

JPS Labs Aluminata Interconnect Cable (HiFi-Plus 68)

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**Products in this article:** [Aluminata Interconnect Cable](#)



JPS Labs Aluminata Interconnect Cable

It's considered good form in *Hi-Fi Plus* to review a whole 'loom' of cable as a single entity; interconnect, loudspeaker and mains cables as one. There's good reason for this – it gives a more consistent picture of what the cables can do, because they seem to work best as a team. It's also a good idea to review cables from a specific 'family' within the output of a cable company. Sometimes, though, a cable stands on its own. Aluminata, by JPS Labs, does just that.

OK, so it stands on its own in the context of JPS Labs Superconductor 3 interconnects, speaker cables and mains leads made specifically for digital and analog use (all to be reviewed soon), but Aluminata sticks out as the leader of the pack. JPS Labs uses Alumiloy, a copper aluminium alloy with a high tensile strength, to form its conductors. In this case, it means 15-gauge solid-core conductors in a Kapton insulator, but the real Aluminata twist is the use of aluminium granules held in a polymer sleeve used as shield (PAS, or 'Particle Aluminum Shield' says the blurb, which sounds like the sort of thing the Romulans periodically 'raise' when bumping into Captain Kirk in the Neutral Zone). JPS claims

this shield eliminates the ingress of RFI and EMI and even cuts out ground loop noise. The whole thing is finished off with a braided sheath, WBT plugs and supplied in an aluminium case, roughly the dimensions of half a dozen LPs.

The word 'uncompromising' springs to mind. Have the products too close together, have the stand too close to a wall and the cable (weighing in at a little over a kilogramme in its own right) will not accommodate. Use a lightweight passive preamp and Aluminata will push it clean off the equipment table. But, it's untroubled by running in – its sound doesn't really change over time.

This cable is the audio equivalent of Marmite; it provokes strong reactions of equal and opposite force, for exactly the same reasons; music flow, granularity of sound and absence of noise; those who love it, think it's the most natural, coherent, lucid and smooth sounding cable with the darkest silences you can get. Those who don't think it's 'smoothed over'. The only things both pro- and anti-JPS had in common was that the treble was 'unforced' and the bass was 'deep, clear and taut'.

This reaction isn't even system dependent; it's person dependent. Put the same people in the same room with the same system and insert the JPS Labs cables and the result is instant – either "Wow!" or "Nah!", but never "Meh!". Put them in the same room at the same time and they will come to blows over the cable. Usually when differences of opinion emerge, you'll usually hear something like "the treble was sweet" by the supporters and "yes, but the bass was boomy" from the nay-sayers. Here, those who like and dislike the cable are arguing for the same aspect – "It's wonderfully smooth" vs. "It sounds too smooth", "it lowered the noise floor" becomes "an eerie sense of quiet" and so on. Weird.

That's the cable's greatest strength, though; the "Wow!" contingent will never be happy with anything else after hearing the JPS Aluminata. It makes changes that you can only feel very strongly about. And you won't know whether that's strongly "Wow!" or strongly "Nah!" until you hear it. But you must hear it. It's the sort of thing that might just leave a cable sceptic troubled. It also might just leave them with a set of JPS Aluminata.

**TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

**JPS Labs Aluminata Interconnect Cable**

**Price:** £2,395 for a 1m pair

Manufactured by:  
**JPS Labs**  
URL: [www.jpslabs.com](http://www.jpslabs.com)

Distributed by:  
**The Audio Salon**  
URL: [www.audiosalon.co.uk](http://www.audiosalon.co.uk)  
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