad. How do you like the pedal?

Chad: Yeah, that ad was great. I love the new pedal. I loved the old ones, too. The new one has so many adjustments. It can be dialed in to the exact way you play. You can make it feel like anything you want. It is great. I have had one out for the last tour and I can only say it works for me.

GC: What was the kit you used on the last tour?

Chad: It was a Masterworks Maple Select ply with only the highest quality maple. The shells were 6-ply with die cast hoops and it has a Silver Sparkle lacquer finish. The finish is beautiful, kind of retro but cool. These kits are totally custom-made. You have to wait a little while to get them, but they are so worth the wait. On this tour I was playing a 10"x10" mounted, a 10"x12" mounted, a 14"x14" floor, a 16"x16" floor, and a 16"x24" bass drum.

GC: Does Pearl have anything new coming out that interests you?

Chad: Check out the new EX and ELX Export kits. They have made a lot of changes. New lugs, the ISS mounting system, cool finishes, and better heads. This is a great kit.

GC: Thanks, Chad, for taking the time to talk to us. Do you have anything to say to your fans?

Chad: Thanks for coming to see us play this last year and look for the new record as soon as we can finish it.

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