

S L O W

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Prize on the Eyes

There's something about the right pair of sunglasses that can transform an entire look. We invest inordinate amounts of money in the jewellery with which we accessorise, yet somehow cringe at the price tag on the piece that is most prominently displayed on our face.

It's an odd irony, and one which Danish eyewear brand LINDBERG has successfully challenged through its handcrafted pieces that rival the finest jewellery creations. The manufacturer has indeed been so successful in this regard that it has made history by being the first eyewear brand to be featured on the jewellery and watch pages of the *Financial Times*.

Purveyors to the Danish court, Queen Elizabeth II, the Pope, the Dalai Lama, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, and a host of other noteworthy customers, LINDBERG has created a product that appeals to everyone from politicians and business magnates to Hollywood celebrities.

Back in the late 1960's, pioneering optician Poul-Jørrn Lindberg grew tired of hearing his clients complain of headaches caused by

uncomfortable glasses. He didn't understand the full extent of the predicament until he himself began to wear glasses, at which point he became determined to solve the dilemma. This sparked his search for a far lighter material, which could be used to make more comfortable eyewear that served to complement, rather than overwhelm the face.

LINDBERG joined forces with an architect, Hans Dissing, in his pursuit, and together they came up with the idea to use titanium in their frames. This lightweight material has many advantages, including being thin and unimposing, flexible, adjustable, and extremely durable. It also eliminates the need for screws in any frame. At the time it was a completely new material to use in eyewear manufacture, and it was indeed a challenge to master, but this early spirit of innovation and perseverance is what has made the brand the industry leader it is today, led by the son, Henrik Lindberg, Architect M.A.A.

Nowadays, LINDBERG is continually investing in the latest cutting-edge technologies to improve its already impressive design and manufacture process. These are used in conjunction with the same tools developed at the outset of the

brand, creating a product that is at once timeless and ahead of the pack. Every step of the LINDBERG production process is completed in-house, from the assimilation of new technologies into custom tools, to the innovative cases and retail displays (which have won almost as many design awards as the frames themselves).

Aside from the skilful use of medical titanium, LINDBERG eyewear also offers customised nose pads (made from medical rather than traditional silicon) to fit every shape of face. A variety of different models make use of other top-end materials, including buffalo horn, white gold, rose gold, yellow gold, and platinum. The craftsmanship and individuality of each piece is not tainted by overt branding, and wearers have the option of having their names, personalised messages or phone numbers, for example, engraved on the inside of their frames.

In keeping with Danish design tradition, LINDBERG pieces are custom made to order, and each piece has its own unique serial number. Unsurprisingly, the brand is a family-owned company, and a great deal of personal attention goes into the creation of each product.



"We don't want to do it like anyone else," says Global Communication Manager Christina Sunn. "Sometimes it feels like there may even be too much perfectionism at play in the process, but the result is always a superior product. Aside from the fact that the craft and durability of our products is far superior to any mass produced offerings, we really put our hearts into everything we do."

The brand is even careful about who is able to sell and adjust their frames. "We are directly involved in the training and servicing of our partners around the world," shares Sunn. "Opticians who like to work with high-end products that will surprise and delight discerning customers are usually those up for the LINDBERG challenge. We demand a mindset of thinking differently, pushing

boundaries, and inspiring a real appreciation for the craftsmanship that goes into the pieces. We are fortunate enough to have a leading, timeless concept, but it takes some knowledge and discernment to appreciate the full extent of this."

Sunn's unabashed pride in the brand is certainly justified, and only when you are lucky enough to lay hands on your first LINDBERG piece will you understand what she means when she says: "The only problem with Lindberg glasses is that they're too damn good. The frames last so long, we don't often get to sell a second pair!"

Text: Penny Lane
Images © LINDBERG

In Henrik Lindberg's Words...

"I spend 24 hours every day with design. Every LINDBERG design is a determined statement about aesthetics, technical innovation, and impeccable craftsmanship. They're eminently fashionable and determinedly bold, but without all the downsides of flash-in-the-pan fads and design-blind alleys.

"To me, design is not only about creating a certain style of eyewear. Design is also about how you run a company, for instance. Everything has to work together, somehow. A well-designed product isn't enough, the design of distribution networks or human resource development needs to work as well. For me, everything is design, in a way."

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