

Fotospeed Signature range From £21.99

Four papers sit in Fotospeed's Signature range offering a selection of surfaces that suit fine art and exhibition use. Each offers wide colour gamut, high D-Max and very clean paper bases.

Our test here used an Epson Stylus 3880 printer with Epson inks and generic profiles

– these are free to download from Fotospeed's website and are available for a wide range of printers. Custom profiles will enable even better performance. Photo black ink was used for Platinum Baryta 300 and matt black ink for the three other papers.

A selection of test images was used. These are pictures used in previous paper and printer tests so are known quantities. An image of the X-rite ColorChecker Color Rendition Chart was also used. Prints were checked under a daylight-balanced light source,

“Run your (clean, dry!) fingers over the paper's surface and you'll hear a soft rustle

Smooth Cotton 300

This is a gorgeously smooth matt paper and the base is a very clean white which helps sets off your richly coloured images really nicely. Its CIE Whiteness rating is 94, and it's acid and lignin free for archival printing.

Fotospeed in its blurb says this paper is good for highly saturated images and to be honest, that is exactly what I found. Where some matt finishes can lack punch, this material acquitted itself very well and if you like your colour images with a good bit of snap as I do, this paper could be for you. It works well with monochrome too and the blacks have an impressive depth for a matt paper.



Specs

► **Price**
A4 25 sheets £27.99 – £1.12 a sheet
A3 25 sheets £57.99 – £2.32 a sheet

► **Availability**
A4, A3, A3+, A2, 17in, 24in, 36in and 44in rolls, panoramic 210x594mm

► **Weight**
300gsm

Verdict

A truly excellent paper that performs really well, giving very punchy results for a matt finish product. Feels great too. A lovely paper suited to fine art use.

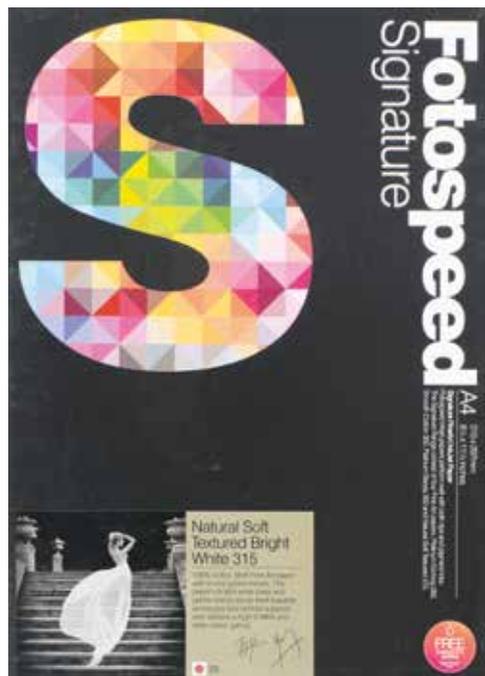
Pros Smooth finish, delivers excellent colours with punch, good blacks for a matt paper
Cons Nothing

Natural Soft Textured 315

Run your (clean, dry!) fingers over the paper's surface and you'll hear a soft rustle which tells you the finish is quite subtle. The base is slightly whiter and cooler than Smooth Cotton, just.

The colour performance of Natural Soft Textured Bright White 315 (to give the paper its full name) is quite different from Smooth Cotton. With this material colour saturation has been turned down a notch or two and that is really obvious in vibrant colours. This look will suit portrait workers.

For black & white images, though, you get deep blacks and white whites with the full range of greys in between.



Specs

► **Price**
A4 25 sheets £24.99 – £1 a sheet
A3 25 sheets £49.99 – £2 a sheet

► **Availability**
A4, A3, A3+, A2, 17in, 24in, 36in and 44in rolls

► **Weight**
315gsm

Verdict

Natural Soft Textured Bright White suits a more gentle approach so if you prefer a relatively understated colour performance this material will suit you well.

Pros Good for monochrome, subtle colour rendition
Cons Not for those who like vibrant colours

Platinum Baryta 300

Baryta 300 is currently the only glossy finish in the Signature range. The finish is more of a high sheen (unglazed gloss in darkroom parlance) than a high gloss so surface reflections are not an issue unless viewing obliquely. The finish is lovely and the paper base is faintly on the warm side with a CIE Whiteness rating of 100.

The material deals with colour and monochrome images very well indeed. Colour saturation is high and natural subjects really sing out and look excellent. Fully toned black & white images come with plenty of contrast but without blacks blocking up and bright highlights hold detail very well.



Specs

► **Price**
A4 25 sheets £28.99 – £1.16 a sheet
A3 25 sheets £57.99 – £2.32 a sheet

► **Availability**
A4, A3, A3+, A2, 17in, 24in, 36in, 44in and 50in rolls, panoramic 210x594mm

► **Weight**
300gsm

Verdict

There is much to like about Baryta 300 and it performs very well indeed. Make your portfolio images on this lovely paper and you will not be disappointed.

Pros Deals with saturated and fully toned mono images very capably
Cons The sheen might be too much for some

Platinum Etching 285

Etching is 25% cotton and 75% alpha-cellulose and of the three matt finishes here is probably the most textured, although the effect is still quite delicate. If your images feature expanses of even tone, this texture shows through nicely, giving that arty feel. It's 100% acid free too.

Colour images reproduce accurately and with a good deal of sparkle but remain lifelike and natural looking. It certainly suits landscape images because greens and blues come out very pleasingly with plenty of life.

Etching works well for black & white images too, with areas of deep shadow coming out solidly while still retaining detail.



Specs

► **Price**
A4 25 sheets £21.99 – £0.88 a sheet
A3 25 sheets £43.99 – £1.76 a sheet

► **Availability**
A4, A3, A3+, A2, 24in, 36in and 44in rolls, panoramic 210x594mm

► **Weight**
285gsm

Verdict

Etching offers good value for money and if you want a lightly textured material that gives a more than capable colour performance this could be the one.

Pros Good price, vibrant colours
Cons Surface texture might not suit all tastes or image types