

Furutech AC Bundle

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Usually, I come to a review with foreknowledge about a product and a set of basic expectations. In this case, I had no first hand prior exposure to Furutech or experience with high-end power receptacles. A very long time ago, before cell phones and audio websites, I replaced the original duplex of my typical post-war suburban ranch house. The old worn duplex was upgraded to a sturdier but not heavy duty, lab grade, or mil spec version from the local hardware store. Furutech specified that in order for their product to reach its full potential, the unit had to actually be installed. Since no one else at *Positive Feedback* was willing to perform such a task, the review was assigned to me. Thus, the question to be addressed is: What is the effect of Furutech's elite high-end AC receptacle performance package on a real world system such as mine?



When the box of Furutech products arrived at my home, I delicately unpackaged each item like a millennial with a new device. The GTX 104-D outlet cover (\$111) is cut from high-grade stainless steel and hand finished with a sheet of woven carbon fiber. The GTX receptacle wall frame (\$160) is CNC machined from aluminum billet and painted with a black non-resonant coating. The GTX DR NCF (\$260) duplex receptacle is an awe inspiring over engineered piece of audio jewelry that speaks to Furutech's obsessive attention to detail and respect for all links in the audio chain.

Copper is an ideal conductor for the AC power that ultimately ends up as music to your ears. Unfortunately, copper is too soft for long-term durable contact with AC power connectors. As a result, the most common material for internal workings of AC receptacles is phosphor bronze. The design and composition of most AC receptacles also makes them prone to all sorts of electro magnetic noise. Through years of research in electro magnetic and metallurgical properties, Furutech has developed a system to strengthen their highest grade α (Alpha) copper for use in their GTX brand of AC receptacles. The copper contact points are then coated with rhodium to protect the copper from weathering and use. Finally the unit is treated with piezo ceramic nano particles that suppress electro magnetic noises from entering the system.



Although replacing an AC duplex is considered basic homeowner do-it-yourself, I strongly urge you to contact a professional if you have any doubts about doing the job. Most importantly of all, turn off the power at the circuit breaker box before attempting any work with AC power. Your life depends on it!

After removing the old AC receptacle, I quickly noticed that beefy Furutech would not fit into the wall box unless I removed small sliding doors covering the contact points on either side of the unit. Further complicating the matter were very short wires from the wall box. I tried unsuccessfully to pull out the wires in order to give me an inch or two more room to work. Nevertheless, I nipped off the old exposed wire and inserted clean copper into the GTX DR NCF. Next, I secured the GTX wall frame with four drywall screws and applied the self adhesive Teflon gasket included with the package. Finally I screwed on the GTX outlet cover and crossed my fingers for good luck when I switched the circuit breaker back on. Before I put the stereo back on line, I tested the newly installed outlet with a small table lamp and smiled proudly when it uneventfully turned on without smoke or sparks.



Then came the unpleasant but necessary chore of tidying up the system and sliding it all back into place. Another moment of anxious anticipation and music was finally on. The resulting effect was immediate and unambiguous as if someone unleashed more than a few watts from my trusty Bel Canto C7R integrated. "I Miss You" is an EDM influenced song from Adele's latest release 25. The song features rhythmic bass drum pattern and low keyboard motif that propels the music under Adele's amazing voice. With the Furutech package in the wall, the house shuttered with energy during certain low bass drum notes in the song as if a hidden subwoofer were suddenly activated. How does this happen? I don't have a subwoofer and my over achieving KEF LS50 start rolling off at 70kHz. This phenomenon repeated itself with numerous recordings in my collection. Sometimes the effect felt like someone slowly rolling a heavy refrigerator across the floor in the basement except I don't have a basement. Could it be that the Furutech package in the wall was finally allowing the little 60 watt(?) integrated to come out of its cocoon and spread its wings with depth and effortless power?

Other listening notes described more focused center images, increased depth of transparency, and blacker backgrounds. Certain sounds were convincingly disassociated from their source. After watching Robert Trujillo's admirable documentary *Jaco*, I cued up side two of *Jaco's 1981 Word of Mouth LP*. The first cut is *Chromatic Fantasy* by Bach that merges into McCartney's *Blackbird* with big band fanfare, whistles, chimes, toots of horn, other cornucopia of sounds that had me turning my head or looking out the window to ascertain their location. The articulation and presence of fingers nimbly gliding across strings was unmatched in the context of this system.

My iTunes download recommendation of the month is *Fils (The Raftsmen): Overture* by Stanislaw Moniuszko as performed by the Warsaw Philharmonic under Antonin Wit . I enjoy this piece because it reminds me of being back at the emerald pastures and rolling hills the Shire. The Naxos recording and performance are top shelf. The different sections of the orchestra are so crisply focused and spread far out behind the plane of the speakers. Then, wait for it, massive mortar like bass drums possessed the room with absolute authority.

Speaking of mortar, *Mad Max Fury Road* is psychotic mayhem with ballet like levels of choreographed precision and grace. If there is a movie with more riveting sequences cataclysmic collisions and carnage, I am unaware of it. I can't believe I'm listening to my system. I'm dumbstruck by the evolution of my two channel home theater. Curiously, part of me wants to reach for the volume and the other part of me wants to see if the copper colored woofers of my KEF LS50s shoot across the room like so many wheels, shards of shredded metal, and bodies on the screen. Nevertheless, with the C7R newly endowed with semi-truck levels of torque and traction, the speakers survived the chaos unscathed. Oddly enough, the volume level was set no louder than usual for home theater.

The best thing I can say about the Furutech package is that the sound of my system remained true. The tones and timbres did not shift along the spectrum. Images of instruments and musicians became more sharply focused and independent like objects in a diorama rather than paintings on a wall. Because the Furutech AC package inhibits grunge from entering the system and maximizes current flow, noise levels vanished and notes decayed into super silence.

In total, \$531 for one AC duplex bundle is extreme but in my opinion, the Furutech's impact and performance is commensurate with its MSRP. If you are curious about your system's next level of evolution, give Furutech a call. If you are one of the fortunate few who are constructing a dedicated listening room or home theater, I recommend that you provide your contractor with at least one GTX DR NCF duplex receptacle for the most critical area.

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