

# MERCURY PRO BLU-RAY DRIVE

## ONE-STOP OPTICAL SHOP

If all you're after is a way to watch Blu-ray movies in your living room, you'll be perfectly happy with an HDTV and one of the many \$200 Blu-ray playing boxes on the market they're peddling in the big box joints. But, if you're a reasonably intense gamer, chances are good that you've already got the

HDCP-compliant video card and display required to watch Blu-ray movies on your PC in their full resolution (if you're not sure, check out the Blu-ray Advisor boxout below). Now all you need is the Blu-ray player.

## BLU-RAY OPTICAL

drives for the PC offer a huge bonus for their premium price—the ability to burn up to 25GB to a single-layer write-once (BD-R) or rewriteable (BD-RE) Blu-ray disc, or up to 50GB for a dual-layer write-once or rewriteable. (Read-only drives are also available.) And if you're willing to pony up \$499, the Mercury Pro Blu-ray drive from Other World Computing will smother you in extras, including support for burning to DVD, DVD-RAM, CD, and even HD-DVD single- and dual-layer discs as well as HD-DVD video playback. In other words, it reads and burns everything but floppies. And with USB 2.0, FireWire 400/800 and eSATA connections, this baby is welcome everywhere.

Performance is excellent—the Mercury Pro took just over 22 minutes to burn 22.5GB to a 4x BD-R, just over six minutes to write a full 16x DVD-R, and less than four and half minutes for a CD-R. You also get two 25GB BD-Rs included, but, unfortunately, no burning software—so you'll need to buy a disc mastering suite (such as Nero 9 with the Blu-ray video playback plugin, \$89.98, [www.nero.com](http://www.nero.com)) or stand-alone Blu-ray video playback software like Cyberlink's PowerDVD (a bit of a rip-



/// A 25GB slice of nice. ///

off at \$99.95, [www.cyberlink.com](http://www.cyberlink.com)).

Blank Blu-ray media aren't cheap (\$8 to \$35), but the price of the drive and the media is much easier to swallow when you consider that you finally have a way to back up all your photos and music library to a medium less delicate than a spare hard drive—and you get to watch *The Dark Knight* in all its 1080p finery to boot. ☒



## THE BLU-RAY ADVISOR



Not sure if your graphics card and display are HDCP compatible? No sweat. You can download the free Cyberlink

BD Advisor at [www.cyberlink.com/stat/bd-support/enu/index.jsp](http://www.cyberlink.com/stat/bd-support/enu/index.jsp).

## FINAL PC GAMER VERDICT

0% BETTER >> 100% 84%

\*\* EXCELLENT \*\*

:: VITALS ::

MANUFACTURER: PHANTOM ENTERTAINMENT  
URL: [WWW.PHANTOM.NET](http://WWW.PHANTOM.NET) MSRP: \$129.99