

Black Ravioli Record Ground LP grounding device

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A few years ago, Black Ravioli pads were all the rage. The name came from the black nylon outer filled with a secret elastomer that made the pads look like ravioli. Audio enthusiasts were keen to place their products on the company's grounding-control pads. Then it went quiet for Black Ravioli... but now the spotlight is back on the brand. The latest generation pads don't look pasta-y anymore, and it has been expanding its purview while in stealth mode. Black Ravioli's new Record Ground is claimed to bring the same energy control found in its pads to the LP.

Black Ravioli's Record Ground is just one aspect of what the company classes as its Groundworks range. There are also Power and Signal Ground devices alongside the new pads. These products work in harmony to ground, transfer and dissipate component noise throughout a system. Black Ravioli suggests this component noise is entropy in the form of "confusion, disorder, and randomness" in a product, which can escalate into chaos.

Removing confusion

Black Ravioli says the Record Ground specifically reduces this confusion, disorder, and randomness from the record surface during replay.

The company suggests the sixteen contact points and a complex array inside the 'dissipation volume' provide an escape path for this energy. The Record Ground is designed to have minimal contact with the turntable and is claimed to require no additional alignment. It sits free on the spindle and weighs approximately 195 grams. The outer containment has minimal interaction with the energy path from the record.

The Black Ravioli Record Ground is supremely well packaged. We rarely comment on packaging, but this comes in its own suspension flight case wrapped in a black pouch. Couriers can destroy practically everything given half a chance, but this little





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» case adds some useful reassurance. However, using just one of Black Ravioli's Groundworks components on its own should tell you little about the entire concept. On the other hand, the Record Ground can act as a gateway to the brand's systemic approach.

In use

I tried the Black Ravioli Record Ground with the Linn Selekt LP12 reviewed in Issue 211. This is a useful test to see if the Record Ground undermined the bounce of the suspension; it didn't! It neither threw the deck off balance nor pushed the subchassis down. Granted this was an expertly set-up LP12, but it gives credence to the 'no additional alignment' claim.

This test is useful because Linn users are notoriously wary of 'clamps', even though the Record Ground isn't a clamp. Does the Record Ground bring out more intrinsic Linn-ness, or does it change the performance? If it does change things, does it change them for the better?

The Record Ground didn't change the fundamental properties of the turntable. A Black Ravioli sporting Linn is still a Linn. But it did make records played seem clearer and even a little quieter. As an example, Beck's 'Paper Tiger' from Sea Change [Geffen] retained the tidy rhythmic nature of the odd backbeat. This also made his pained voice stand out from the mix a little better. The sound was bigger and wide of the speaker boxes, although not so big as to seem absurd and overblown.

No more heretical acts!

I moved on from the Linn because I fear being burned for accessory-heresy by the faithful. Regardless, moving across to a high-mass turntable (a Kuzma Stabi R), I got the same effect. The Black Ravioli Record Ground did help clarify the sound of an LP on both decks. This made swapping from LP to LP more immediately noticeable as well as seemingly getting more off the grooves. Background noise on this

turntable with a 4Point9 arm is already low but got lower. The scale and size of the soundstage improved mildly, although the Kuzma is an expert in that field.

It's the combination of improving the sound without changing the sound that is a winner. The Black Ravioli Record Ground does that well, and you notice its absence when removed – always a good sign! Whether this improvement is down to Black Ravioli challenging entropy, good engineering, or even magic beans is ultimately immaterial. The simple fact it... it works, and that may be the introduction to a world of ground-control. +

Specifications and pricing

Black Ravioli Record Ground

Dimensions (Diameter x Height) 75 x 35mm

Weight 0.195kg

Price £600

Manufacturer Black Ravioli

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