

Furutech GTX-D NCF

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Furutech GTX-DR NCF AC Receptacle

You Complete Me

Neil Gader

Audiophiles have been known to spend a lot of time selecting a power cord. Indeed, these devices are indispensable links—nothing happens without them. But what about the other indispensable accessory that enters the listening room right in front of them—the AC wall receptacle? Easily overlooked on the enthusiast audio checklist, and just as likely to be a cheap dual outlet that a contractor picked up at a big-box store for two bucks. Thin internal copper and poor electrical connections and contacts create impedance issues and losses in connectivity and conductance that affect performance.

As they say, attention must be paid. And that's where Japan-based Furutech comes in. Heroic in construction, the company's GTX-DR NCF receptacle takes the humble outlet and runs it through a gauntlet of refinement far beyond what anyone could have imagined. This receptacle is so well machined it almost seems sinful to hide it in a wall.

The pure copper conductors are rhodium plated and strengthened, and sprung by Furutech's unique, non-magnetic, stainless-steel-conductor spring system, which keeps a firm grip without damaging a power cord's connector blades or plating. What sets it apart is "NCF" or Nano Crystal Formula. This is Furutech's special crystalline material that has two active properties. It generates negative ions that eliminate static and converts thermal energy into infrared. This crystalline material is then combined with nano-sized ceramic particles and carbon powder for additional "Piezo effect" properties. The result is a material very high in electrical and mechanical damping. Incidentally, installation of the GTX-DR is actually easier than that of typical cheapo home outlets. Designed to accept heavier-gauge wiring (4mm), the spacious internal contact points make it a breeze to cinch wires down tightly. Normally, plugging and unplugging components is such a matter-of-fact, even mindless, exercise, but I could instantly feel quality and smooth tactile execution in the way the GTX gripped a power cord connector.

I was admittedly skeptical going into this evaluation. However, in performance there's no doubt that the Furutech removes a layer of low-level grunge from the sonic window, reducing noise across the soundstage. As if wiped by a sonic dust cloth, images are clearer and more tangible.

No, these are not monumental shifts. I didn't expect them to be. But once experienced, I was not going to let my system's resolution take a step back, either. Familiar musical performances took



on a newfound silken ease and composure. A prime example was Harry Connick Jr.'s "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square," where I could hear the atmosphere and sound-space opening up with added air and buoyancy. Image specificity among acoustic bass, Connick's vocal, and Branford Marsalis' saxophone was cleaner. Low-level sustain and decay were more extended. Harmonics seemed to carry into the deepest recesses of the mix. And most curious was the altogether wider stage, where the sax literally shifted to a position nearer the edge of the speaker.

Consider a recording like Melody Gardot singing "Who Will Comfort Me?"—nicely recorded, to be sure, but adding the Furutech reduced veiling and revealed the top end of the brushed snare with finer air and detail. Percussion generally had more transient pop and spring. On a track such as Elton John's "Someone Saved My Life Tonight," where the mix progressively rises in output to the crescendo of the final chorus, the Furutech produced more

splash off the drums and a top-end shimmer and bloom that were decidedly more present and natural. At the end of the day my system achieved a new level of transparency.

Unless you have the inclination to rewire your home, the outlet represents the electrical starting line in your listening room—literally a handshake partnership with a power cord, where everything is riding on the connection. And while the Furutech GTX is not cheap, its uncompromising quality and high performance make purchasing it seem a small price to pay. In the world of audiophile-grade wall outlets, the Furutech will spoil you, as if did me, for anything less. **tas**

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