

FURUTECH

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Audiophile AC Power Outlet Comparisons

Oyaide, Synergistic Teslaplex, ACME, Hubbell IG 5362, cruzeFIRST Audio Maestro, and Furutech GTX.

Review By Jonathan Lo

Furutech GTX-D Rhodium Outlet

The Furutech GTX-D is built like a jewel and sounds like it, too. Unfortunately, such quality does not come cheap, and those who are used to \$1 light-weight, plasticky outlets used in most large residential developments these days may be somewhat shocked by the \$239 price tag for the Furutech GTX-D Rhodium. Going straight to the source, Furutech, there are reasons their top-of-the-line outlet costs what it does.



In an ideal world, pure copper would be used for power connectors and outlets, but unfortunately, pure copper is quite soft and malleable, which would deform and loosen over repetitive use, leading to a potential disaster for AC power chain. This is the reason most power connectors and receptacles are made with materials with worse conductivity such as brass or phosphor bronze. Furutech has developed a technique that allows the use of their best conductor material, Alpha-treated pure copper, as the base conductor. Alpha-copper means being blessed with Furutech's patented cryogenic treatment and demagnetization process, good enough to be used in Furutech's premium signal cabling products. This copper is strengthened with nonmagnetic stainless steel spring system that maintains a very firm grip on power blades while avoiding damages to male connector blades. These receptacles receive the world-renowned Furutech rhodium or gold plating, becoming (r) or (g) versions of GTX-D.

Attention to detail does not stop there, and in order to minimize vibration and resonance, the receptacle body is made from a heavy-duty composite of nylon and fiberglass, which is impregnated with carbon powder and "piezo nano" ceramic. This technique is used to convert mechanical resonance into heat while performing shielding duties from EMI. Some of the other features include a curved pressure clamping system that increases surface contact area between the electrical line and the receptacle, accommodation for either spades or bare wire, special protective clamp cover, patented wire clamping system, nonmagnetic stainless steel mounting strap, and an anti-resonant rear dampening clamp.

If still not convinced regarding the price, one just needs to hold the GTX-D in his hand to realize this has to be the best built, most sturdy, meticulously thought-out, non-resonant piece of audio outlet available. Every moving part, screw, strap

inspires confidence that this jewel will last for generations and still deliver. If still not convinced, one only needs to listen to it. Before listening to the Furutech, I was initially worried the rhodium plating may sound too analytical, which is the somewhat accepted reputation for rhodium; the corollary is that gold plating yields warm and euphonic sound. This description somewhat matches my previous experiences with these plating methods with other products, but GTX-D (r) managed to walk the fine line between resolution and warmth, while definitely avoiding any hash, grit, sheen, brightness, or harshness.

GTX-D achieved the highest levels of both resolution and smoothness, something usually not seen together in one product. If one switched from the \$1 house outlet to GTX-D, the staggering amount of previously-unheard resolution, clarity, and dynamics will likely be startling to the listener. All that extra information and energy is delivered in a defined, controlled way, without various sound bites getting out of control and ragged as can happen with lesser outlets. Bass is not overblown or obscuring; instead, it is tight, defined, and extended with energetic dynamic punch. Tiny sounds from various nooks of soundstage come alive with crystalline and pure delivery while instrument positioning, layering, and depth become effortlessly obvious. To make matters worse (?), GTX-D delivers a gorgeous, tasteful, 3-dimensional solidity in the all-important midrange without going overboard with overly round and thick presentation. This outlet is not held back by an overly "balanced" but boring presentation with polite, reticent midrange presence, either. The voices have superb reach into the room and soundstage, vivid and forward enough to be engaging while not overcooked, especially in the sibilance and presence region.

What are the flaws? Well, Furutech must have a reason for making the gold plated version of GTX-D as well for a different flavor. Some of the Furutech vendors recommend the rhodium version for neutral to warm systems, probably with tubes, which may mean the gold version, may fit better in neutral to cool systems. Not having the GTX-D Gold in house to compare to Rhodium, it is difficult to say for sure, but going by prior experience with gold vs. rhodium plating, one might presume that GTX-D (g) might have a warmer tonality with possibly more bass quantity, albeit with less tightness. It may also have more forgiveness but not as much detail resolution. Would that make (r) version any less worthy and flawed? Any well-heeled audiophile would already know that systems are different and that one does not fit all. One outlet may serve a certain type of system better while the other outlet may synergize a little better with a different type of system, with final results heavily being dependent on the listener's personal tastes as well. Once again, there is no substitute for actually trying the product in one's own system, and for those audiophiles who are willing to pay the tariff and do the hard work, the Furutech should be on the rather short list.

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