

# Atlas Mavros Ultra

With the same construction as its flagship Asimi Ultra, but trading silver for copper, Atlas's Mavros interconnect is a third the price. Review: **Paul Miller**



**C**an't stretch to silver? Interconnects made from this noble metal, including Crystal's Absolute Dream [HFN Jun '12] and the Atlas Asimi Ultra [HFN Dec '14], remain HFN favourites, albeit at a premium price. So I was intrigued to discover that Atlas's partnering Mavros range includes both RCA and balanced XLR-equipped interconnects that share the Asimi Ultra's construction, dielectrics and geometry but trade silver for OCC (Ohno Continuous Casting) copper.

So what is the gap in price and performance between silver and copper versions? The price of entry is still considerable – Atlas offers a range of 0.5m, 1.0m (£875 RCA/£1000 XLR), 2.0m (£1315 RCA/£1440 XLR) and 3.0m (£1755 RCA/£1880 XLR) lengths – but it works out to be about a third that of the Asimi Ultra.

### QUALITY INGREDIENTS

The RCA Mavros is equipped with Atlas's exquisite Ultra phono plugs which feature snug-fitting silver-plated OCC copper contacts. As with its Asimi, Atlas has chosen a microporous PTFE tape covered by an extruded polyethylene layer as the supporting dielectric. Held within are identical signal and return cores comprising six bundles of 12 OCC copper strands surrounding a thicker copper wire.

The twisted signal/return pair is covered by a continuous copper-mylar electrostatic screen combined with two symmetrical drain wires which are attached 180° apart on the plug. The outer sheath is made from PVC and covered by a black cotton jacket.



Silver betters both copper and gold for electrical conductivity, as reflected in the Mavros's 70mohm/m loop resistance, slightly higher than the Asimi's 56mohm. Otherwise, the Mavros Ultra offers a lower capacitance and, usefully, lower inductance at 82pF/m (86pF, Asimi) and 0.25µH/m (0.45µH), respectively. So the Mavros Ultra remains a fine choice for long runs.

### A CABLE OF CALIBRE

I auditioned the XLR-terminated Mavros Ultra between my Oppo BDP-105D player/DAC and Krell S-1500 amp and quickly appreciated the smooth and deliciously 'dark' quality it brought to the system. While the Oppo could never be described as untidy, with the Mavros in tow its music sounded that bit better ordered, with dense tracks like Gov't Mule's live 'Shine On...' [Dark Side Of The Mule (Deluxe); Evil Teen 11217] delivered with a rare intelligibility almost in spite of Warren Haynes's fierce vocal and the crushing tsunami of guitars. The deep black acoustic that

**ABOVE:** The Mavros Ultra interconnect is also available as the Mavros Symmetrical which is terminated with cold-welded Atlas XLRs

accompanies Gregory Porter's 'Hey Laura' [Liquid Spirit; 96kHz/24-bit FLAC] sounded especially velvety, the brush of cymbals tailing off into a whisper of noise as his voice gripped at the air with a mixture of subtlety and conviction. Atlas's Mavros Ultra is not inexpensive, but it can certainly make other cables sound *cheap*. ☺

### HI-FI NEWS VERDICT

Atlas's Asimi Ultra had already dispelled the myth that all silver cables sound 'bright' but the copper-infused Mavros Ultra succeeds in sounding smoother still. It helps instil a settled quietness to musical backgrounds, the system sounding free of grit and grain and yet not so luxuriant or sweet that the shimmering edge of percussion or brass is polished away. This is a supremely well-balanced cable with a standard of construction and finish to match.

Sound Quality: 88%



**LEFT:** The Mavros Ultra interconnect is terminated with Atlas's own solder-free Ultra phono plugs with self-cleaning contacts

