

IsoTek EVO3 Initium power cord

by Alan Sircom

Initium sounds like the sort of name an advertising agency from the 1990s might use, but in fact it's a bold new departure from IsoTek. Initium is designed to bring the company's EVO3 performance to a new affordable level.

This is not the first time IsoTek undercut itself to release a great power cord at a good price; EVO3 Premier uses an FEP dielectric, 40 strands of silver-plated OFC form the three 2mm diameter conductors, an RFI-busting rotational twist in the construction, a cotton filter, a dinner service, a fondue set, 24ct gold plating, a cuddly toy, and a nifty PVC jacket. Some elements of that list might have come from classic British Saturday night TV of the 1970s. That resulted in a truly high-performance power cord coming in just under the £100 mark.

EVO3 Initium uses the same OFC conductors, without the silver plating, moves from FEP to PE dielectric, and uses nickel plating in place of 24ct gold on the terminations. In the process, it has allowed IsoTek to effectively double each production run, bringing the cost of each cable down to a more manageable £70. IsoTek has instigated a 'no swapsies' rule – the cable is pre-terminated with moulded terminals at both ends, and comes in a 1.5m length and a standard C15 IEC only. Initium is also a shiny emerald green colour with sparkly green IsoTek logos embedded in the IEC plug. And unlike many lower cost audiophile power cords, it doesn't smell like a cheap plastic raincoat.

Initium has to contend with a host of rivals, and be good enough to overcome the 'screw it, I'll just use the one that came in the box' black cord default. It will end up being used with components that might cost a few hundred to a few thousand pounds, and will also be one of the first 'trial' power cords for the sceptical. That's a tough list of jobs for one mains lead.

Fortunately, EVO3 Initium is more than up for the task. Lower cost audiophile power cords have a habit of either packing too much RFI treatment into the mix (making for potentially quieter backgrounds, but at the expense of dynamic freedom) or sound immediately exciting by seemingly filtering the bottom end to make the top sound exciting. Initium, instead, plays a longer game, with an absence of sonic signature and a good sense of dynamic freedom on integrated and smaller power amps. Initium also shows up just how inconsistent give-away power cords can be, by simply sounding like the device should sound. In the context of a demanding high-end system, there are better power cords in the IsoTek range and the limitations begin to show in dynamic foreshortening. But this isn't meant for high-end powerhouses; it's meant for people with really good affordable audio equipment who want to give that system a more consistent performance.

IsoTek's EVO3 Initium is now our all-rounder default mains cable choice, and comes highly recommended as a result. +



SPECIFICATIONS

IsoTek EVO3 Initium

Available in UK, EU, US, AU, and CH power plugs, C15 IEC socket only

Price: £64.95/1.5m cable

Manufactured by: IsoTek Systems:

URL: www.isoteksystems.com

Distributed in the UK by:

Sound Foundations:

URL: www.soundfoundations.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0)118 981 4238