

# Tellurium Q Ultra Black II



...all I can say is just have a listen if you think this review is hyperbole

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## TELLURIUM Q ULTRA BLACK II SPEAKER CABLE

**by Simon Wilce, Reviewer**

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This is a Tellurium Q Ultra Black II speaker cable review, one of the easiest and most pleasurable reviews I have put together in the last 9 years.

I have recently been truly fortunate to assemble a terrific HiFi system in my listening space that has matured with soft furnishings, a few acoustic panels and general incremental improvements in the kit, power conditioners, plinths, isolation, and soft lighting.

The system is currently, an Auralic Vega G1 with Tellurium Black II XLR cables into the Chord Étude Stereo Power Amplifier and a pair of Kudos Cardea C10 stand mounted speakers. The system is singing, I have got it just how I want it, I am 3 meters away, with the speakers a similar distance away in the triangle we all seek.





I have width and space between instruments on tracks that are properly presented to the system, I have a good bass response from the C10s. As I have said before, it is not going to remove the tiles from the roof, but it is positive, fulsome, it crunches when needed and lingers as required. My midrange is mature, rhythmic, punchy, and dynamic with the C10s singing. My treble is clean, not too bright but crystal clear and I am hearing elements of songs I have often not heard before. I have a low-ish noise floor. Overall, the system is long listening and is not fatiguing. I too have increased energy, I am sure in response to this uplifting experience. I am missing only a stunning turntable, like the recent Vertere Dynamic Groove, or a Planar 8 for the perfect system.

But I have taken one element of this system totally for granted because I thought it was fine, I have QED Supremus cable, the big fat stuff that I have seen often at the likes of KJ West One, Marylebone. However, my very positive experience of the Tellurium Q XLR Black II cables, at just a meter long, prompted the question of just how good are my speaker cables? After a conversation with Tellurium Q MD Geoff Merrigan, he suggested a listen to the Tellurium Q Ultra Black II. With a firm email insisting I run the Tellurium Q System CD before critical listening, here I am.

## DESIGN

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I have the Tellurium Q Black II cable and the Tellurium Q Ultra Black II. The Ultra cable sits to the top of the middle of the product lines offered by Tellurium Q offering the listener the opportunity of, simply unlocking what a well-balanced system can do.

## DESIGN-CONT.

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The Ultra Black II is in a different performance level to the Black II and is therefore this is the focus of this review. As we know there is no technical data with Tellurium Q so the exercise at hand is simply to challenge the 'well balanced' system I have with the two new cable types I have. The Tellurium Q Black II XLR is in place.

## QUALITY

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The Black II cables are flat, about 12mm wide and a few mm thick, they have a rubber feel cover and are pliable. By contrast, the Tellurium Q Ultra Black II are 40mm wide and similarly thick but wrapped in a plastic feel mesh to consolidate both channels and hide what is in there! However, the Ultra is a bit weightier. I have to say the Tellurium Q Ultra Black II have a Premier League feel to them. The shrink-wrapped plug terminations feel and look very similar.

Black II speaker cable is £54/m, the Tellurium Q Ultra Black II speaker cable is £310/m, different leagues as I say.

## PERFORMANCE

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### REVIEW EQUIPMENT

My system is as described in the introduction. The first job was to find my old Yamaha CD player and play the TQ system disc, it is over an hour and quite a few little jobs got done around the office, garden, etc.

### SYSTEM DISC

Whatever you think about them, a burn-in disc just makes sense; like running in a Lamborghini, not that I have any experience of it, but you do not want to floor something straight out of the blocks in my view. I left the burn-in disc to do its thing first with my existing cable, then the Black II, then with the Ultra Black II. I put the Black II cable in place of my existing cable. I picked three familiar tracks with detail, complexity and then snap. They were:

Amos Lee: Keep It Loose, Keep It Tight (Qobuz 16bit/44.1kHz)

Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 2, Moderato, Vladimir Ashkenazy (Qobuz 16bit/44.1kHz)

Jack White: I'm Shakin' (Qobuz 24bit/44.1kHz)

### BLACK II

The Tellurium Q Black II is at least as good as my current cable, at a third of the price, this is remarkable in itself. If anything, I prefer the sound as it is a fraction lighter but all the detail I need is there. In Amos Lee's track, the finger detail in the track is wonderful and the soft brushed snare is just lifted slightly forward.

I certainly prefer the cable itself physically as it is more flexible and easier to move about and tidy up, I much prefer the plugs that are bare and have a ribbed gap to enable them to be slid in but grip the binding posts positively on insertion.

After a couple of gardening jobs, the System Disc was finished again, and I put my game face on.

### TELLURIUM Q ULTRA BLACK II

I am not going to say this is night and day but the difference in performance is, well, night and day. Incredible. I will remind you the cables are in different band levels in Tellurium Q's product range but nonetheless, this too is remarkable.

Amos Lee's voice is no longer forward in the soundstage, he is just in the room like I have not heard before. The track, the album, in the end, is raised higher and the energy in the tracks feel fresh out of the recording studio. My noise floor has fallen away, I conclude, the cable has stepped aside from carrying the sound waves. Everything is lifted further and is brighter (in a good way), more air, more space. The experience reminds me of when I plugged in a Naim XPS (power supply) into my Naim NAC-N 272, that was night and day!

Geoff will not let on what he is doing with these cables but in a couple of conversations, it seems to me it is in all the detail of all the elements in cables. One example would be where the RCA centre connector has a different plating to surrounding connectors, just small things like that. It seems these tiny elements of detail lead to a balancing act that must be struck with each product in the ranges. These are the incremental marginal gains that Clive Woodward always used to talk about in winning the Rugby World Cup.

Jack White's I'm Shakin' absolutely leaps out of the Kudos C10s and it is a good job these speakers are capable of delivering such a great sound. I am really enjoying Miles Kane's 2013 album Don't Forget Who You Are at the moment and again, this track fizzles and cracks from the C10s, the extra snap from the snares is dynamic and thrilling, you just cannot help playing air drums here.

## OVERALL

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It is hard to understand what has happened here, the last few weeks of exposure to Tellurium Q have changed my perception of HiFi and what can be achieved. I have no technical things to point to but all I can say is just have a listen if you think this review is hyperbole. I can guarantee, if your system is up to it, it will be improved. Whether you can afford it, is another matter.

<b>Love</b>	
Stunning performance Flat Cable Shrink wrapped banana plugs	
<b>Like</b>	<b>Wish</b>
Clear directional Arrows	I understood what has happened

