

Effetto Mariposa CaffelLatex: Final Review

August 4th, 2009 by Guitar Ted

Now with plenty of time under testing I am ready to give my verdict on the CaffelateX sealant. Let's cover a few of the basics of the product before we go on, just as a refresher.

CaffeLatex is a synthetic latex sealant. This differs from other popular sealants that are latex in that CaffelateX does not have any ammonia in it. Ammonia has been shown to be detrimental to bare aluminum by corroding it, and thus weakening the rim structure. So you won't be taking a risk with using CaffelateX. It also is nicer to your tire casings because of this.

CaffeLatex also foams up inside your tires when they are rotated. Other sealants pool against the outer part of the casing due to centrifugal force, but CaffelateX claims its sealant will also protect sidewalls better due to the foaming action. The foaming action is quite easy to verify and usually manifests itself by puffing out some foam if you release some air to adjust pressure mid-ride. (You can also see it in a clear container, if you care to check it out, by shaking some CaffelateX up.) The sealant will pool up once again after it has set dormant for a bit.

CaffeLatex boasts life span of up to 12 months, but this can vary depending upon several climatological and user parameters. They suggest checking the level of sealant in your tires every two months. The temperature range for use is listed as -20 to +50C.

It should be noted that Effetto Mariposa also sent along an Injector Kit, valve stems, along with the 1000ml size of sealant. I will mention the valves and injector kit as we go along.

How I Used The Product: I used the product in tubeless ready 29"er tires, non-tubeless 29"er tires, and in standard tubes. I used the product in Bontrager's TLR System, Mavic's Cr29ssmax wheels with Geax TNT tires, and in "ghetto" set ups on non-tubeless rims. I usually used the recommended amount in each tire (100ml for 2 inch and up 29"er tires), but would sometimes use slightly less down to a minimum of 70ml. In all cases but one, I had success sealing the tires up and in the one failure I only needed to add about 50ml to get it to seal up. (A non-tubeless tire, by the way)

In all cases but one I added the sealant in by means of the CaffelateX injector which worked flawlessly. It will screw onto the valve stem and push the sealant right past the valve core if you want. This also works on tubes that you want to make thorn proof. With a bit of practice, you can add sealant to tires without spilling a drop. Nice! The one set of tires I did not use the injector on I added sealant by means of my old, cobbled injector system. I won't be using that method any longer!

Long Term Performance: I started using this sealant late in March and in every tubeless set up since then. All set ups have required minimal pressure maintenance and still have sealant inside that is foaming up and doing its job. This isn't necessarily outstanding for where I live, but I will continue to monitor its performance over the rest of the year. Typically, a Stan's set up will last about 8-10 months for me here, so CaffelateX is on track to go at least that long. At any rate, there is no need to worry after 4 months in the tires I first set up.

Sealing is an issue that is harder to gauge. I did get a puncture and had it seal up on a ride that I noticed, but typically if you do not notice anything wrong here, the sealant is doing its job. We have many Honeylocust trees here and the thorns from these trees raise havoc with tires. If your sealant is working though, you'll never know about the thorns until you change your tires out. So, I believe the sealant is doing a great job of sealing punctures I should be suffering from, but I am not due to the sealing properties of this product. I will also be checking through my tires to verify this as I pull them off later on. I did have a puncture in a tubed tire seal up with CaffelateX though and that was from a thorn.

CaffeLatex seems to play well with all my tubeless systems and valve stems. CaffelateX injects right past the valve core on all of the types I have used including the excellent CaffelateX valves that I received. These do have removable cores though, in case you need that feature. I have not had any clogging of valve stems even though it is not uncommon for a bit of sealant to spit out while inflating or releasing pressure from a tire.

Conclusions: Given the stellar performance of CaffelateX and its Injector and Valve Stem products, I have no negative things to say about them. I highly recommend that you try them out for yourself. The injector works, and the valve stems are solid as well. The sealant seems to be working as advertised in regards to the foaming action, and even seals punctures in tubes in my testing, so you don't even have to be a tubeless devotee to gain benefit from this product. The fact that the solution has no ammonia in it to corrode your rims is another bonus. Effetto Mariposa has hit the ball out of the park with this sealant. It is good stuff Really good!