

BALADA & CO.

Interview with Christian v. Petersdorff Founder & Creative Director

What does BALADA & CO. stand for?

BALADA & CO. represents aesthetics, passion, style, and an ambiance of comfort - sleek, timeless, and with great attention to detail. With our collection, we are looking to address the modern gentleman as well as the trendy fashionista. We start with high demands on material quality and implement design that does not stray into abstractness. A touch of retro charm coupled with high-tech materials, such as the innovative FENIX NTM.

From inspiration to finished object – what does your creative process look like? What drives you?

I am driven by my passion for design and branding. I do not simply want the product to speak, BALANDA & CO. should impart savoir vivre as well. I've had the vision of producing my own lamp and furniture collection since my youth. Images of furniture and lamps would sometimes appear in my mind while falling asleep. Sometimes, I was able to make sketches before succumbing to slumber.

From consultant to designer? How does that work?

I've had my passion for design and architecture since early childhood. Later, I developed the initial ideas and sketched drafts of lamps and furniture back in school and while studying Economics. I largely learned the design craft via self-teaching throughout the course of my life. Perhaps one could say I have a sense of proportion and technical elements running through my veins. My grandmother was an artist and my father is an aerospace engineer - among other things, he taught me technical drawing.

In mid-2015, I implemented my first vision of a design collection into reality, which is how the BALADA & CO. came to be. Now, I am working on our new BALADA & CO. drafts in collaboration with product and industrial designers. My experience from finance and business help me to stay on an economically solid path.

Why lamps? What is it about light that fascinates you?

For me, light is one of the most important design elements in any space. A lamp can add special character to any space. No other type of furniture can set a scene like a lamp does - lights on, lights off.

From the initial idea to series production: How did you move forward?

The first ideas for our lamp legs began on a blank sheet of paper, with pencil and eraser. After these drawings, a local workshop milled the prototypes. Now we have the legs produced in a carpentry workshop specialized in boards in the Munich region. The lamp shades from our Classic Collection are created in collaboration with an Austrian manufacturer. We produce the wire frame of our Vintage shades by hand, using specially constructed bending and welding equipment.

You are highly fascinated by high-tech materials. What makes them special?

I was looking for the perfect shade of black for our lamp legs. I wasn't satisfied with the first trials using paint, and then bumped into the materials "FENIX NTM" from the Italian company Arpa. It is produced using a special nano technology process. While the milling does have inherent challenges, the result makes it worthwhile. The material feels great, featuring an extremely matt surface and excellent color depth. And: You won't see any fingerprints.

What other materials are used at BALADA & CO.?

Our lamp legs use high-quality coated glued wood from Finnish birch and hand-embossed buffalo leather. For the lamp shade materials, we also have a cooperation with Kvadrat. All other components consist of quality, long-lasting materials like brass, stainless steel, aluminum, and ceramic.

Why do your lamps have four feet?

Above all, it is the visual effect that fascinates me. A four-leg base provides a new perspective from every line of sight, enabling the observer to discover the lamp anew over and over again. Moreover, there is a greater structural challenge with four legs when compared to a tripod design. A particular level of precision is required, for a lamp on four long legs can start to wobble quickly.

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