

GutWire Consummate loudspeaker cables

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In Issue 191, I reviewed GutWire's Consummate interconnect cables. A lot has happened since then, including the passing of the then-distributor. However, one of the last discussions I had with Peter Djordjevic was about loudspeaker cables from the same family. It's time to honour that request.

Like the interconnect cables, Consummate stands at the pinnacle of the GutWire range. It employs 16 AWG and 24 AWG solid-core, high-purity, oxygen-free copper insulated with silicone and protected by two shielding layers: pure copper and pure Mylar. The conductors are arranged in a rope-like, golden section configuration, measuring one and a half inches in diameter. The connectors are sourced from Furutech, featuring CF-201(R) spades or CF-202(R) banana plugs, which are cold-welded to the conductors.

No Added Quants

GutWire avoids exaggerating its claims. There's no 'quantum' magic here. Instead, the company produces high-quality cables through good engineering principles and rigorous testing and listening. These cables are designed to minimise EM and RF interference from internal or external sources.

When discussing speaker cables, they refer to eliminating 'near-end crosstalk' (or 'NEXT'), which occurs when adjacent conductors influence each other. The cube at each end of the Consummate is not merely a breakout box for the positive and negative conductors; it also helps reduce that NEXT figure.

Whether it's due to those NEXT-busting ceramic boxes or simply a characteristic of GutWire cables in general, this cable requires some time to acclimatise to its environment. This process isn't just a few hundred hours of signal passing through the cable; it also pertains to the system and its movement. If you swap the cable, it requires a few hours to recondition. The same applies when you replace a power amplifier. The effort is worthwhile because the result is so good, but it also explains why it rarely features in reviewers' systems; we often change components in our system so frequently that Consummate would forever be in its 'warming up' state.

Cynically, I'd also suggest that GutWire Consummate's ability to bring out the best in components ultimately undermines the relentless pursuit of changing them, making the promotion of The Next Big Thing in audio more challenging. When you incorporate Consummate into your system, it sounds enjoyable, encouraging you to play track after track. You'll first notice the size and scale; the soundstage is expansive, and the dynamic range is entirely unrestricted by this cable. Not 'big' in an exaggerated sense, but 'big' in the way well-recorded orchestras can sound. If you play something smaller in scale, it delivers on that front as well.

It's also extremely fast and detailed, more than keeping up with the fast, glitchy rhythms of Aphex Twin, Burial, or the latest James Blake offerings. The sheer amount of detail puts you in the studio control room or with the musicians. The difference between recording styles is so easy to distinguish here that you find it frustrating when switching to other cables.

However, more important than all this is GutWire Consummate's ability to set aside the usual musical granularity of audio, allowing you to focus on the musical whole. It's the performance that matters, and the 'two-minute twitch' of audiophiles wanting to showcase their systems (often to themselves) is diminished. Consummate aids you in enjoying the music rather than fixating on the sound it produces.

If you are obsessed with audiophile ephemera or having a system featuring big-brand cables, look elsewhere. GutWire doesn't do 'high profile' or 'big-brand' marketing. It just makes great cables. The name checks out; this is a Consummate performance. +

Price and contact details

Price: £12,990, \$13,799 for an 8' pair.
Additional lengths on application.

Manufacturer GutWire

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