● **GRAPHICS CARD**

Gigabyte GV-RX80L256V

PC PRO A LIST

PC PRO RECOMMENDED

EXCLUSIVE

PRICE £200 (£235 inc VAT)

DELIVERY £7 (£8 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER www.scan.co.uk

INTERNET http://uk.giga-byte.com

VERDICT With universally high benchmark scores there's a lot of headroom for forthcoming releases. At only £200 this card is a sound investment.

Gigabyte's esoteric naming convention reveals this card to be an X800 XL-based card that holds 256MB of GDDR2 memory for maximum texture storage. The chip itself is based on an 110nm process, allowing ATi to fit more onto a silicon wafer and so cut costs. You can pick up an X800 XL for about £30 less than an X800 Pro. However, thanks to the increased parallelism of the 16 pixel pipelines rather than 12, and the RAM running

40MHz faster, it can actually outperform it.

Far Cry ran at an almost unprecedented 72fps at 1,280 x 1,024 with no AA or AF. Half-Life 2 proved even less of a challenge: almost 100fps at the same settings. Even ramping up the resolution to 1,600 x 1,200 and throwing every bit of anti-aliasing and anisotropic filtering at the X800 XL barely brought on a sweat. Doom 3 predictably returned some more sensible scores, but still only the most extreme resolution and AA/AF settings brought the frame rate below the 30fps mark. It's still playable at 1,600 x 1,200 with a touch less than 4x AA and 8x AF, which is incredible.

The heatpipes effectively channel the vast heat produced to the rear of the card. It will need some sort of cooling though, as the hunk of metal got so hot that it almost burnt our errant fingers in testing. This is the real benefit of a silent graphics card: you can usurp a tiny,

Extremely high resolutions and textures are no problem for this silent X800 XL.

noisy, onboard fan for a quiet 120mm case fan. With this £10 addition, you can enjoy high-resolution, high-detail gaming in relative quiet, which is some feat for a £200 card.
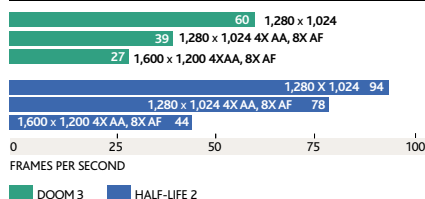
CLIVE WEBSTER

● **RESULTS**

60	1,280 x 1,024
39	1,280 x 1,024 4X AA, 8X AF
27	1,600 x 1,200 4XAA, 8X AF
94	1,280 X 1,024
78	1,280 x 1,024 4X AA, 8X AF
44	1,600 x 1,200 4X AA, 8X AF

FRAMES PER SECOND
0   25   50   75   100

■ DOOM 3   ■ HALF-LIFE 2

TEST RIG Athlon 64 4000+; Asus A9N-SLi Deluxe nForce4 motherboard; 1GB Crucial PC3200 RAM; 36GB Western Digital Raptor hard disk.

PC PRO RATINGS

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES & DESIGN	★★★★☆
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★☆
OVERALL	★★★★☆

SPECIFICATIONS PCI Express graphics card; ATi Radeon X800 GPU; 400MHz core clock; 256MB 490MHz GDDR3 RAM; 256-bit memory interface; S-Video out; D-SUB; DVI-I; 16 vertex and 6 pixel pipelines; 2 games, PowerDVD 5 and PowerDirector 3 ME software bundle; S-Video in/composite TV out breakout box.