



# SUPERCHARGED

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR TESLA OWNERS AND ENTHUSIASTS

APRIL 2023 N°25



**BRUSSELS 2023  
AUTOSHOW**

**TUSCANY  
TOUR**

**DRIVER  
EXPERIENCE**

  
**EMAD**  
eMobility Day  
EXPO & TRY-OUT EXPERIENCE



# VOEL, BELEEF, ERVAAR EN ONTDEK DE MAGISCHE WERELD VAN HET ELEKTRISCH RIJDEN



**EMD 03/06/2023 wordt een bruisend event met 90 standhouders** die de talrijke bezoekers - particulieren, zelfstandigen, fleetmanagers, ceo's en (lokale) overheden – zullen voorzien van de nodige informatie & live experiences via de geplande testritten. Voor de E-bikes is er een binnenparcours uitgewerkt. Voor de wagens en motorfietsen wordt er een route uitgestippeld op de openbare weg.

## HALL A

Ontdek een breed scala aan bedrijven die u zullen begeleiden en informeren!  
Testritten zal je vooraf kunnen inboeken. Na jouw EMD-bezoek heeft het elektrisch rijden voor jou geen geheimen meer!

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*Selected by Lien*

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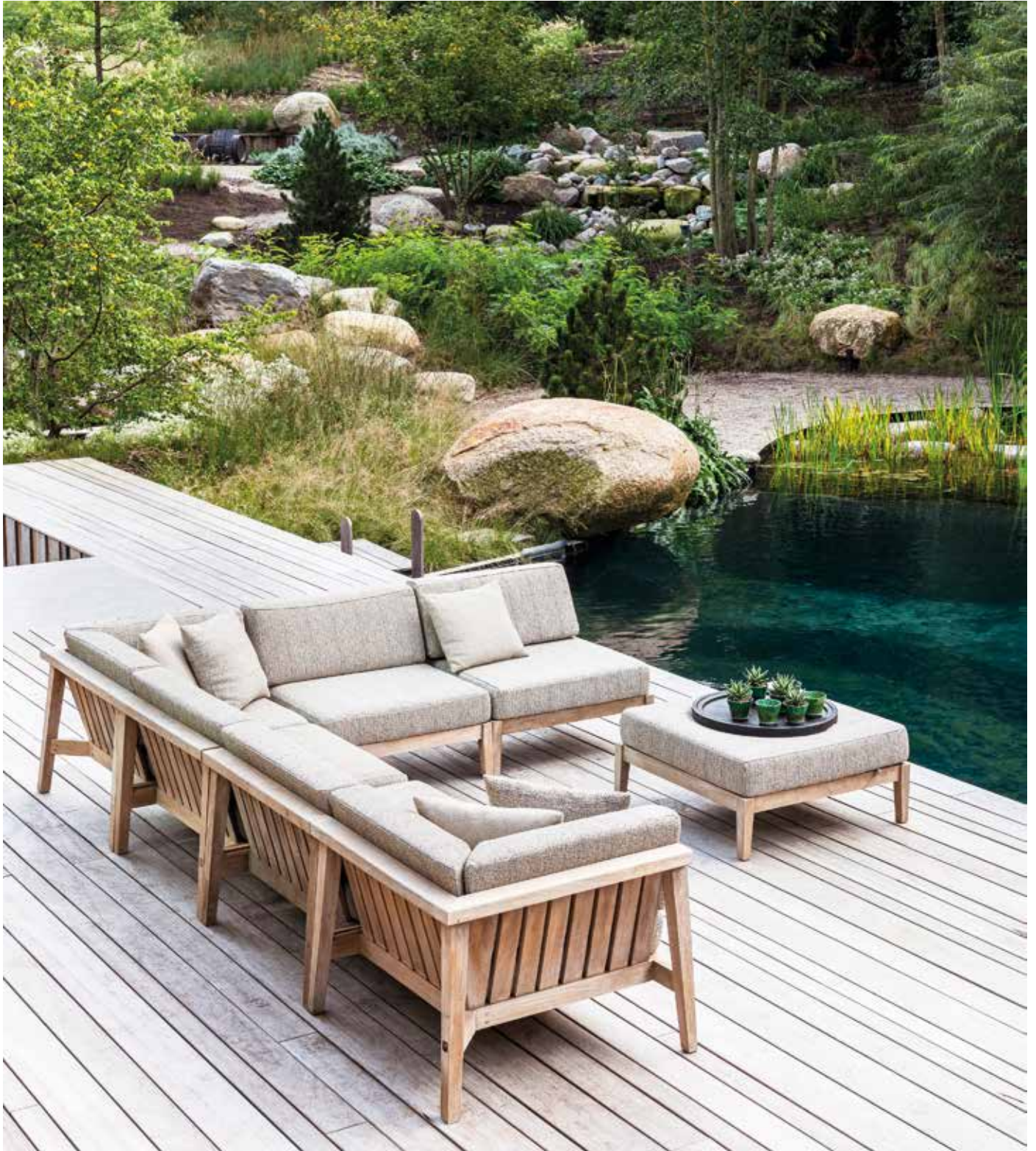


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DEAR NEWEST OWNERS !  
DEAR MODEL S PLAID, ROADSTER AND CYBERTRUCK ENTHUSIASTS,  
DEAR READERS,  
DEAR TESLA OWNERS AND CLUB MEMBERS,  
DEAR RESERVATION HOLDERS,  
DEAR SHAREHOLDERS,  
DEAR EV ENTHUSIASTS,  
DEAR SPACE TRAVELERS,

WE WISH YOU A GREAT AND AWESOME NEW YEAR,  
FULL OF PROMISES AND ADVENTURES !

Welcome to your twenty fifth edition of SuperCharged, your independent Magazine for Tesla Owners, Reservation holders, Club Members, Shareholders and EV enthusiasts. Thank you for your readership. Once again, we lined up interesting topics and stories that you will enjoy discovering.

**Welcome** TO ALL new Owners ! The more the merrier, the 'Extended Family' is growing every day ! We are very pleased to cross roads with more and more Owners, waving at each other: We are delighted to have you onboard and we look forward to our exchanges ! Supercharged is a great way to break the ice and join the Community.

We wish you all an Amazing New Year, wishing you the very Best. 2023 started in great shape with the much awaited Brussels Auto Show 100th Anniversary. During our visit, we ran into Jacques Piroux and Fabian Gilet, both Tesla Owners and fervent Community supporters. Find out about their Auto Salon insights.

This Magazine is yours and you have the floor. We reached out to participants of the Tuscany tour 2022 to get their impressions, read it in full in this sunny article.

An Amazing and usual journey, this sounds like Rafael de Mestre and 80e days that you might remember from our past editions. Find out about his latest trip, in good company, headed to ...

As you know Plaid deliveries started to take place at the end of December 2022. Quite an event. We reached out to Christophe Duponcheele, Proud new S Plaid owner and Maxime Vandorpe, Stylish X Plaid owner. Read their story in this article.

Spring is around the corner, we are eagerly waiting for butterflies to appear, meanwhile meet Solarbutterfly and Louis Palmer, Solarbutterfly Director and Founder.

Meet the first Tesla semi deliveries that took place, semi much awaiting by the professionals.





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Up next, all aboard with Gary and Luc for a stunning road trip from Canada to Texas !

And, as usual even more lifestyle topics and content are also featured in this edition.

For new readers or simply wanted to read past editions ?

SuperCharged is available online, with past editions : <https://www.teslaclub.be/supercharged>

Thank you so much once more for your readership, we truly appreciate it.

We look forward to hearing from you, contact us through our Club website.

Thank you for your ongoing support and trust.

On behalf of Tesla Owners Club of Belgium vzw/asbl,

**Martin Gillet**

Vice President Global Communications and Marketing Tesla Owners Club Belgium asbl/vzw.

## ON BEHALF OF TESLA OWNERS CLUB BELGIUM VZW/ASBL



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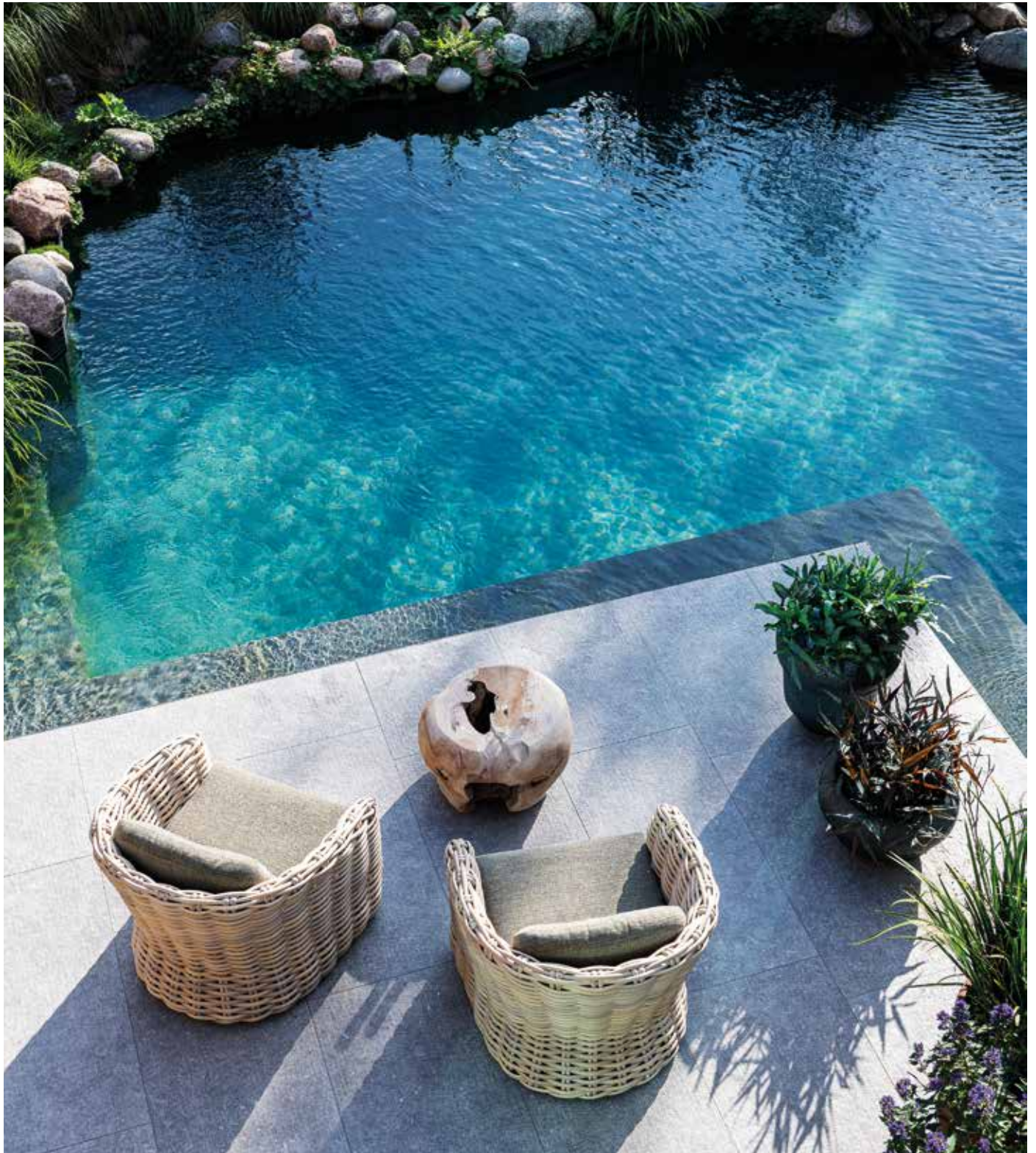


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# INSIGHTS FROM BRUSSELS 2023 AUTOSHOW

Text : Martin Gillet - Photos Credit by their respective owners

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Thanks to all the Tesla staff and all parties involved. Don't drink and drive.

Brussels Auto Salon took place in January 2023, it was a 'smaller setup' but nonetheless much awaited after the too well known covid period and above all, it was the 100th Anniversary. Green Mobility was quite high on the Agenda with lots of opportunities to seize. Most manufacturers have understood the migration to electric vehicles is not only nice to have but rather a new chapter to embrace. As we were visiting the Show, we ran across two handsome electric drivers. Tesla was naturally onsite with stunning models on display, including the new color made available. Staff onsite was overwhelmed with visits and questions, which they enjoyed thoroughly. We reached to Jacques and Fabian that we met across our whereabouts, to get their impressions and insights.



**JACQUES CAN YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF ?**

I'm Jacques Piroux 53, I drive a 2014 TMS P85+ since 7 years, I'm the Business Development manager at Powerdale, the Charging solution company based in Brussels, producing all range of AC charging solutions from Mobile and Home for B2C till Cluster solution for B2B large parkings. I work on Belgian and Luxembourg market, I enjoy participating in the

**CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR VISIT ?  
WHAT WERE YOUR HIGHLIGHTS ?  
KEY TAKEAWAYS ?**

We visited the 2023 Autoshow for the 100th edition in Brussels Expo with some colleagues on the opening evening. I expected to see more and more BEV and PHEV models and it was the case, all brands are taking the curve to a more electrical mobility focus.

The first stand we had the chance to visit was "Tesla motors" with a marvelous Plaid brand new example, like the one our colleague just received the same week at Powerdale facilities. Impressive optimisation on many aspects of the TMS. The attraction was big and all the team in place was challenged by a large number of professional visitors that evening. We very much appreciated this atmosphere for a first large stand at this fair.

**ABARTH 500E, AUDI Q8 E-TRON, DACIA SPRING EXTREME, OPEL ASTRA ELECTRIC**

All main car makers were present, or almost (just Mercedes was missing among the big names). We almost had an impression of old times while making the tour of the well furnished pavilions. First public release for the Abarth 500e the sporty version of the new electric Fiat 500, connected Abarth. The engine power of 154 hp. with much better acceleration. The 42 kWh battery allows a range of about 300 km.

Audi's first electric model Q8 e-tron, with the front face's new grille, which integrates a light bar. A new Audi logo, with flat rings but also larger batteries like the 55 variant with a 106 kWh battery with a 600 km range.

European premiere for the 3, Polestar's first SUV, it looks like a big station wagon. Launched with two engines, up to 517 hp in the Performance version. In both cases, it has a 111 kWh battery, which gives up to 610 km of autonomy WLTP. This 2023 edition also marks the arrival of several Chinese brands, like BYD (Build Your Dream), Seres, Maxus Mifa 9, or the MG.





We also noticed a trend to give more explanation on how to charge with slow AC charging the key principle for most of the drivers - since the new law with the capacity tariff was announced as a key game changer for 2023. Only smart charging will enable all of us to benefit from smart charging infrastructures.

We even visited the "e-sports zone" with Formula 1 simulators and game consoles. Some historic Formula 1 cars, Peugeot, Porsche e-concept cars on display.

Up to Fabian, that you might remember from a past Supercharged edition.

#### **COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF ?**

My name is Fabian, I'm the co-founder of La Pause Garage, a Youtube channel and a Blog specialized in car tests of all kinds. I've been driving an electric car for more than 7 years, and I currently drive a Tesla Model 3 Performance. But I also admit to having a lot of passion for thermal cars, whether they are recent or older.

#### **WHAT WAS YOUR EXPECTATION ?**

Together with colleagues from the channel, we visited the 100th edition of the Brussels Motor Show during the press day. We knew from the start that this edition was a small show because of its size and the number of exhibitors. But what we didn't know was that the proportion of Chinese cars would be so large.

#### **THE CHINESE OFFENSIVE**

Shunned by some European brands such as Mercedes, Volvo or Ferrari, this Belgian show showed everyone the aggressiveness of the Chinese marketing offensive, with for example the surprise of this show: Build Your Dream (BYD). With no less than 3 different models on display, including the very attractive and qualitative Han, a competitor to the Tesla Model S, BYD is sending a clear message: Europe is going to become its new playground.

<https://youtu.be/ch08s6pDSCg>



And it is not BAIC, MG or Seres who will say the opposite. Fortunately, we could count on some brands such as those of the VW group or BMW and Polestar to show us complete and varied ranges, both in size and in engines. Special mention for the Polestar 3, the BMW i7 or the future Audi A6 e-tron presented as a concept.

### **TESLA ON THE FIELD**

And what about Tesla? Well, they presented us with some great news with the Tesla Model S and X Plaid which was really the attraction of the American brand's sleek stand. Presented in a flamboyant red, the new S attracted all eyes. Starting with the little kids to play with the different screens, but also the big kids to dream behind the wheel. This is something we were

able to do the following week with an adrenalin test drive to be found on our channel:

<https://youtu.be/eWalywYTZPs>

### **WHAT DO YOU LIKE THE MOST ?**

Our favorites of this show will remain on the one hand the Tesla Model S which seduced me personally, and on the other hand the Ford Bronco which charmed my colleague Marc. Our biggest disappointment is undoubtedly the absence of Mercedes, which nevertheless has a beautiful electric range to show and discover.

[https://youtu.be/xf2\\_zTzp33M](https://youtu.be/xf2_zTzp33M)

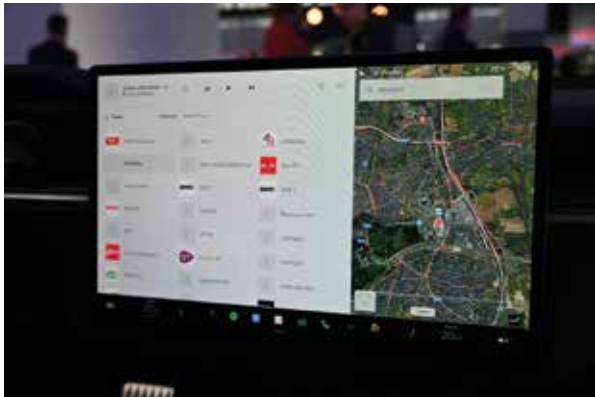


### WHAT ARE YOUR TAKEAWAYS ?

We knew that the show was going to be smaller than usual, but the absence of some manufacturers only reinforced the feeling of disappointment of this 100th edition. Fortunately, this black picture was brightened up by some beautiful new products, both electric and thermal. Whether it was the electric Abarth 500, the electrified Opel range, the Polestar 3 in its European premiere or the Audi Q8 e-tron, the novelties were present and accessible to spectators.

We can only hope that this edition will restore the confidence of the brands and allow us to experience a 101st edition worthy of what our beautiful capital has known before the Covid.

Our opinion in video: <https://youtu.be/Gm4sUN3GsXg>



### WHAT SHALL WE EXPECT IN 2023 ?

The year 2023 is likely to be a reflection of this show, with European brands shying away from electromobility, leaving room for brands from further afield. Let's hope for an awakening of consciences to save the European automotive heritage.

Thank Jacques and Fabian, very interesting chat. We will for sure keep an eye on new cars and models to arise soon. Not to mention the forthcoming Auto Salons to take place. It was very nice to run into you.



A male golfer is the central figure, wearing a white cap with a black logo, a blue polo shirt, and dark pants. He is holding a golf club and looking down. The background is a lush green golf course with trees and a bright sky. The brand name 'Peak Performance' is overlaid in white serif font.

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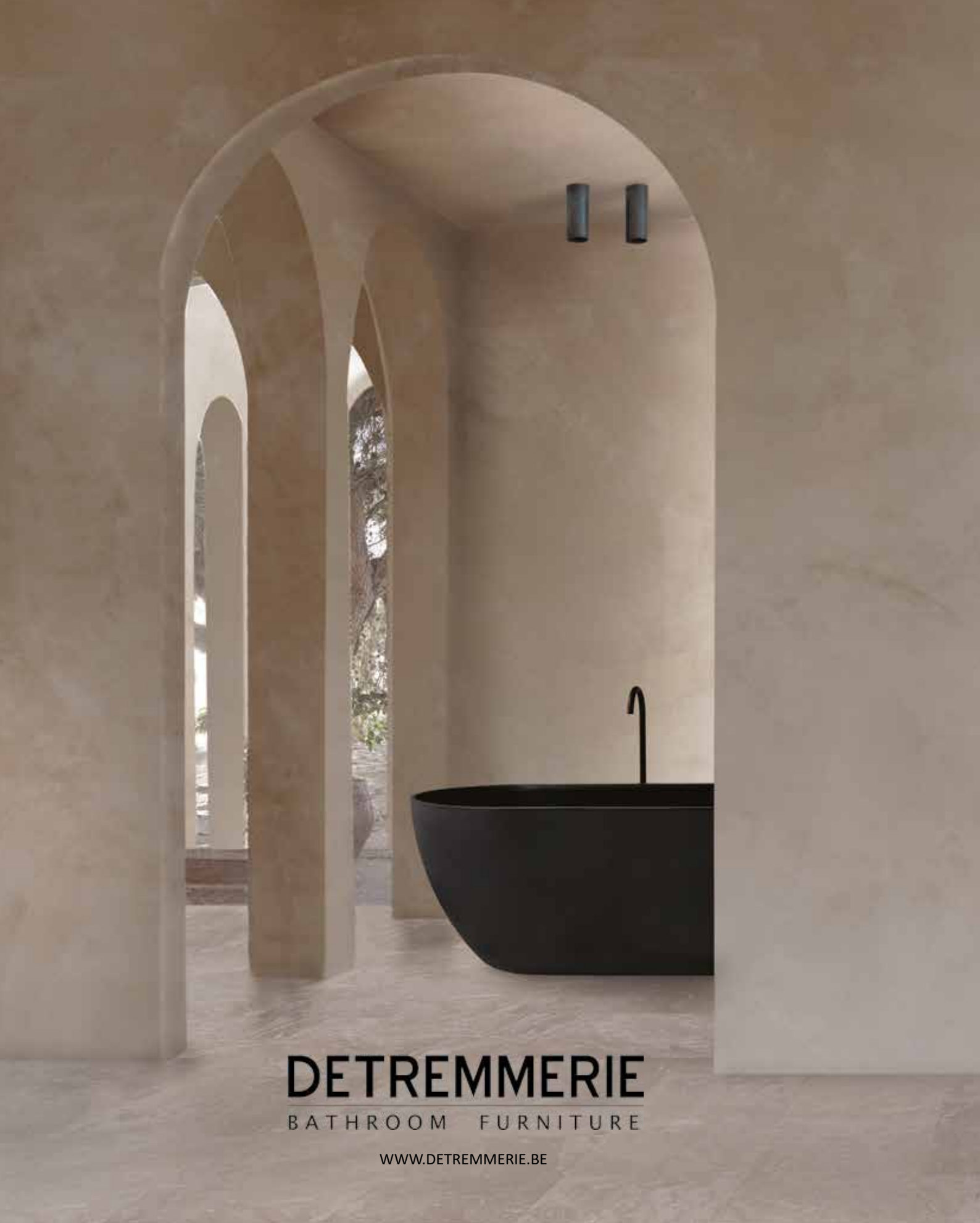


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# TUSCANY TOUR

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## 1. TRAVEL JOURNEY TUSCANY BY KEVIN COERTJENS

### Introduction

As per tradition November 2022 the TOCB went on their yearly road trip towards the rolling hills of Tuscany. Together with the president of the Tesla Owners Club Italy and owner of the idyllic B&B "Il Paluffo" located on a hillside in Chianti. In this Travel journey we will give you a taste of the unforgettable journey hoping you will join us next year for this one of a kind experience.

### Arrival day

On arrival day we took it easy as all Tesla cars gradually arrived throughout the afternoon. After their 1300 km journey, the drivers were shown their rooms and had the time to unpack and get comfortable as they soaked in the mesmerizing views from the terrace of the B&B, naturally guided by a glass of locally produced prosecco.

Dinnertime on the first night started off on a high with freshly baked pizzas made in a traditional stone oven on site. And if that enough to get your mouth watering the accompanied wine tasting led by the renowned house of Donatella Cinelli Colombini would certainly get you there as they demonstrated why the Tuscan region is famous for its wines.

### Day 1: Firenze

When in Tuscany a visit to Firenze should be mandatory. So that's exactly what was prepared for day 1. After an early breakfast we got on our way towards the capital of the Renaissance and were greeted by our guides at the famous Uffizi museum. As we got shown around the vast museum it did not take long to realise why this was one of the most important museums in the world with its vast collection of priceless paintings and sculptures.

After our exploration of the arts we were expected at the Piazza facing the Palazzo Vecchio for a delightful 3 course lunch packed with local specialities. After the lunch the drivers had free time to stroll through the beautiful city of Firenze. In normal circumstances this alone would suffice for an amazing day but we are only halfway through.

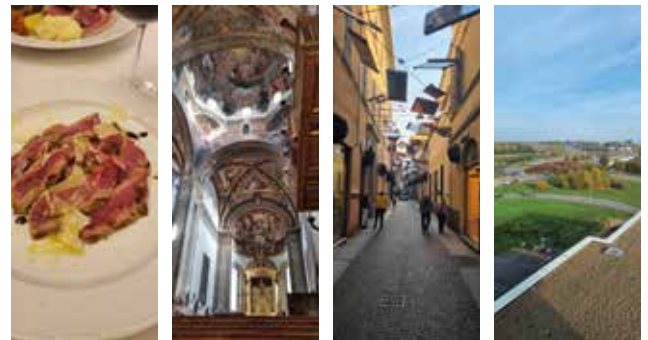
When the drivers got home they were told to dress up for a surprise and to say it did not disappoint would be a grave understatement. We were treated to a live opera performance as the living room of the B&B was transformed into a theatre. After this marvelous performance the drivers were told to take their keys and drive towards a mystery location for dinner.

As expected, upon arrival it was clearly evident that this was not going to be an ordinary restaurant. We were seated for a private dining at 'Il Arnolfo', a staple name in the region and recognised by the Michelin guide with 2 stars for a 7-course dinner made up out of the specialties of the chef. A truly memorable experience.

### Day 2:

On day 2 we shifted the focus towards the fitting topic of electricity as we visited a Geothermal powerplant and Geyser park. The guide took us through a true time capsule as she led us through the history and technology of the site. Impressed by the broad knowledge and clear passion of our guide we decided to stay a bit longer and tour a Geyser park nearby. After a quick lunch at a local brewery it was time to hypermile home along roads so stunning even pictures could not do them justice.

Instead of the standard gala night the organising team embodied the Halloween theme as everyone got out their best/scariest costumes for the award ceremony and final dinner at the B&B. As we dined and danced the night away we almost forgot that the journey had come to an end and we had to drive back home the next day.



© Kevin Coertjens



© Byron Soulopoulos

## 2. TUSCANY TOUR 2022: HALLOWEEN BY DOMINIQUE D'HOE

Oh, what a great experience...It was summer in late October. The fun thing about leaving with the TOCB is the surprise effect. Although with Hal-loween rather surprise effects. Getting to destination with brief info is an instant hol-iday feeling. Incredibly grateful that Philippe and Claudia included us in this family. It was here that we really felt that this family is not limited to Belgium alone. The welcome at Il Paluffo, where TOCI president Luca Del Bo is in charge, made this immediately clear. The homely character of this beautiful domain, also turns out to be of all sorts. From the vista of expansive vines and olive trees, they make the pur-est finished products; from wine, tasty olive oil to the caring shower products, all homegrown. You notice with how much love everything is taken care of here. Even our dinner was homemade pizza with custom organic wines from Casato prime donne, known for its delicious Brunello di Montalcino wines. These immediately provided the right tone to our wonderful adventure.

Our first day was coloured with art and culture in Florence. For me, the museum was just a bit too crowded to fully enjoy it, but really worthwhile. In the afternoon, our lunch including zucchini and risotto was finger-licking good. After our "self-exploring moments" in Florence, our tight schedule beckoned us back to Il Paluffo. There, Luca, Byron and Kelly had surprised us with a real living room opera accompanied by a glass of bubbles. To top the level yet again, we were taken aback afterwards, at the two-star restaurant Arnolfo on the Colle di Val d'Elsa. It had only been at this location and fully available to us for three weeks. What a delicious ex-perience. The setting of the restaurant matched perfectly with the sophisticated and surprising culinary journey, accompanied of course by the most refined wines. All the dishes under the direction of Chef Gaetano Trovato, were works of art in themselves, sometimes too beautiful to bite into.

The next day, no mercy, early on roll call; To discover another natural phenomenon of Tuscany, our morning was filled with exercise, to the wonderful world of geo-thermal energy. The heat sources

located in this region are used to provide the population with the necessary energy.

On this last day, "the boys and their toys" were made aware, during our journey to "Il Paluffo" in the form of a competition, to arrive with the lowest possible consumption.

After the ceremony, we were able to put on our pre-prepared Halloween outfit, to end the spooky evening by full moon, with shivering elastic legs in style. Under the approving eye of the professional DJ

So much for a small look at our tantalising experience of the Tuscany Trip 2022. It is all about the energy, the vibe we transmit to where we want to grow ... In short, a Halloween experience in Tuscany, a unique experience richer, thanks to the good organisation. An experience where I enjoyed and imagined myself in a different suit.



© Marie-France Lefèvre

### 3. TUSCANY TOUR BY SUZY PEETERS & MICHEL CEYSSENS

In March 2022, we bought our 1st Tesla, a Model Y Long Range. We joined the Tesla Owners Club Belgium via Facebook and so a few months later a new world opened up for us. We received an invitation via e-mail for a weekend in Tuscany with the club. In an impulsive moment, we decided to take the plunge.

We left on Friday 28/10 in the afternoon. Stopover in Colmar with overnight stay. On Saturday we were expected at 8pm at the Il Paluffo estate in Certaldo. In 1 word "wow!" totally our thing! We were welcomed by Luca, Byron, Kelly, Gwen and Dorien. Extremely friendly, we immediately felt welcome. The rooms were assigned and after having freshened up a bit, we sat down at the table with the 12 other couples + 1 son. Meanwhile, Brecht had missed a step, resulting in a painful ankle. Fortunately, Dr Peter was in the room to administer the necessary care. We had delicious pizzas with custom Wine Tasting by domain (Kelly fill in). The company couldn't have been better. We didn't know anyone beforehand, but

what laughter and fine conversations we had. We still say it often: what a top group!

It soon became clear that if we wanted to complete the busy programme, a tight schedule had to be imposed: breakfast at 7.30am and everyone in the car by 8.10am!

The next day we left for Florence by carpool, where we visited the Uffizi museum with a great guide. In the afternoon, a nice lunch in Piazza della Signoria. Some free time and back to Il Paluffo. We put on our chicest clothes and were surprised in the evening with a mini concert by a Soprano and Tenor accompanied on piano. Superb! After this musical masterpiece, Carpool again (there had to be Bobs) to a 2-star restaurant (just fill in the name Kelly). Mamma Mia! Splendissimo! Kudos to the organisers! Tired and fulfilled back towards the domain to get some sleep.

Early breakfast again on Monday and then off to the geothermal area with a visit to the museum and tour followed by a walk in a



© Michel Ceysens



© Philippe Coertjens





© Byron Soulopoulos



© Michel Ceyskens

piece of unspoilt Tuscan nature. In the afternoon for lunch to a brewery where they use this technique (heat from the earth) to brew their beers. Not really our thing that beer, but we Belgians are used to something else when it comes to beers. After the previous culinary treats, this meal was a bit disappointing, but no worries, the organisation more than made up for it. That can happen, you don't always have everything under control. Before the drive back to Il Paluffo, another Hyper Mile was organised: a race to drive economically with the Tesla, won by Bart and Sandra with their Model Y. In the evening, there was another super tasty dinner with a banging Halloween party to finish. Everyone was dressed up and there were some hilarious costumes among them!

We got up extra early the next morning for the drive back to be back at work on Wednesday. In Arlon in the evening, we happened to run into Sandra and Bart and Gwen and Dorien during the suc session at Van der Valk. We then had something to eat together and talked about the trip.

For us, it was a memorable experience. We will definitely do it again! Thank you dear all. Tuscany Tour 2022 was great!

Suzy and Michel

# LUXUEUS WONEN

**P**roject VOT, een stijlvol warm project dat volledig op maat van de klant is ontworpen door onze interieurarchitecten. De lichte sofa Citizen staat in mooi contrast met de maatwerk tv wand in donker eik. Dat zie je ook terug aan de tafel Erin, hier speciaal gemaakt met een conische poot. In de keuken is een uniek marmer uitgekozen, dat perfect past in het geheel. De prachtige verlichting van Atmooz maakt het geheel af. VIE LUXUEUSE





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# RAFAEL DE MESTRE

## THE PIONEER OF ROUND -THE-WORLD EV TRIPS

Rafael de Mestre became the first person to complete a round-the-world tour in an electric car in 2012. Travels in EVs were quite a different experience then. Rafael de Mestre shares anecdotes from the first e-circumnavigation and his latest trips ...

Text : Joanna Pays and Martin Gillet - Photo credit : Rafael de Mestre



"In 2012, When I started to tell people I was going to do an around the world tour in my Tesla Roadster, everyone said it was impossible and that I was crazy" says Rafael. "That just made me more determined! Then, when I heard that two guys from France had already started on a e-world tour in their Citroën C-Zero I decided I had to move my plans forward immediately, as I wanted to be the first. I also wanted a Tesla to be the first car to make this epic trip. My round-the-world tour had now become a race."

### AGILE PLANNING

"I stopped everything I was doing and got in the car, and drove off from Barcelona with no preparation. While I was driving I started contacting people for advice on how I could get the Tesla across the Atlantic. I headed to Frankfurt to take a DHL transport plane to New York. The problems began when I was completing the customs' declarations. This was back in 2012, so there were no special customs forms for EVs in the computerised system. It insisted on me entering a minimum amount of fuel in the tank for example. I had similar problems when I arrived in the US."



### FROM NEW YORK TO SAN FRANCISCO AND MEETING WITH TESLA

"The next leg of my journey was from New York to San Francisco, but there was no network of Superchargers in those days. Some fellow Tesla Roadster owners suggested I used the power supply in camper van parks during my journey across the US, so I went to a hardware store and bought the most powerful RV adaptor I could find. I continued through the US, hopping from one RV park to another and charging overnight. Along the way, Tesla owners kindly invited me to stay with them too. This was not feeling like a race at all."



"When I arrived in San Francisco I met several more Roadster owners who offered that I stayed with them and really made me welcome. Then Tesla got in contact. They told me I was a trailblazer and invited me to a VIP tour of their factory, where I was welcomed by George Blankenship, then Tesla VP and the lead architect of Tesla's sales strategy and distribution network. Tesla even organised a surprise party for me with a cake. The whole factory took a break to meet and talk with me. That was really the best, but it was now on to the next leg of my journey, to China. That's when it started to get tricky."

### COMPLICATIONS IN CHINA

"When I arrived in China I had huge delays (and costs) trying to get through customs with the Tesla. That is a story in its own. I even had to get a Chinese MoT for the car and get a Chinese driving license. I had to think of every trick in the book to get through these hurdles! Once I did get through customs, I had to have a Chinese guide with me in the car, all through my travel in China."

"My next worry was my competition. I heard the two French guys in the Mitsubishi were already in Asia! The French team was quite far ahead but they only had a charging range of about 100km, while I had 400km. I eventually caught up with them in the Gobi Desert. I asked them if they wanted to travel together for the rest of the trip but they said no and shut off their tracker so I couldn't follow their progress any more. So I continued on to the Chinese-Kazakhstan border, to find a hotel. I was saying goodbye to my Chinese guide who had been great, when we had a knock on the door. It was the Chinese secret service! They decided they needed to interview us before I left the country and my poor guide was interrogated for about two hours."

### TESLA TO THE RESCUE AND THE RACE TO VICTORY

"I had many more adventures and police controls while traveling through Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine but as I crossed the border into Romania, dozens of journalists and TV stations were waiting for me. As I reached Germany I was nearly on the home stretch, but then I had a huge crash on the autobahn. Tesla in Munich really helped me there and managed to repair the car in just 5 days. This meant I could go on to cross the finish line and claim victory before the French team. As soon as I entered back into Spain there were over a hundred electric cars following me, as the first EV driver to circumnavigate the world!"

### 2016 - ELDURO TOUR

By 2016 Rafael was on his second EV round-the-world trip, but this time not alone.

"This tour I named the Elduro and it was more like a rally. We had 11 cars including my own from several different countries including the US and China. This was not a race against each other, but a race against time. We were all helping each other to get all the cars over the finish line in 80 days. Our common goal was to show that there are no borders to electric vehicle driving and how we can work together to help preserve the environment."

### 2024 - ELECTRIFYING TOUR

The next world etour with Rafael will begin in 2024.

This journey will pass through 36 countries, but no planes will be used, in order to reduce carbon emissions. Driving time, not counting the shipping times, will be 80 days. "My aim is to break gas car rally records and have the longest car rally, covering 40,000 kilometres – all EV-only of course! The trip will begin in May 2024 and run through to October."

Communications about the new tour have just begun. If you are interested in joining, sponsoring a team or just following the tour, visit <https://80edays.com/> for more information.

80edays website: [www.80edays.com](http://www.80edays.com). You can find the first trip around the world called Genesis, when Rafael travelled around the world in his Tesla Roadster. Also, you can find information about the second trip around the world – Elduro. Rafael de Mestre transported this winter his Tesla Roadster emission free with a sailing ship over the Atlantic Ocean to Miami. He is planning to continue his 2024 promotion trip with it in US in June.

80edays YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/80edays> (there are two shorts from the arrival of the Roadster at Port Everglades)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/80eDays>

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They are planning to break the Guinness World Record of the longest Tesla parade in Meppen on 1.10.2023.: <https://eco.gp/season-2023/meppen/>





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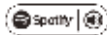


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## DISCOVER THE PULSE FAMILY



# DRIVER EXPERIENCE

## TESLA PLAID MODEL S AND PLAID MODEL X

The first deliveries of the Tesla Plaid Model S and Model X have now arrived in Europe. Let's take a quick look and hear what the first customers have to say!

Text : Joanna Pays - Photos : Courtesy of Tesla Inc.

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### MODEL X PLAID

The Model X Plaid is the highest performing SUV ever built, with a top speed of 262 km/h and a maximum range of 543 km/h. Maxime Vandorpe, who runs his own business in Charleroi, received his Model X Plaid just before the end of December, 2022. He has been a Tesla driver for four years and previously owned two Model S. He shared his experience of the new car with Supercharged.

“I wanted a Model X because of the extra space I needed” says Maxime. “This is a six-seater and I can fold down the seats to transport stock for my business. To be honest, I didn’t specifically choose to have the Plaid version, it was what they had available at the time. Our version is grey, with a black interior.”

“Our main motivation to change to an EV when we bought the first Tesla was to make fuel economies” says Maxime. “Because of the amount of driving we do for the business, we were paying between 800 and 1,000 euros a month on fuel. Since we changed to Tesla, we are saving about 75% of these costs.”

#### What I like

“I like the added power and the driving comfort is much better than the Model S. Since I have had the Tesla X Plaid I have already driven 12,000 km. The acceleration is very impressive, especially if you want to enjoy it on the highway. The driving range autonomy is also exceptional.”

“The onboard infotainment solution is similar to what I had with the Model S, but I do like the new pivoting screen which is useful for the GPS when you are driving.”

“Tesla really is the reference for EV driving. We recently bought a Cupra for my mother, but frankly the autonomy is not great and the range falls away fast. The Cupra is only suited for around town driving really, not for long distances.”

#### What could be improved?

“For me, the weak point at the moment is the car guarantee and after-sales service. I don’t find it comprehensive enough compared to the cost of the car. I had a problem with the electric cable for one of the rear seats and was told that a ferret had chewed it, so the guarantee wouldn’t cover it! I’ve also had a problem with the fabric lifting on the driver’s seat, which happened after 5,000 km. The dealer is checking, but it’s not sure the guarantee will cover this either.”

### THE MODEL S PLAID

The Model S Plaid has the fastest acceleration of any production car, delivering 0-100 km/h in just 2.1 seconds and a top speed of 322 km/h! Christophe Duponchee has been driving his Model S Plaid since December.

“Now that I am in my 50s, I’m still interested in cars but not excessively” says Christophe. “My main motivation is that I have a very busy professional life and my car must live up to my expectations when I am travelling on business trips.”

#### My Tesla Story

“I first learned about Tesla in 2012, when I read about the story of Elon Musk. I became interested in the Tesla brand and ordered my first one – a Model S – in 2013. At the time there was not even a Tesla dealership in Belgium, and nobody was speaking about Superchargers, as they were totally unknown in Europe. I was immediately won over by my first Model S, with its design, the innovations in EV technologies and the advanced integrated software.”

“Some people might find it a bit surprising that I ordered a car that I hadn’t seen in real life, let alone tried out – and at the time there were no specialised repair shops in Belgium. However, I was convinced by Elon Musk’s ambitions and his proven competencies. My choice was confirmed by the fact that I was looking for a high-performance, innovative car that was different from any other on the market.”

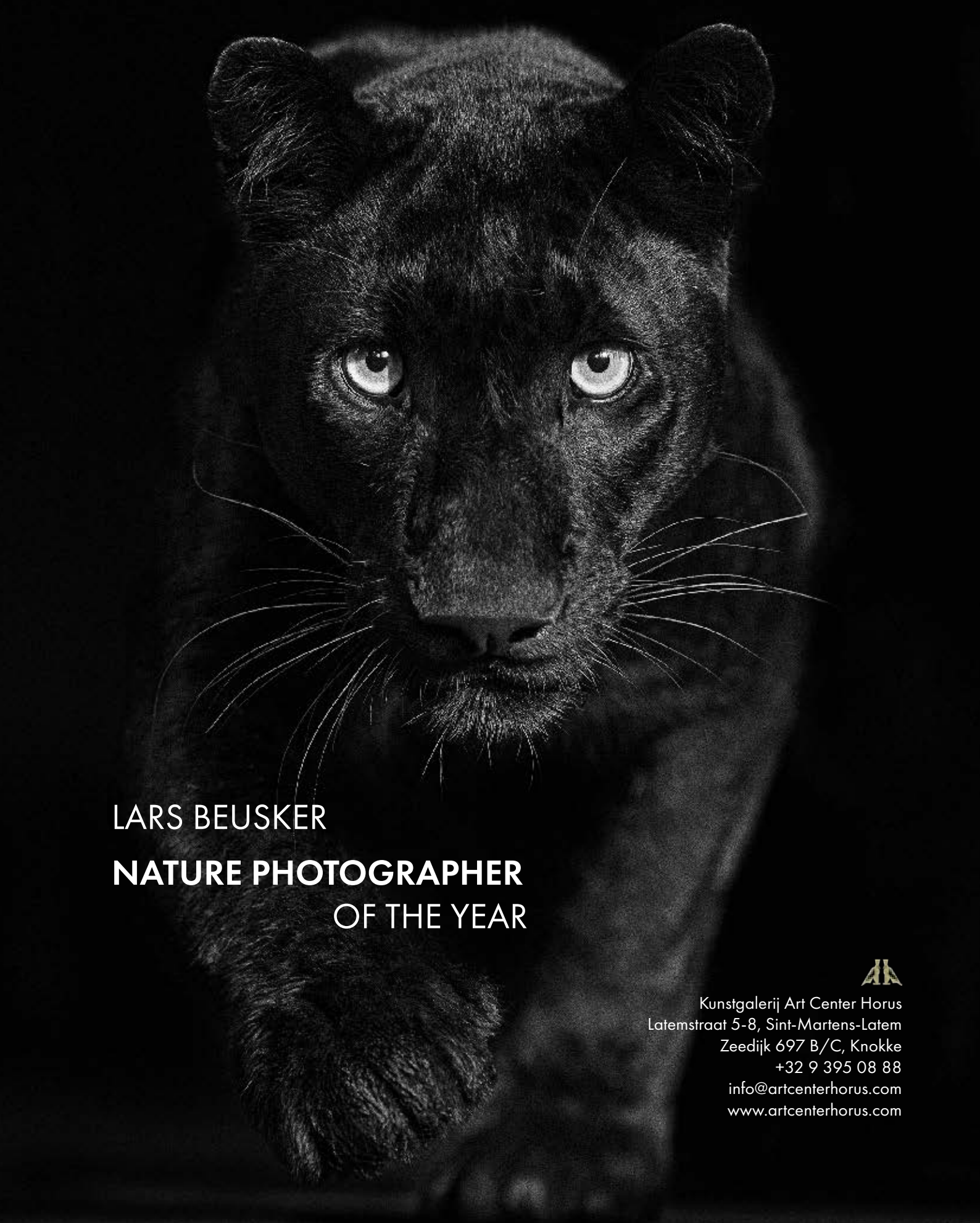
“I have been a member of Tesla Club Belgium since the beginning and I have met many great friends there, as well as passionate fans of Tesla. We always enjoy meeting up to talk about our cars, the Tesla brand and other projects. I have always been very satisfied with my previous Model S and with my interactions with Tesla representatives in the various outlets. Because of this I am very loyal to the Tesla brand.”

#### What’s different about the Model S Plaid?

“I chose the Plaid because of its supercar performance and the superior driving experience. I have been talking about it with a lot of my friends and the Plaid is really ahead of its time – as was my first Model S when I bought it 10 years ago.”

“The Model S Plaid is slightly wider and longer. Comfort has improved radically over the last 10 years and a lot of care has been taken over the interior finishings. The integrated software has clearly improved as well.”

“I have been driving the Plaid for three months now and I am very satisfied with it. However, you do need to drive carefully, as the acceleration can take you by surprise! The safety performance is up to Tesla’s high standards and I’m getting used to the Yoke steering wheel. It’s a head-turner and the Yoke steering wheel is one of the things that attracts the most attention from curious passers-by. In fact one day the car was surrounded by people and when I went to open the door I was told to wait my turn!”



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# SOLAR BUTTERFLY

## THE SOLAR CARAVAN WHICH SHINES THE SPOTLIGHT ON CLIMATE PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD

Solar Butterfly was created to highlight and share great ideas from over 1000 eco projects around the world. Over a period of four years, the Solar Butterfly team is travelling in a solar-powered caravan to meet locals, eco-project founders, schools, politicians and the media in six continents. Supercharged Magazine spoke with Louis Palmer, the founder and motivator of this amazing project, to find out more.

Text : Joanna Pays and Martin Gillet - Photos : Solar Butterfly







### SOLAR BUTTERFLY FOUNDER LOUIS PALMER

Supercharged readers may already be familiar with name of Louis Palmer. Back in 2007-2008, he became the first person ever to circumnavigate the globe in a solar-powered vehicle. Louis travelled around the world in his solar taxi, inspiring audiences to think about solutions to slow climate warming. At the same time, his messages caught the attention of over 770 million people in the media.

Born in Hungary, Louis lives in Switzerland and speaks English, French, German, Hungarian and Spanish. "We live in central Switzerland, in Lucerne, at the foot of the alps" says Louis. "The scenery here really inspires you to appreciate nature and take care of the environment. At home we have solar panels, drive a Tesla – and electric bikes – and I converted a 17 seater bus to electric. With the electric bus I offer tourists sustainable tours of the area. Of course I have the solar taxi I built in 2007 and I still use it even now. We do make efforts to play our part for the environment– but we can all always strive to do more!"

### METAMORPHOSIS

Fast forward to 15 years after Solar Taxi, Louis decided it was time for a new project – the Solar Butterfly. "Emissions continue to rise, and we needed a new idea to capture people's imagination" explains Louis. "It had to be a striking vehicle, so I decided to build a caravan in the shape of a huge butterfly with wings covered by solar cells."

"I contacted the Lucerne University of Applied Science and discussed my new dream of building a solar caravan to power my Tesla. The goal would be to send it on a world tour to visit projects that could help save the planet. They accepted to help me. In all, the development stage of the project took about one year, but building the Solar Butterfly only took five months! The car we use is a Tesla Model X. Its range is around 170 kilometres, as it has to pull the weight of the caravan which is about 3 tonnes."



### THE WORLD TOUR ITINERARY

"The caravan can accommodate a team of four people, along with equipment to give interactive talks and film various projects. The mobile team on the tour changes regularly, but normally comprises a driver, a mechanic, a journalist/social media specialist and a videographer. We have around 200 other volunteers contributing to the project who are not on the actual tour."

"The itinerary, over four years, is to visit pioneers of sustainable solutions in 90 countries. Our aim is to present 1,000 projects in total. We completed the first part of the tour, in Europe, in 2022. You can already see videos on the Solar Butterfly website of the projects we visited. In June 2023 Solar Butterfly will set off on its tour of Central and North America. Starting in Halifax, it will travel down the east coast to Miami, head west over to San Francisco and then down to finish in Panama. In 2024 we will cover countries in the Middle East and Asia. Finally the longest leg of the tour will be in 2025, through Australia, South Africa and South America. We will finish in Belem, Brazil, to coincide with the COP 30 Climate Change Conference in November 2025."

### SPREADING THE WORD

"So many people have beautiful stories and ideas to share. With this project we have been able to post their videos and blogs, which you can find on the solutions area of our website. The media has also helped us a lot to spread the word."

"I'd like to thank all of our supporters, volunteers and sponsors who are making this possible. We have had some great sponsors to help us fund the project, including Longi, maxon, Brugg and Elma."

"Butterfly is not only a symbol of the environment, it is also about transforming something ugly to something beautiful. The Solar Butterfly is the first vehicle to be constructed from recycled plastic bottles from the ocean!"

For more information about Solar Butterfly, the climate solutions filmed, volunteering for the project or sponsoring, visit [www.solar-butterfly.org](http://www.solar-butterfly.org).

# TESLA SEMI TRUCK DELIVERY EVENT IN NEVADA

Tesla marked the first deliveries of its Semi trucks to customers during an event in Nevada in December. Elon Musk arrived at the event in a Semi truck and revealed more details about the revolutionary new vehicle.

Text : Joanna Pays - Photos : Courtesy of Tesla Inc.





### FIRST DELIVERIES TO PEPSICO

The first delivery was to PepsiCo, who placed a large order for 100 Semi trucks during the vehicle's event launch in 2017. Pepsi has ordered the trucks to cut down on fuel costs and emissions and plans to use them to transport cargo between its California factories in Modesto and Sacramento. Tesla also revealed that it will be using the trucks for its own deliveries.

### FAST CHARGING AND 800KM RANGE

One of the major gamechangers with the Tesla Semi is that it charges at ultra-fast rates of 1MW. To enable this, Tesla has developed a charging cable which uses new immersion cooling technologies. This means the trucks can gain 70 percent of charge in just 30 minutes. Tesla also announced that the Semi will have a range of around 800 km on a full charge. In terms of fuel-cost savings, Tesla estimates that transport companies will be able to economise up to \$70,000 a year, per truck, depending on the cost of electricity in their area.

### THREE TIMES MORE POWER THAN ANY DIESEL TRUCK

The Semi can accelerate from 0 to 100 km/h in 20 seconds, even when fully loaded. "This is really a step-change improvement in what it's like to drive a semi-truck" said Elon Musk during the delivery event. "It's fast to accelerate, its fast to brake and it's got three times the power of any diesel truck on the road right now. We are leveraging the existing powertrain elements that we already make in great volume, in order to achieve extreme efficiencies of cost and capability."

### SAFETY

Along with its enhanced autopilot technologies, a major safety differentiator of the Semi is the central position of the steering wheel and driver's seat. This provides the driver with maximum visibility and helps to avoid collisions. Touchscreens are located on both sides of the driver.

"We have done lots of hardcore testing," said Elon. "One of the important things about a commercial truck is that the reliability has to

be extremely high. So it's got to be running continuously and it can't break down. It's got to handle every kind of weather and uptime is extremely important for any kind of Semi truck."

"It's been a long journey, a long 5 years but this is really going to revolutionise the roads and make the world a better place in a meaningful way."





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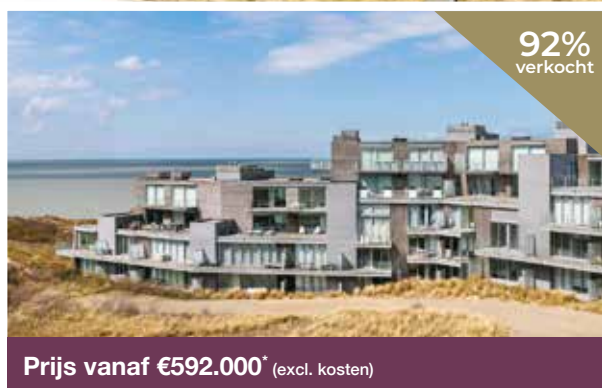
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# ROAD TRIP FROM CANADA TO TEXAS

Gary Chan from NY and Luc Quirion from Montréal recently took an epic road trip in their Model Y, travelling from Montreal to Texas and back, via Florida. They shared their adventures with Supercharged Magazine.

Text : Joanna Pays and Martin Gillet - Photo credit : Gary Chan and Luc Quirion





Gary and Luc live in Montreal where they own real estate properties and rent them. Gary is from Montreal and Luc is originally from New York, where they first met 27 years ago. They purchased their Model Y during the period of Covid restrictions and couldn't wait to go on their first road trip!

### THE STORMTROOPER

"StormTrooper, our black and white Tesla 2021 Long Range Model Y, is our first EV" says Gary. We believe in the electrification of transportation for the sake of the environment and we both love technology. When we went to Tesla show room to see the car, we were immediately convinced. We love the comfort of the car, the acceleration and the way it holds the road. Our previous car was a BMW, but the Model Y way outperforms it.

We love travelling and photography and when we got the Tesla we wanted to do long road trips -but the pandemic put a halt on that. The province of Quebec was quite strict during lockdown, so we were looking forward to travelling again. At the end of 2022, we decided to take the Tesla to go and visit family and friends. What started out as a "escape trip" just to do a road trip to NYC to see my family for Thanksgiving and maybe Florida ...turned into one huge adventure to keeping going! We easily made it to Texas and stopped everywhere, using exclusively Tesla Superchargers.

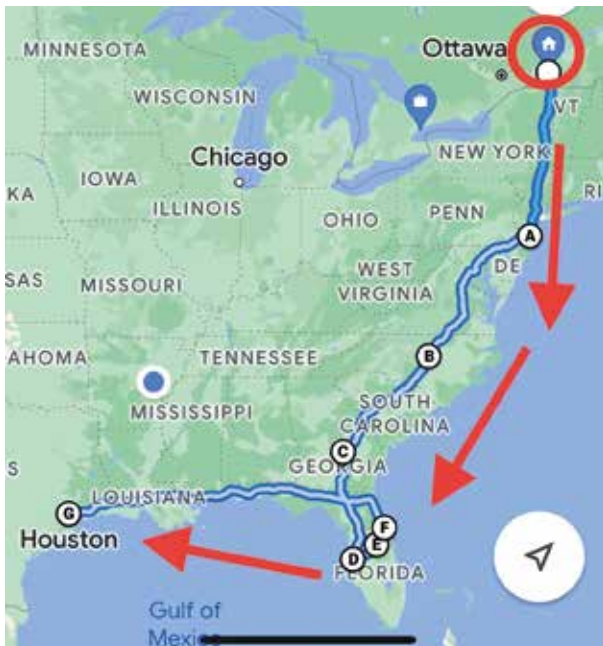
### WE LOVE TEXAS!

Texas is such a big state, it's like the size of a whole country, maybe as big as France. The people are really nice, there are tons of Superchargers and very nice roads. Texas also has a speed limit of 140 km/h, which is higher than the 110 km/h in most other states. As it is the oil capital of the US, I was surprised to see so many Teslas there were.

Austin was one of our favourite cities in Texas and we made it the Giga Texas and drove the Tesla Highway. No visitors are allowed there, but we were happy just to be so on the grounds where great things are to come!

### CHARGING WAS EASY, EVERYWHERE

We had no range anxiety as there were so many Superchargers. We bought an adaptor before we set out, but we didn't have to use it. One of the great things about the car is that it told us if there were too many cars waiting at a charging station and redirected us to a less busy one. Luc and I were really amazed at how easy it was to charge everywhere for Teslas – but less so for other EV drivers. In a large station we would have between five to twelve Superchargers, but only two to four chargers for everyone else. Plus often half of the other EV chargers would be out of order. That makes it very difficult for other drivers. Tesla has really got it nailed in this respect



and the car can even tell us how many available charging places there are at each station. Elon has made it easy for us to drive cross country and back to Canada without any issues!

**LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT ROAD TRIP!**

During our four-week trip we covered 6000 km. The Tesla was comfortable and effortless to drive. We had a lot of fun and met a lot of interesting people. One of the big surprises was when we were charging in North Carolina and we found ourselves next to a Tesla

police car. We got to chat with the police officers and they were experimenting to use Teslas and they were really excited about that. Another story was when the car led us to charge at a very small town, off the highway, in the north of Texas. It was a really charming town and we would never have got to visit this place if the car hadn't guided us there. There was a restaurant we ate in called "Red Neck" where we had a great meal and got chatting to some really nice people, who were all very interested in the car.





"Our trip from Montreal to Texas and back was an amazing 4 week journey. We are already thinking about our next road trip and we might go to Vancouver. This will be a huge trip and about twice as far as the last one. So, we will keep you posted!





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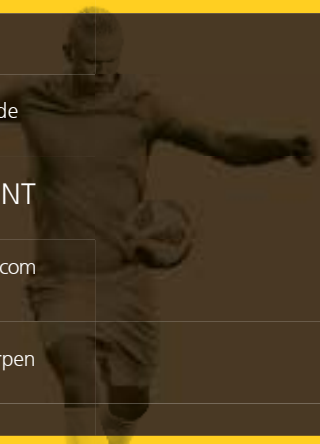
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# TENSEN JUWELIERS: FAMILY BUSINESS WITH A HEART FOR THE CUSTOMER

## “TOP BRANDS TELL A STORY”

TenSen Jewelers values personal contact. The shop offers state-of-the-art watches for women and men. There are several Limited & Special Editions. The range of jewellery is also very diverse and exclusive.

Text: Hilde Pauwels - Pictures : TenSen Jewelers

TenSen Jeweliers is a well-known quality shop in Antwerp. It is an authentic, warm family business where the fourth generation is now at work. That makes it special. There is a long story behind it. "Originally the Tensen family lived in the Netherlands, but over the years they settled in Antwerp," says Charlotte De Groof, Time Visualiser and in charge of marketing. It started in 1885 when grandfather Klaas Tensen repaired watches as an employee. His son Nicolas started a workshop in Brussels and Antwerp. Cousin Marc Tensen joined him as a job student, opening a modest shop in Klapdorp in 1962. He is thus the original manager. In that neighbourhood, there were many dockers and sailors who came to shop in the city centre when they were ashore. They would often buy a jewel or watch to take home as a souvenir. "Marc Tensen is now 83 and still present in the shop. Together with his wife Brigitte Van Beveren, they have devoted themselves to the shop. However, they did pass the helm to three of their five children who now run the shop: Alain, Philip and Nadia. "They all attach great importance to the family character. Meanwhile, the fourth generation is taking its first steps in the business. The dna of the business can be seen in two areas. On a personal level, they strive for close mutual cooperation. In addition, they are very accessible to customers. It reduces the threshold, customers feel welcome here."

### BOWLER HAT AS A SYMBOL

Of the three current business managers, Philip Tensen is the most digitally minded. He launched [tensen.be](https://tensen.be), an online platform. "In 2007, he realised a first version of the online platform. That has since been adapted, it is now possible to use filters to search for a particular product more quickly," says Charlotte De Groof. Look & feel plays an important role. TenSen Jeweliers opts for a neutral look and feel. "The business has developed its own identity. Our brands have strong branding, we want to express that in the best possible way. We are recognisable by the bowler hat; an ode to René Magritte. We are very proud to be a Belgian business." During the covid pandemic, online sales proved to be a hit. It attracted many new customers from all over Belgium and the Netherlands. They couldn't just walk in. "At that time, we relied heavily on online sales to introduce new products to customers anyway. When customers decided to make a purchase, we made sure they were dealt with quickly. After all, good service is crucial."

### TRUST IS IMPORTANT

Charlotte De Groof points out that there was still a certain barrier to online sales. This has to do with the higher price range. "Then a personal approach is very important, but so that fell away. It went very smoothly for mid-range watches. For more expensive purchases, we first contacted the customer to check everything out. We felt it was important to contact the customer again after an online sale. This included asking if they were still happy with their purchase and if there was anything else we could do to help them. This gesture was much appreciated, as many customers we had never seen in person. This created a bond of trust. A great example is an online customer who has now made a fourth purchase."

Some high-end brands such as Rolex do not want online sales, partly because there is more demand than supply. Rolex and other high-end brands insist on personal contact when buying their luxury watches. It is also about the experience and a guidance from a to z.

### WATCHES WITH A STORY

The demand for watches involves both aesthetics and quality. "We work with the most prestigious Swiss brands. With them, materials, quality and also history are key. Some brands have been around for hundreds of years and built a storytelling, something customers value. Rolex has long been a market leader in terms of innovations and choice of materials. Moreover, they are trendsetters. When they launch a new design, there is an immediate huge demand. These are watches that are passed on from generation to generation. For most watches with a mechanical movement, we recommend a check-up every six to seven years. With Rolex, it can



## TENSEN JUWELIERS

be done every eight years because the inner mechanism is so advanced.”

Omega also has a rich history and built up a lot of know-how. The first watch on the moon was an Omega Speedmaster, which still generates a lot of fascination. Neil Armstrong was the first human ever to set foot on the moon. To this day, the Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch is part of NASA's International Space Station equipment. The watch is still made and liked. “Another top brand is Patek Philippe. Purchases are made mainly to pass on the watch to future generations. Production is quite low because they want to be 100 per cent sure that everything is perfect to perfection. Breitling is also a very valuable Swiss watch brand that is particularly valuable. TenSen Jewelers is the only business in Belgium to have a separate boutique entirely dedicated to Breitling. “We have been distributing the brand for more than 30 years and that led to a bond of trust,” he says.

Collectors also find their way to TenSen Jewelers. It is a well-known phenomenon: those who bought a quality timepiece and are very satisfied with it soon move on to a second purchase. This is partly due to the specialised craftsmanship and aesthetics. An inside mechanism is sometimes worked on for years, which makes for unique pieces.

### WIDE RANGE OF JEWELLERY

TenSen Jewelers' focus is on watches, but customers can also go there for exclusive jewellery. “We offer a very wide range with a contemporary touch. There are the classic engagement rings and solitaire rings that are also often given as gifts. Belgian designers like to work with coloured stones, sometimes with a special polish. Other brands are rather more avant-garde and special. When putting together its range, TenSen Jewelers takes into account what is available in Belgium; local shopping is an important factor. When customers want to realise a particular concept, they collaborate with Bloch & Co. These Antwerp-based jewellery designers can put together all possible combinations.”

### NATURAL DIAMOND

Jewellery has an emotional value. They are often bought on the occasion of a particular event. The value of a piece of jewellery has to do with several factors. There are factors such as colour, carat, quality, purity and the cut. “We work exclusively with natural diamonds, which helps determine the price. Over the past five to 10 years, there has been a global focus on diamond labs. This involves production in laboratories to reduce the cost price but also not to deplete reserves. We sell our jewellery with a certificate we get from controlling authorities.”

### ATELIER WITH A LOT OF EXPERTISE

TenSen Jewelers has its own workshop with watchmakers. Three of them are Rolex certified, which means that only they are allowed to work on Rolex watches. Due to their know-how, they can of course work on other brands as well. Two other watchmakers are

in charge of day-to-day tasks, e.g. changing batteries, following up on spare parts. “The workshop has been renewed and modernly equipped. Besides Rolex, it is also recognised by Cartier, Breitling, TAG Heuer and others as an ‘Official Service Centre’. These brands invite watchmakers to familiarise them with the latest technological developments.

TenSen Jewelers has a shop at Huidevettersstraat 46 and Schuttershofstraat 2 in Antwerp. Breitling Boutique Antwerp at Leopoldstraat 2 in Antwerp

[www.tensen.be](http://www.tensen.be)





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Een lelijke zwarte tv in je mooie interieur. Een probleem dat je bekend in de oren klinkt? Daarom vonden we enkele oplossingen om je tv en interieur in harmonie te laten samengaan.

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Wie Bang & Olufsen zegt, zegt **kwaliteit én design**. Met B&O kies je voor hoogstaande producten die naadloos aansluiten bij je interieur. Kom langs en test zelf ons uitgebreid assortiment.

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Met The Frame van Samsung haal je kunst in huis. Kies een omlijsting en projecteer kunst terwijl je niet naar tv kijkt. De Objet Collection Easel van LG is dan weer geïnspireerd op een schildersezel. Dankzij onze lifestyle tv's voeg je dus extra waarde toe aan je interieur.

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Met LG Signature OLED R haal je 's werelds **eerste en enige** oprolbare tv in huis. Dé ideale oplossing dus! Als je stopt met kijken rolt de tv opnieuw in zijn luxueuze behuizing. De LG Signature is slechts in beperkte hoeveelheden geproduceerd en **Audiomix is de eerste verdeler** van het toestel in Benelux.

### Ga voor extra groot

Met een projector heb je zelfs geen televisie meer nodig. Een projector kan spectaculaire beelden projecteren maar je hoeft ons niet te geloven. In onze toonzaal kan je het zelf komen ontdekken.

### Tv-lift

Een lift die je tv in de vloer laat zakken wanneer je hem niet gebruikt en weer naar boven laat komen als je hem nodig hebt. Een oplossing ontwikkelt door Audiomix voor mensen die opzoek zijn naar een systeem op maat. Ons team kijkt bij interesse wat de mogelijkheden zijn in uw woning.

### B&O Beovision Eclipse



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### LG Signature



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# VANTYGHEM INTRODUCES: ARTWORK!

For 30 years, Peter and Michèle Vantygheem-Lambrecht have run Fashionable Flooring, the exclusive floor covering business in Ichtegem that has since more than earned its stripes, with its own imports of exclusive hand-knotted carpets, mainly from India, Iran and Pakistan. In 2020, an entirely in-house collection was added: CREATIVE DESIGNS by Michèle. And very soon they will introduce another novelty, because at VANTYGHEM FASHIONABLE FLOORING they like to be innovative. Recently, the showroom was also redesigned where they will soon proudly present their brand new line ARTWORK.

Text : Ella Scheers - Pictures : Vantygheem



Michèle speaking:

### OWN IMPORT

After our start-up period, we decided to go in a more exclusive direction. We went East to organise our own import of locally produced hand-knotted carpets. We wanted to create a collection with unique pieces. We not only select on design, we also find it very important to check the quality on site. Right from the start, we have been striving for high quality standards and we have stuck to them until today. Vantygghem stands for a unique range of tailor-made knotwork with sound and expert advice.

During our conversation, it is clear that Michèle is bursting with ideas and that she talks about her profession with passion.

### OWN COLLECTION

So a collection of her own could not fail to emerge. In a world that has become increasingly digital and impersonal, we want to create a special touch and a personal interpretation with our exclusive designs. Thanks to our long-standing relationship with local manufacturers in India and the fact that we personally develop and select

each artwork on site, we turn each rug into a masterpiece every time. With striking colour combinations and traditional motifs, we build a story into a rug. Today, we are actually building on that momentum somewhat through the launch of our latest product: ArtWork.

### ARTWORK

From the end of February to 23 March, there were refurbishment works in our shop. This meant that our offices were redecorated and our shop was beautifully renovated. Our showroom is an experience space where our customers can admire our carpets. In addition to an exclusive range, Vantygghem has tons of experience, allowing us to give the appropriate advice. In our showroom, our customers can compare, discuss and choose which carpet suits their interior. Everything has just been freshened up nicely. We therefore see this as the ideal opportunity to present our new line.





**“VANTYGHEM ARTWORK MEETS DENIS DE GLOIRE”**

Renowned painter Denis De Gloire continues Jackson Pollock's Action Painting. The colour-loving artist from Waregem has exhibited in Paris, Moscow, Amsterdam and from 24 March 2023 ... in our renovated showroom in Ichtegem, among others.

We seek real life, imbued with joie de vivre, energy and joy, vitalism and liberation and ... translate this into carpet art - ArtWork. Denis De Gloire is the first of a series of artists with whom we will collaborate.

## VANTYGHEM

In October, I was there to check out the first ArtWork carpet. I had it trimmed in relief, so you get more of the high/low feel, which makes it even more chic and beautifully finished. It then arrived in Belgium in December last year. All this time I couldn't say much about it, <<top secret>>, well, until now - finally... I'm really looking forward to it", says Michèle enthusiastically.

Come and have a look, because Vantygheem Fashionable Flooring gushes with colours and is currently elusive, unorthodox and explosive with the art of Denis De Gloire! To be discovered and experienced at VANTYGHEM FASHIONABLE FLOORING.

[www.vantygheem.com](http://www.vantygheem.com)

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If you are looking for contemporary art, Art Center Horus comes highly recommended. Art Center Horus is one of the fastest growing galleries with branches in Sint-Martens-Latem, Knokke and Laren (NL), near Hilversum. You will find beautiful sculpture for both indoor and outdoor use, drawings, glass art but equally an extensive collection of beautiful paintings. Valuable art is increasingly seen as a solid investment for the future, as the value of such works of art only increases. A showpiece in the art gallery, is undoubtedly the collection of the IbeX Masters. A select group of 24 top super-realism artists. World class tout court.

Text : Dominiek Saelens - Pictures : Art Center Horus





### 15 YEARS OF ART WITH A MISSION

Art Center Horus exists since 2008 and started in the cultural hot-spot Sint-Martens-Latem. It has since grown into one of the most diversified art galleries in Belgium. Niña Van den Bosch, manager of Art Center Horus: "Spurred on by my dear friend Linde Ergo, a visual arts artist, I started the business 15 years ago. Since then, the art project has only grown and taken on a mission. Art Center Horus is more than an art gallery. It is a place where art is shown to its best advantage in spacious rooms with plenty of light, in a tastefully decorated model home and in the attractive garden with water feature and patio. The binding element is a heart for beauty. It is important to me that art conveys a message and values. The artist is also always central here. Who is he or she? Captivating personalities who create from the heart are essential to the story. At Art Center Horus, you will find an extensive range of artworks for everyone's budget. We offer both accessible and investment art. It doesn't always have to be extremely expensive to be beautiful. Art is about feeling that it fits you, in harmony with colours and shapes. That's why our art gallery is so universal."

### IBEX MASTERPIECE COLLECTION

The concept Ibex, founded by German artist Albrecht von Stetten, occupies a prominent place at Art Center Horus. Niña Van den Bosch: "We entered into a collaboration with Ibex, a group of super-realistic artists. The artists create a larger-than-life painting based on a photograph. The artwork is so refined and finished that you cannot distinguish it from reality. You can certainly count Ibex among the world-class investment art because of their creativity and their unseen technical excellence. They are the new masters,



namely highly skilled figurative painters who create works of art with oil on canvas that are so precise and fine that people often compare them to photo-realistic art. The paintings look like photographs at first glance, but once you stand in front of them, you feel the layering and energy they exude. These unique works are created by today's new masters." Creating those artworks takes months, sometimes years. The artists are among the absolute best in the world and enjoy complete creative freedom. At Art Center Horus, you can view several of those world-class works. You will find works by Philipp Weber, Marco Grassi, Christiane Vleugels and Nobuyuki Shimamura, among others.

### BOOK PRESENTATION AND LIVE PERFORMANCE

Art Center Horus brings art closer to the public. A new way for this is the opportunity to meet the artists during a live performance. Niña Van den Bosch: "We regularly organise an event offering the opportunity to meet artists during a live performance. On 25 June 2023, the next live performance in Sint-Martens-Latem will take place and you will be able to see artists at work. On that occasion, a new book of creations by Luo Li Rong will also be presented. She is a Chinese artist-sculptor known for her contemporary Chinese sculptures. Her works exude delicacy and great sensuality." Both Luo Li Rong and Belgian Christiane Vleugels will be present during the live performance. Christiane Vleugels' works belong to the Ibex collection. She paints and draws depending on the mood or theme that comes to mind. She uses her large archive of photographs of models who have posed for her over the years. If you would like to be present during the live performance and book launch and meet one of the artists, it is best to reserve a seat in advance via email.

### SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

At Art Center Horus, you can visit for both sculpture and painting. There are works by several remarkable artists on display, such as visual artist Marianne Turck. She does not limit herself to just one medium. She designs sculptures, for instance, but she also takes photos, draws and creates visual images. The German Heinz Rabbow, on the other hand, is a painter who wants to inspire people to be more human through imaginary painted faces. His work radiates all the possible virtues of a human being, such as honesty, innocence, tenderness and wonder. Rabbow is also a philosopher, educator, lecturer and journalist.

### WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

The gallery is in full swing, showcasing both young and experienced artists. One project coming up soon is an exhibition by photographer Lars Beusker. He is the world's best wildlife photographer and was awarded "Nature Photographer of the Year 2022" in New York. He captures particularly unique moments of unspoiled nature in unseen beautiful black-and-white photos of animals. Sometimes eye-to-eye, so close. The proximity of wildlife and people in these habitats fascinate him time and again. He travels into the wilderness as often as he can. Some of his well-known works include "The King" (lion in front view), "Carbonado" (black panther in front view), "Ba Jun Tu" (white horses galloping in a pond), "Game Of Thrones" (two rhinos with crossed horns).







### **WORLD FIRST IBEX IN KORTRIJK**

There will be a unique exhibition in Kortrijk in the autumn. Art Center Horus is organising an exhibition of the Ibex Masters there from 27 October 2023 in the Art Church Rochus church. The exhibition will run for four weeks and is a world first of its kind. Central figure in the exhibition is Albrecht von Stetten, the founder of the Ibex collection. It is definitely worth heading down to Kortrijk, as



there will be many unique works from the Ibex collection on display. An excellent moment for art lovers.

More information:  
[www.artcenterhorus.com](http://www.artcenterhorus.com)  
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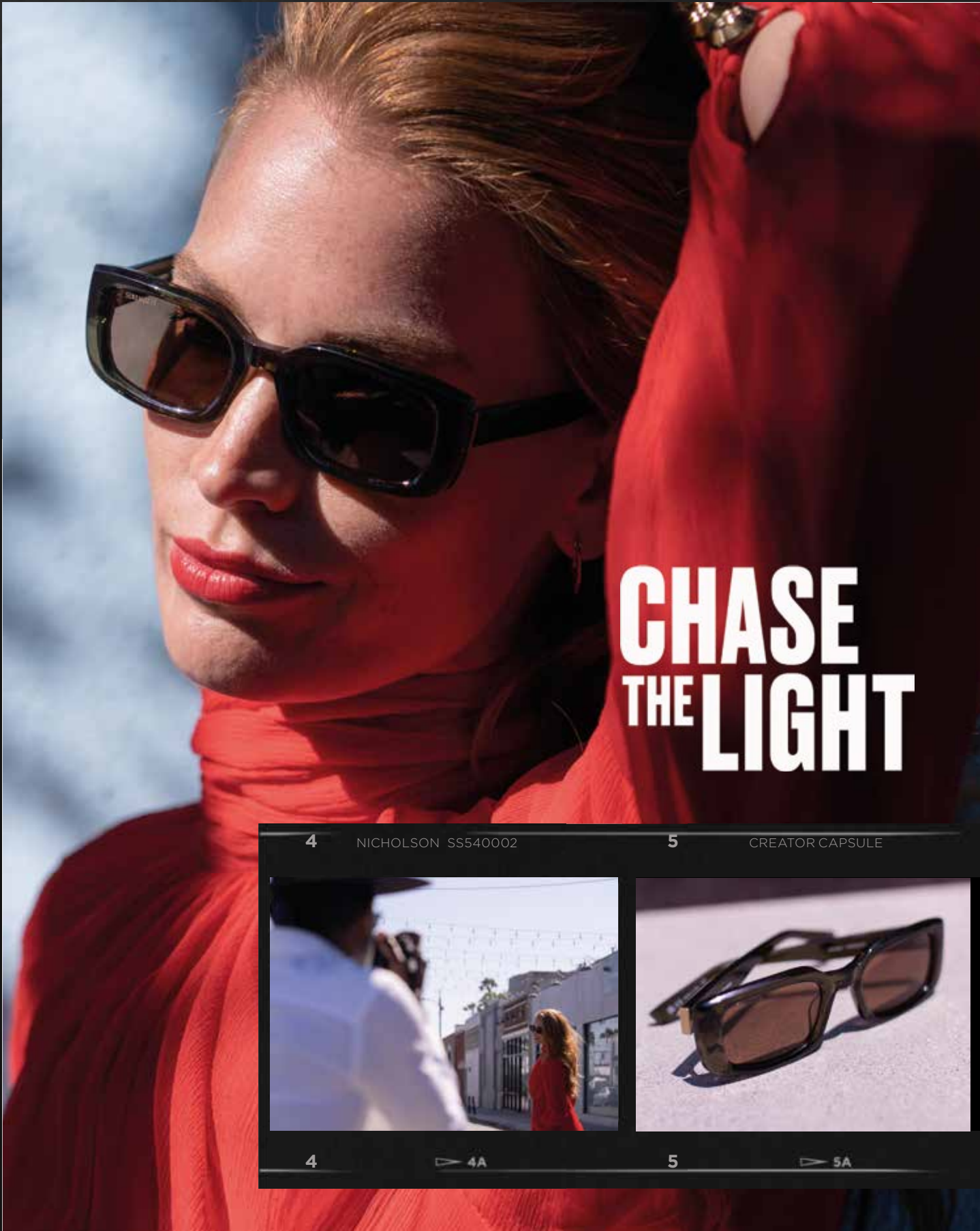
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# PELICANO FOUNDATION GIVES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE **MORE CHANCES** **FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE!**

No child or young person deserves to grow up in poverty. Being born into extreme poverty or suddenly ending up in a situation where financial problems arise and parents can no longer make ends meet ... Unfortunately, this is the harsh but daily reality for more than 40,000 children and young people in our country. For 14 years, the Pelicano Foundation has made it its mission to support them directly financially and thus improve their future prospects.

Text: Isabelle Vandecan - Pictures: Stichting Pelicano





### WHAT IS CHILD POVERTY?

We speak of child poverty when a family does not have enough financial resources to meet the basic needs of the children and/or young people.

“These basic needs are derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are very clear: personal hygiene, a daily hot meal, clothing appropriate to the season, education, medical/paramedic and finally sports, leisure and culture. These six pillars are of extreme importance in a child’s growing up. When these cannot be met, the child gets into trouble,” explains Ruth Dierickx, spokesperson for the Pelicano Foundation.

### EMPTY BREAD BOXES

A very topical issue is the empty lunch boxes problem. Children increasingly come to school with an empty lunch box or with unhealthy food. And the child himself can never be blamed for that. However, the consequences are devastating. The children are hungry which makes them unable to concentrate, they are irritable, are much more prone to diseases which in turn makes them absent

from school. All this leads to a lack of motivation and self-development and indirectly causes these youngsters to end up in a vicious circle, from which they very rarely escape.



### BREAKING THE POVERTY CYCLE TOGETHER

In 2009, a few friends joined forces to tackle the growing problem of child poverty in Belgium. The Pelicano Foundation saw the light of day and was very quickly officially recognised as a 'Foundation of Public Utility'. Since 2010, it has even received the High Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid.

"We give children in poverty real chances for the future by offering them individual and sustainable financial support so that they get equal opportunities just like a 'normal' child. To this end, we invest on average up to €40,000 per child until they enter the labour market," said Christiaan Hoorne, director of Pelicano Foundation.

Pelicano Foundation works mainly with carefully selected care partners (schools, OCMWs, social services, ...), in big cities and smaller municipalities. When one of these services notices that a deprived child or young person is in very urgent need of financial support, they notify the Foundation. The Foundation investigates the case and takes the necessary steps.

Urgent problems are addressed first, the so-called primary needs: food, health and clothing. At a later stage, the educational and social concerns of the Pelicano child are addressed. Because however you look at it, a child needs social contacts and pedagogical guidance to fully develop.

Ultimately, this evolves towards long-term support until the young person enters the labour market. Durable is the key word here, as two-year-old children are also registered. In that case, Pelicano Foundation will commit itself until the day the child can integrate into society individually. A commitment of perhaps 20 years.



### HOW DO WE RAISE MONEY?

Pelicano Foundation works mainly with two main sources of funds. First here are direct donations or gifts. Both individuals and companies can support the Foundation financially. You and I can donate an amount to Pelicano Foundation, from €40 you will receive a tax certificate. The warm feeling of helping a child in extreme poverty comes with a big thank you.

As part of Corporate Social Responsibility, companies can also donate and contribute to a better world. Tailor-made actions are worked out together, often involving staff, suppliers or customers. Together, we achieve so much more.

A second pillar involves including the foundation in your estate or will. That way, after your death, the amount you set aside will automatically be transferred to the charity. In life, you thus determine how you can still make a nice contribution when you are no longer around.

### CARE PARTNERS ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS

To ensure that the funds are spent correctly, the foundation appeals to carefully selected institutions. These include schools, social welfare centres and social services. These institutions are very familiar with poverty situations in families and are best placed to identify the children and young people and their family and social backgrounds.

This way of working additionally ensures that the appointed care coordinators ensure that the money ends up in the right place and not with the parents or family. In the case of a visit to the dentist, for example, it is paid directly by the care partner. The possibility of "bad intentions" is completely eliminated here.

### EVERY CHILD SHOULD HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES

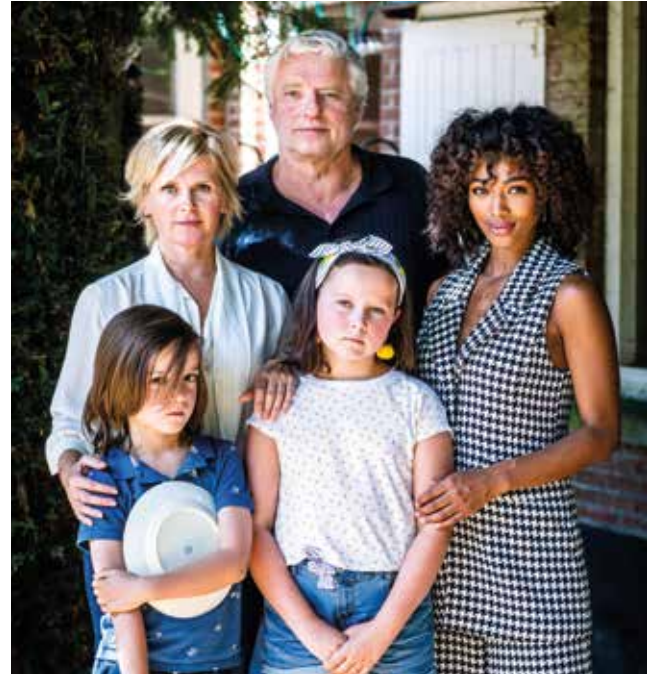
Caroline Petitjean is one of our care partners. For years she has taken children under her care who are struggling with underprivileged poverty. Through Pelicano Foundation, she ensures that the basic needs of these children are met.

"In early September 2022, an application came in from a single mum with 3 daughters. She had just fled her dire situation, after years of domestic violence and financial problems. Fortunately, she was able to stay temporarily with her demented mother but this was not a tenable situation with 3 children. She looked for and found another place to live but finds it very difficult to make ends meet. The children suffer from severe traumas, cannot go to the dentist or ophthalmologist, do not have their own bed to sleep in, wear clothes that do not fit them or were offered to them by friends and also struggle with learning disabilities.

Still, mum tries to keep strong and works full-time in care. She even tries to do extra night work to be able to give more to her children anyway. She insists on working full-time and thus cannot claim help from the CPAS.

In short, a harrowing situation but a profile that was 100% eligible for Pelicano Foundation support. Meanwhile, we paid all overdue school bills, the 3 children were enrolled in a sports club, a bed is available for each child, as well as new bedding and we provided shoes and clothes. There is still a lot of work to be done, yet the children now live in a better situation and can work towards a better future. The enormous gratitude of such a family warms your heart, and that's what we do it for," Caroline said.





### THE BIG IMPACT OF CHILD POVERTY REDUCTION

The importance of child poverty reduction is very high. Not only does it make a huge difference in a child's life but there are only benefits for society as well.

Vlerick Business School carried out a study commissioned by the Pelicano Foundation which shows that investing in child poverty reduction is desirable not only from a social point of view but also from an economic one.

"With a minimum investment of €1 per child in poverty, this will bring the government at least €5 to €9 in tax revenue and savings in the future," says Professor Dirk Buyens. Children who eventually get out of the vicious circle of poverty are no longer a cost and, after all, contribute to society.

### AMBASSADORS

The Pelicano Foundation can also count on three well-known ambassadors: actor couple An Miller and Filip Peeters and Kedist Deltour (Miss Belgium 2021) are happy to lend their support to this project.

Kedist Deltour (Miss Belgium 2021) herself lived in the rawest poverty for 10 years before being adopted by Belgian parents. She could not go to school and suffered from hunger. "There is no miracle solution. You have to tackle child poverty individually. That is my conviction and also that of the Pelicano Foundation," Kedist said.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

Since Pelicano Foundation was founded, many children have already been financially supported and thus prepared for a life in the labour market. Every day, they hear fantastic stories of children and young people who, thanks to their support, have stepped into a completely different life. They were able to turn their backs on poverty and build a new future in a healthy and constructive environment. These children and young people are the best proof that it can be done. That there is another way, but that they just needed a little push.

Pelicano Foundation can only do its work with the help of gifts and donations. Do you also want to make a huge difference in a child's future? Go to [www.pelicano.be](http://www.pelicano.be) or scan the attached QR code and donate a contribution of your choice. By doing so, you will give every child more chances for a bright future!



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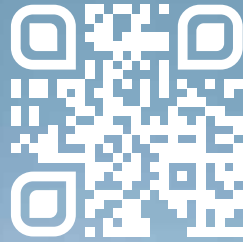
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# MANUFACTURE OF PERSONALISED JEWELLERY "I SELL PIECES OF HAPPINESS"

B-Diamond Brugge is a well-known jewellery manufacturer. Customers often come with a creative proposal, Bart De Vroe guides them in making the right choice. Empathy and trust play a major role.

Text: Hilde Pauwels - Pictures: B-diamond Brugge



"We have been jewellery manufacturers for three generations. We work for jewellers and private individuals. Our know-how enables us to provide customised design specifically for private individuals. They come to us with ideas. Their inspiration comes from the internet, pinterest, instagram or magazines. It also happens that they take pictures themselves of jewellery they have seen somewhere and find beautiful. In our shop B-Diamond Brugge, we have a collection of thousands of rings, earrings, pendants and so on. This is important because then you have the experience factor. You have to feel the jewellery, weigh it, try it on. You may like a piece of jewellery, but it happens that it doesn't look good on you. That is also why it is so difficult to buy jewellery online," says manager Bart De Vroe.

### PERSONAL

A piece of jewellery is something very personal, so customisation is much appreciated. "Sometimes customers bring old jewellery or family gemstones to have something new made with them. These are jewels that are no longer worn, but to which customers would like to give new meaning." Bart De Vroe listens to their ideas and then has them try on jewellery from his collection. B-Diamond Brugge only works with 18ct gold, natural diamonds and gemstones as well as semi-precious stones such as topaze, morganite, tourmaline etc. "To guide the client to the best choice from this huge range, we fine-tune based on our years of experience as manufacturers. This is how we come up with a design; larger or smaller, in white, yellow or rose gold, with stones in the right colour so that the piece of jewellery completely suits the client's personality. Here, at B-Diamond Brugge, we use sketches, but also digital 3D drawings and 3D prints. These help the client gain insight into the design to achieve the best possible result."



### CUSTOMISATION

“The combinations are endless. The budget also plays a role. Some choose precious gemstones, others ask us to consider the size of their budget. Our strength is that we have a lot of experience in manufacturing options and can work flexibly. That distinguishes us as a manufacturer from a retail jeweller who often works with brands and collections that have a certain fame. That way he can raise his profile, but fabrication of jewellery is another discipline. Fabrication, in turn, is what B-Diamond Brugge is good at. We go completely with the customer’s story.” Bart De Vroe says that for him, too, it is something personal. Empathy is needed to get a good feel for the customer. “It is better that the person for whom the jewellery is intended is there. Customers sometimes show confidence in me to find out where they want to go. We don’t sell what we would like to get rid of, we do try to make the customer happy. I often say I don’t sell jewellery, but I do sell a piece of happiness. If I see on camera that people who had a piece of jewellery made are giving each other a kiss or hug on going out, then my day is good. That means they are satisfied... with the piece of happiness.”







### ONLY NATURAL RAW MATERIALS

Bart De Vroe trained at the Diamond High Council and in 1997 started in the family business that had already built up know-how for two generations, which was passed on each time. "I wanted to put something of myself into it and started with the label B-Diamond Brugge and took out a patent on it," he says. The b refers to Brugge and Bart. B-Diamond clearly indicates what I am about: be diamond. The world of fantasy jewellery has increased dramatically since the 1990s. Their workmanship is so good that they are sometimes mistaken for genuine 18ct jewellery and real, natural gemstones. There is a tendency among some European countries to work with 14ct gold because you can then have more competitive prices, but we do not. You also see an evolution in gemstones. In London and elsewhere, you can find 'lab grown diamonds', which are thus produced in a laboratory, but we don't participate in that either. Our gemstones come exclusively from mother earth. You can come to us for high-end, pure jewellery with a high-quality finish. We once had our own cutting mills, but diamonds are cut in low-wage countries such as India these days. For a polishing demonstration, however, you can still go to B-Diamond Brugge by appointment. Here, too, the 'experience' factor plays a role. If the customer understands better what he is buying through our professional explanations, he gets more."



### ENGAGEMENT AND WEDDING

B-diamond Brugge also specialises in engagement and wedding rings. "The classic solitaire is still popular for engagement rings. The size and purity of the diamond also has a lot of significance. The value outweighs the shape. You can come to us for loose diamonds placed in a provisional ring to make the marriage proposal. At a later date, the couples then come together to have the final ring designed. This way, the partner also has a say. We also give advice. An engagement ring must match the later wedding rings. From the very beginning, we pay attention to that." Corona had a heavy impact. Parties were not allowed or very limited, there was less marriage. "Now there is catching up. It is noticeable that those who take the plunge now want the best of the best. What's nice is that some couples turn choosing rings into a romantic weekend in Bruges. The city is fantastic, of course."

### SATISFACTION

Because of years of experience, Bart De Vroe is sometimes called in to appraise family jewellery for insurance or a succession. "Often these are families who have been coming to us for years and know what we stand for," he says.

B-Diamond Brugge's clients sometimes come from quite far away, think Amsterdam, Paris or Maastricht. Satisfied customers send friends, colleagues or neighbours. "It's nice to hear that other customers specifically ask for me because they heard about our approach. That means we are doing a good job and that we can do something extra for the client with B-Diamond Brugge. I am lucky to have certain sensitivities that come in very handy when making choices. My gut feeling is usually right."

[b-diamond.eu](http://b-diamond.eu)

**RE-VOLT BELIEVERS  
RE-THINK THE WAY  
TO CREATE AND SELL  
OBJECTS. RE-VISIT  
THEIR EVERLASTING &  
TIMELESS ESSENCE.**

**RE-VOLT HOMES,  
HEARTS, LIVES.**

Re-Volt is a new Belgian brand with its own philosophy, a passion for light and a distinct creative approach with which they like to stand out on the lighting market.

Text: Ella Scheers - Pictures: Re-Volt

Drawing on years of experience, Re-Volt designs and develops with one eye on sustainability and the other on design. Beautiful interior pieces that survive generation after generation. Not only because they are quality, but also because they are enveloped in timeless design. "And because we are convinced that especially that which does not change is ultimately interesting in a world where change is becoming more and more and faster a constant," Bernard and Sofie of Re-Volt tell us enthusiastically. "For us, good lighting makes the atmosphere. Of course, there is a difference lighting-wise between lighting in the workplace and lighting in your living room, but that therefore does not mean that, for example, a desk lamp has to be cool or boring. We found the lighting market at one point became rather monotonous, all the same white and black tubes, so to speak. In that respect, we might want to revolt a bit. We want to bring the spark back into lighting, hence Re-Volt."



## ORIGIN

Re-Volt's genesis roots lie with Modular, the almost infamous lighting company that has been setting tone and trends in the lighting world since the 1980s. Bernard Rommens, son of Modular's founder Paul and former creative director, was responsible there for the proverbial "crazy" designs, stands and campaigns. In 1998, his entrepreneurial blood also ran deep and he set up Rotor: his own agency (because someone had to make those catalogues for Modular...). Since then, Rotor has designed campaigns, stands, websites and interiors for clients such as BMW, Nespresso, Novy, Dierendonck and - of course - Modular.

But, all legacy aside, and as so often in the creative process, the first Re-Volt pieces were unintentionally - and at the same time inevitably - conceived in the context of an interior project by Rotor. "It proved impossible to find a suitable existing product, so we decided to design it ourselves. It was written in the stars that somewhere along the way we would give in to the seductive marriage of our passions: design and lighting" notes Bernard.

The result is Re-Volt, a new member of the Rotor family, which consciously opposes the instant and disposable culture that also seems to have invaded the design world. "This is why we design lighting that (survives)lives, both in terms of design and quality. All parts of our luminaires can be replaced, so they do not end up in the waste at the very first failure."



## SUSTAINABLE

"After all, I myself like it when I can reuse a piece of furniture from a previous generation in my interior," says Bernard with a hint of nostalgia in his voice. "Everything used to be manufactured more in a way to stand the test of time anyway." "And objects that acquire a beautiful patina thanks to their longevity, that has a charm," adds Sofie. "Our Light Machine, for example, can easily take a rough ride and a little dent does not detract at all from its beauty and individuality, quite the contrary."

We try to insert our pieces into our customers' stories as much as possible: sustainability is also in the design and the degree to which it is an extension of our customers' lives and stories. This is why we design lighting that can be highly personified by our clients. Our clients are Re-Volt believers. We also really like working with colour, that's in Re-Volt's DNA, we want to stand out."

## COLLECTION

### The OFFICER collection & the LONG ARMED OFFICER collection

The Officer, Re-Volt's first product, is a lighting luminaire that can be either desktop or wall-mounted. The Officer comes in two different lengths and five different colours with the customer having the option to choose an interior finish in gold or white, and thus more or less light warmth.

The height is mechanically adjustable. Each product is carefully assembled by hand and individually numbered in our workshop in Belgium.

### The LIGHT MACHINE collection

A 'small' piece of machinery inspired by a mix of film set lighting, army jerry cans and mechanical details.

### The MISTER-T collection

Mr T brings back some good vibes from the analogue era using the famous R80 glass lamp. The R80 lamp was commonly used in many lighting fixtures from the 1970s.

Mr. T is available in 4 colours and of course ... a chrome-plated version.

### The MARVIN collection

Re-Volt's latest bedside lamp is called Marvin.

A kind of tribute to Mr. Marvin Gaye who wrote 'Sexual Healing' while living in Ostend. Set the intensity switch to its maximum and it will surely create the mood for some 'Sexual Healing' if needed.... Available in 4 colours and with an integrated usb charger. Soon the Marvin will also be released on a stand.

### The RADIEUX collection

No-nonsense, simple, well-made and pure in 4 lengths.

Discover these lighting collections on the Re-Volt website and you will certainly see the light to make your choice.



### AWARD

The Henry van de Velde Awards showcase and laud Flemish designers, companies, products, projects, services and systems that cleverly use design to have a positive impact on society, the environment and the economy. Re-Volt received the Gold copy of this prestigious, the most important, design award in 2020.

### PHILOSOPHY

Re-Volt's ingenious spirits believe that only what is not real is ultimately disposable, and maybe there is enough of that anyway? Instead, Re-Volt believes that beauty, as an expression of reality, never tires and becomes more beautiful over time. Re-Volt believes that the more you invest in something, the more valuable it becomes. Re-Volt prefers the kind of slow that stays and increases time to the fast that fades.

It is not only in design and quality that Re-Volt sets itself apart from the status quo. An almost poetic mission statement infuses the Re-Volt team, their products, approach, communication and customer contact. And it gives away style, depth and the characteristic angle we have already mentioned. "We treasure cycles more than lines. Poetry more than prose. Authenticity more than pose."

"So we invest time, creativity and truth in the objects we create and we think it shows. In the same spirit, we let our customers invest in the objects they buy, personalising them, repairing them when they are broken instead of throwing them away, passing them on, repositioning them and revisiting them.

We believe that too much change masks emptiness and in the end only what remains is interesting."

### INTERNATIONAL

"We are aware that we do not make 'main stream' products hence our interest in the larger international market . For example, we notice that our Mister-T is getting more and more international attention, really worldwide, the US , Brazil, Japan... We are also participating in Maison & Object in Paris this year. In February 2023 we will be at the Furniture & Light Fair in Stockholm," Bernard and Sofie conclude.

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SCAN TO SEE  
OUR PORTUGAL  
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# NOTERMAN FASHION OFFERS SUSTAINABLE TOP QUALITY

“WITH OUR TROUSERS, WE WANT TO  
MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE”

Atelier Noterman is a top brand in the segment of quality trousers for men. But there is also the concern for society and the climate. It is a story of sustainability, connection and transparency.

Text: Hilde Pauwels - Pictures: Atelier Noterman



I hope we can with Atelier Noterman  
to make the world a little more beautiful.  
A glittering snowflake on one  
immeasurable snow field.

Noterman Fashion is an SME, anchored for three generations in the beautiful Flemish Ardennes. Making quality good trousers is their core business. Their range includes chino, denim and city wear. Wouter Noterman focuses on the company's strategy, but also on designing the collection. He is not a designer, he readily admits, but he knows the market inside out. Staff member Christophe is in charge of sales; he catches a lot of information, which provides a lot of feedback. "I also steal with my eyes, I like to observe. To make a difference, a lot of subtle details are important. We bring a new collection every season, but still remain recognisable."

### FINGERSPITZENGEFÜHL

Wouter Noterman indicates that colours are very important. A new colour at Noterman Fashion is lavender. "We know we cannot attract the general public with that, but we dare to do it. The choice of fabrics is also very important. I have already seen thousands of fabrics reviewed and sometimes you can hardly tell the difference. It's all about fingerspitzengefühl to make the right choice. We build on what is already there and take trends into account. Less is more: we don't bring a collection of hundreds of types of trousers, an overkill is really not necessary. We aim for an excellent fit that is 'the perfect fit' for a lot of customers."



### SUSTAINABILITY AS A CHALLENGE

"We are increasingly emphatic about sustainability. You come across the term everywhere, but putting our money where our mouth is is not always obvious. You sometimes hear from critics that we should take certain steps, but it has to be technically and economically possible. Also, everyone has to be inclined towards the story. If consumers can choose between two equivalent products, one of which is sustainable and a bit more expensive, they usually still choose the cheaper offer. There is still work to do to make them understand the importance of sustainability. But we are going for it and want to bring our customers into our story."

### MATERIALS

Noterman Fashion brings quality. That means their trousers have a long lifespan, which is also a sustainable aspect. "What is quality anyway? A pair of jeans should look washed. But if you don't industrially wash them, they would be much stronger. Raw denim was the material used for trousers for miners. Only after five years did they get the look we see now in new trousers."

The supplier of jeans is Candiani in Italy. The denim is a detox denim, meaning it uses hardly any chemicals and much less water. Ozone technology mimics sunlight to give the fabric a washed look. This also uses less energy and less water. "Now we are also starting with techniques like fibre recycling. This is especially possible with denim because the fibres are slightly thicker. With a fine fabric, like for chino trousers, recycling fibres is still very difficult. For the summer collection, we use a lot of Lyocell, a fabric made from wood pulp. No bleaching agents are used, almost all the water needed for production is reused. It is a cotton substitute of perfect quality." The trousers are produced in two workshops in Portugal and, at the hands of 'May plastic-free', paper is now used for packaging instead of plastic.

### SELECTING SUPPLIERS CAREFULLY

Noterman Fashion chooses suppliers very consciously. The business owners really want to know how they work and what their story is. They used to buy buttons from a German manufacturer. It turned out they were made in Turkey, China or other low-wage countries. "We didn't want that anymore. Now we buy them from a Portuguese manufacturer. It is located ten kilometres from our workshops, which is ideal. We have to try extra hard to get them as fashionable, but we know where they come from and that's what matters to us. Striving for sustainability means constantly having to make a choice." Surely Wouter Noterman describes himself somewhat as an idealist, not an activist although he understands that because they send strong signals. "We want to reach a wide audience with our sustainable story. So I will not glue myself to a painting with one of our trousers. But as entrepreneurs, we want to make an impact and make the world a little bit better."

### OWN WAY

It is in the company's dna to avoid waste, to respect the environment. For the business managers, it is the obvious thing to do, but in recent years it became an emphatic choice. "I don't hesitate to





talk about this with our suppliers too. We are a small player, they will not develop a new fabric for us. I do feel that by constantly hammering on about how we see it, they too understand that things have to be different. There are a lot of connections involved. I myself am convinced that a small SME can work more authentically. We are not listed on the stock market and have no shareholders. That means we have to take less into account and can go our own way more. I only want to do things I feel good about and fully support.”

### CONNECTION

Wouter Noterman emphasises that sustainability is not only about materials, but also about how you negotiate, how you deal with people. It comes down to corporate social responsibility with a focus on people, planet and profit. “If everyone wants to get the most out of it, nothing will change. Then it makes no difference whether it is organic cotton or regular cotton.” There is also a strong commitment to employees in Portugal. This is much appreciated. “We make sure we have a good contact. It almost became family. They not only make trousers for us, but also mean a lot. We visit them regularly to hear how they are doing. At the end of the year, we give everyone a box of chocolates. It’s a small gesture to express our satisfaction. I also think it is important that they get a decent wage and that the working atmosphere is good. That seems like the obvious itself and yet it still isn’t.”

### TRANSPARENCY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

In the textile sector, prices and quality vary widely. It goes from spotty cheap to very expensive. In both cases, production sometimes takes place in countries where working conditions are very poor. This is where Noterman Fashion resolutely fits in. “Our very first starting point remains that we want to make beautiful products that customers are happy with. We have our own place in the trouser world because of our strong story. If you make sustainable choices, that has implications for the cost structure. As a result, our trousers are certainly not the cheapest you can find, but we make a difference in many other areas and that appeals to a lot of customers.”

Wouter Noterman is fascinated by the economic system, he immediately raises the question of where he wants the company to go in the future and what he still wants to achieve. An important dimension is working transparently. He shows a board on which a miniature pair of jeans hangs. With each component, such as the yarn or the buttons, there is a card with its origin and technical aspects. There are quite a few, because making a pair of jeans involves a lot. “I want to tell customers which ‘ingredients’ we use and also tell them why we choose them,” he says.

### LESS GLUTTONY

Wouter Noterman refers to the slogan ‘being good is not a gift’. By this it is meant that you should not let people walk all over you, but

for him 'being good' rather means being reasonable and he does think that is an incredible gift. "There are eight billion of us, with a few billion more to come. There is enough for everyone. The condition, however, is that the gluttony of the system is reversed. Even though I am an entrepreneur who has to consider the financial aspect, I find the way some multinationals operate irresponsible. Everything is geared towards endless consumption and that is unsustainable in the long run."

### **FAMILY BUSINESS PUR SANG**

Now the third generation of Noterman is at work. Etienne Noterman founded the company in 1946, a difficult period after the war. Notebooks survived from that time. This is how we know that an overall cost 63 francs then, which is about 1.5 euros today. In the 1960s, his sons entered the business. One of them is Johan Noterman. He can tell fascinatingly about how it all started. "My mother was a tailor. My father studied at university, but the war threw a spanner in the works. They decided to make clothes for the Alsico company in Ronse. First it was about overalls, later work trousers were added. My father had a good friend in Avelgem who

owned a large clothes shop. He asked him to make trousers for him. There was no workshop yet, he worked in a small concrete room. He expanded with another 'shed', then another. Everything was cut there. Every day we brought a pile to the 30 home workers who sewed everything together. That was in the 1950s. We also made a lot of trousers for the Jewish community in Brussels." Wouter Noterman explains how in the early years there was already a focus on sustainability *avant la lettre*. Nothing was allowed to go to waste. Shorts were made from leftovers fabric. At that time, sustainability simply stood for frugality.

### **STRONG BOND**

Today, Johan Noterman's sons work in the company: Wouter, Willem and Frank. Willem focuses mainly on production, Wouter on strategy and developing the collection and Frank takes care of deliveries. Working as a family is very nice, say Wouter and Willem Noterman. There is the drive to be fully and unconditionally engaged in the business. "We are a tandem and work well together. If that works, you can multiply the energy and drive by a factor of three."

### **BEAUTY**

Wouter Noterman grew up in the business, so to speak. He started working there with great pleasure. "You have to enjoy doing something like this, otherwise it doesn't work out. Now, I did have periods when I wondered whether this was the life I wanted. Everyone goes through something like that from time to time, I think. I find the road we are on now very fascinating. Actually, the question is: can we make the world a better place by producing trousers? For me, it's about creating beauty. Trousers have to be beautiful on the outside, that's obvious. Even more important, all-encompassing, is the beauty we don't see! The invisible beauty in the form of sustainable, conscious and conscientious choices to make (or have made) those trousers. Not just any fabric, not just any button, not just any atelier, not just any laundry. Every choice matters. How can you achieve an economy with less inequality? This fascinates me enormously. I have tried to capture this in one image and two sentences: "I hope that with Atelier Noterman we can make the world just a little bit more beautiful. A shimmering snowflake on an immeasurable snowfield..."

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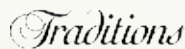
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