

Tele Vue's New DeLite Eyepieces



Tele Vue DeLite Eyepieces

U.S. price: \$250

Tele Vue dealers worldwide

YOU JUST KNOW that when one of the world's leading manufacturers of eyepieces unveils a new product line, it will spark a lot of interest among observers. And that's what happened last April when Tele Vue Optics made a surprise announcement introducing its new DeLite eyepieces at the Northeast Astronomy Forum (NEAF). Made to fit standard 1¼-inch focusers, the DeLites are currently available in focal lengths of 7, 11, and 18.2 millimeters, with more planned for the future that, according to company founder and CEO Al Nagler, will have focal lengths shorter than the 18.2-mm model.

The DeLite eyepieces all have a generous 20 millimeters of eye relief and an adjustable eye guard that locks solidly in place with a twist of the lower textured-rubber collar. Their modest 47-mm barrel diameters make them ideal for bino-viewers, something that is often a problem for modern eyepiece designs that have bulging barrels.

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While many of Tele Vue's recent eyepiece introductions have established new standards for the wide-field observing experience, the DeLites have far more modest specifications. With an apparent field of view (FOV) spanning 62°, the DeLites offer only a slightly wider FOV than Tele Vue's now-discontinued Radian eyepieces (57°), but smaller than the company's Delos eyepieces (72°). Indeed, were you only to look at the DeLites' specifications on paper, you might come away thinking that their most interesting attributes are simply the Tele Vue name and their \$250 price tag (only a handful of the company's Plossl eyepieces retail for less than the DeLites).

What makes the DeLites special, however, comes from looking through them. And

WHAT WE LIKE:

Upholds Tele Vue's reputation for optical excellence

Comfortable to look through

Adjustable eye guard with locking collar

Works with Dioptix astigmatism corrector

that's what I did after borrowing a set of the samples shown at NEAF for this review. I tried them with four scopes – a 12-inch f/4 Newtonian reflector fitted with Tele Vue's Big Paracorr coma corrector (reviewed in the April 2015 issue, page 72); a 12-inch f/5 Dobsonian; a 4-inch f/5.4 apo refractor, and a classic 6-inch f/9 Newtonian.

As I've come to expect from all of Tele Vue's eyepieces, the DeLites offered superb views. Stars appeared as pinpoints across the entire field; there wasn't a hint of false color around even the brightest stars; and there was only a touch of pincushion distortion, meaning that round objects won't stretch into ovals as you sweep them across the field. Daytime views were contrasty and without a trace of color fringes even at the borders of high-contrast objects such as power lines seen against a bright sky.

These are the features everyone looks for in a quality eyepiece, but the DeLites offered something more – something that I also found remarkable about the Tele Vue Delos eyepieces (reviewed in the June 2011 issue, page 58). The DeLites are very easy to

look through. You never get the feeling that you are struggling to get your eye perfectly aligned with the eyepiece. This comes as little surprise since Tele Vue acknowledges that the DeLite design evolved as a "smaller, more economical and lightweight version of the Delos." Even the name is a clever spin on a "lite" version of the Delos.

More so than even about their telescopes, observers tend to develop very strong feelings about their eyepieces, and I too have my favorites. While I certainly marvel at the views through many of today's incredible wide-field eyepieces, the bulk of my observing of the Moon, planets, multiple stars, and deep-sky objects is done at medium to high magnifications with tracking telescopes. As such, I'm well served with eyepieces that have a modest field of view. That's something to think about given that I can own the whole set of DeLites with their uncompromising 62° FOV for less than the cost of just one of some of today's premium wide-field eyepieces. ♦

Dennis di Cicco has been gazing skyward since the dawn of the Space Age.