

# WORK

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# THE CHEESE WHISPERER

Willi Schmid “understands milk  
and thinks like a cheese” and people rave  
about his delicate wheels





# Häcker

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Looking to the future optimistically: Häcker Managing Director Markus Sander

## Dear Readers,

Here at Häcker, we have a plan for how we want to move forward in the future. We want to start by establishing Häcker as a strong and design-oriented brand in the USA. This is why we opened our new US headquarters, complete with its own showroom, in Miami. Häcker now stands for high-quality “kitchen. german.made” in the USA too. The reactions to this new site were fantastic (Page 6).

In April, we attended the world’s largest kitchen trade fair, EuroCucina in Milan. With our impressive booth, we showed guests how Häcker has developed over the past year. Our focus is on designing and planning for customers in various countries (Page 7).

Häcker is internationally oriented but still remains a family company. This offers a major advantage. We can decide what is right for us and how we want to equip ourselves for the future. The world of kitchens is changing constantly. We want to offer some stability. We do not follow every single trend but we are constantly renewing ourselves, whether it is in production or in design.

Together with our suppliers, such as natural-stone experts Schwanekamp, we develop innovative worktops (Page 14) to show that our kitchen furniture can be practical as well as beautiful.

The NCS colour system that we use with our systemat range allows you to stylishly add some colour to your kitchen and living areas (Page 30). And if you do not want to have your entire kitchen in a colour, you can always add accents with innovative tiles (Page 20).

For the upcoming in-house exhibition in autumn, we are preparing a lot of surprises for our systemat range. Remember to put the date in your diaries: 21st to 27th September 2024.

Once again, we are looking to the future with foresight and optimism. We are well prepared and look forward to continuing this journey together with you.

Warm Regards,

You can find more information at:  
[haecker-kuechen.com/en](https://haecker-kuechen.com/en)







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NATURE  
HELPS BUILD  
Organic materials  
could revolutionise  
the construction  
industry.



THE MAN WHO THINKS  
LIKE A CHEESE  
Willi Schmid from the  
Toggenburg Valley is one of the best  
cheesemakers in the world. WORK  
sat down with him to find out what  
makes his cheese so delicious.

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Photos: MARKUS ALTMANN/GETTY IMAGES, STUDIO GDB, HÄCKER KÜCHEN, CHRISTIAN GRUND, MAJID MOUSSAVI, ISTOCK, BRIGIDA GONZALEZ, CUTIPOL

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FINE FOOD  
With the right cutlery, like the ones from Cutipol for example (photo), a good meal can taste even better.







**HÄCKER HAS SPENT** a lot of time finding the right place for their first showroom in the USA, and they have finally hit the jackpot. Future trainee kitchen studio consultants, project developers and installers will find the new Häcker Kitchen North America headquarters in Doral, just next to Miami International Airport, in South Florida.

Häcker USA President Andreas Gommeringer invited guests from the spheres of politics and business alongside customers, suppliers, designers and the press to attend the grand opening on the 9th of November 2023. “Here in Miami, we are in a central location and so are easy to reach for our customers and other people interested in seeing what Häcker has to offer,” explains Andreas Gommeringer. “We are thrilled that we can now offer the timeless beauty, innovative design and unique customisation

**A KITCHEN FOR MIAMI**  
US customers can now see Häcker kitchens for themselves in the new showroom.

options of Häcker kitchens on this side of the Atlantic.” Häcker already has an excellent reputation in the USA for outstanding quality, functionality, durability and design.

As a high point of the grand opening, Bob Aungst, the favourite chef of many American celebrities, wowed guests with flavour explosions created using steam. Whether it was lettuce leaves or ice cream, everything was steamed with smoke.

The new showroom offers plenty of space for consulting and training. It has six kitchens, a utility room, a meeting area with a wide range of front, handle and worktop samples, an installation and storage area and an office for the team.

After attending the opening, the team from Germany and Managing Director Markus Sander headed off on a small US tour. One of their stops was the Old Castle design centre in Atlanta, where they were struck by some of the peculiarities of the American market. VIP customers like to order kitchens that come with an additional prep/butler’s kitchen, a smaller kitchen which they use to prepare and actually cook their food, which means that their actual kitchen is more or less just for show. In America, things are always a little different – and much bigger.

## Häcker goes USA

With the new showroom in Miami, Häcker now has a permanent site in North America.



**STARTING SHOT**  
Claudio Riedi (German American Business Chamber), Managing Director Markus Sander and Häcker USA President Andreas Gommeringer open Häcker’s new headquarters.

Photos: HÄCKER KÜCHEN



**ELEGANT AND TRANSPARENT**  
In line with the motto “Pure Inspiration”, at this year’s edition of EuroCucina Hacker’s booth featured seven exclusive kitchen and interior designs, as well as a lounge area for talking shop.

A

## Where trends are born

EuroCucina, the trade fair for innovation and design in the kitchen world which is held in Milan every two years, is a unique source of inspiration.

t the major international industry event in April, Häcker presented seven exclusive kitchen and interior designs – and the interest shown by visitors was considerable. Even from outside, the booth attracted a lot of attention with its façade made from a delicate metal branch pattern which allowed people outside the booth to see in and people inside the booth to see out.

Inspired by the motto “Pure Inspiration”, Häcker used the booth to show some stunning, contemporary furniture solutions, including their new interior design range in “Black Chrome”. The black, reflective surfaces gave the interior a unique and exclusive feel. The grooved veneer of the handleless systemat AV 6023-GL kitchen in elegant oak with gold channel handles paired with a “moving table” worktop made from “Tropical Storm” natural stone clearly demonstrated Häcker’s strong awareness of current trends. The Häcker Milano, an impressive custom-made island solution made from natural stone with an extravagant, five-sided front, also grabbed a lot of visitors’ attention.

Another unusual product presentation was the wine lounge. The natural walnut wood décor of the AV 2041 combined with the popular OneRegal cabinet and integrated glass holder, as well as a well-stocked Miele wine cabinet and fridge, highlighted the variety of different room solutions that Häcker has to offer.

The gallery, with its bar with Smartglas fronts in metallic sand grey, was the perfect place for visitors to sit awhile and a very popular spot for discussions.

At EuroCucina, Häcker placed a particular emphasis on a change that is being seen all over the world: living spaces are becoming smaller and more expensive. Despite this, people still want to show off what they have got. “Small Luxury” is the phrase that inspired Häcker to create their tailored solutions for high-quality living in small spaces. The key to success here is all in the careful planning and selection of high-quality materials, just like the ones that Häcker showed in Milan. Precise solutions that are tailored to the available space mean that we can make optimal use of every last centimetre without losing out on anything in terms of functionality and exclusive design. A minimalist design with clean lines emphasises the elegance of any room and can give the impression of space and tranquillity even in the smallest of kitchens and living rooms.



**ON TREND**  
Visitors loved the avant-garde Häcker Milano polygon-shaped island with its natural stone worktop and the Smart GL fronts in Carbon Metallic.





**PURE CRAFTSMANSHIP**  
The whey is skimmed off (top) and pressed into shape using a mould, like the “millstone”, which has a hole in the middle (centre). The Bergfichte soft cheese is wrapped in spruce bark, which gives it its name, flavour and reddish colour (below).

If there is such a thing as perfect hearing, then there must also be such a thing as a perfect sense of smell and taste. If anyone were to have these skills, it would be cheesemaker Willi Schmid from Lichtensteig in the Toggenburg Valley in Switzerland. WORK paid him a visit.

TEXT: PETER WÜRTH PHOTOS: GAETAN BALLY / KEYSTONE

# THE CHEESE WHISPERER

The place that all cheese-lovers and top chefs are talking about is a simple, modern, functional building sat on a main road. There is a small shop in the front and a larger production area in the back. Anyone who wants to visit has to disinfect their shoes and put on overshoes first. Any cheesemaker worth their salt knows how to manage the complicated interplay between different bacteria and has no use for foreign invaders, regardless of how small they may be. Willi Schmid is a master of this game. Literally.

## Inspired by nature

In 2010, his Jersey Blue won the title of “World’s Best Jersey Cheese” in a competition on the island of Jersey. A journalist from the Financial Times was reporting on the competition and all eyes of the cheese-making world turned to Willi Schmid. Schmid is a modest yet confident man. The son of mountain farmers, he grew up with five siblings and was certain about two things early on in life: “I wanted to live in and work closely with nature. As the second youngest child, I would not inherit my parent’s farm. So I chose to train to be a cheesemaker instead.”

When you work like Schmid, making cheese is a real craft that closely combines work and nature. He uses fresh cow’s, sheep’s, buffalo’s or goat’s milk to create delicacies in a range of flavours, shapes and textures. An artist like Schmid combines the fresh raw milk, which is pumped into his stainless steel tank by his carefully vetted farmers each day from four in the morning, with plants from the surrounding area. “Nature was my playground. I observed it carefully and spent a lot of time learning about it. I have personally tasted every herb that the cows around here eat.”

Schmid loves experimenting with ingredients but would never use something that has not come from the natural environment around him. He only uses milk from



## THE CHEESES AND THEIR MASTER

Even when Willi Schmid “thinks like a cheese”, his wheels often have a mind of their own. Each one is a delicious, unique treat.



“You have to understand  
the milk and  
think like a cheese.”

WILLI SCHMID

carefully selected local farms where he knows the conditions that animals live in, where they graze and where he can even prescribe what the animals should be fed. The milk from each farm is processed separately to create a specific cheese. The outcome depends on the smallest differences, as the man with the golden ear studs explains: “The vegetation on the east side of the valley is completely different from the vegetation on the west side. On the east side, we find drier grasses that result in a warmer aroma with hints of caramel and vanilla. On the west side, however, the plants have a stronger, more aromatic flavour. I usually use the milk from here to make more flavourful soft cheeses and the milk from the east side to make semi-hard and hard cheeses with more subtle flavours.”

To prove to you just how sensitive Schmid’s senses are, he can tell if a cow has been given the wrong food or has been ill just by tasting the milk. “It is a special gift,” explains Schmid. “I developed it accidentally while I was still living at home, simply because I tasted absolutely everything.” As a result of this preoccupation with nature, he also learned that “cheesemaking actually starts in the slurry pit. You have to keep an eye on the vegetation and make sure that you spread manure and slurry on the meadows at the right time. This helps the right plants to grow through stronger. The farmers I work with here understand this.”

An area with a long cheese history

Just like how a terroir is important for wine, soil composition is incredibly important when it comes to making cheese. Toggenburg Valley is one of the wettest places in Switzerland and has heavy clay soils, which store nutrients well. Natural meadows in this area usually have between 50 and 100 different plants per square metre – perfect conditions for the traditional cheesemaking that the region is known for. In the past, local farmers were required to pay a tithe to the Count of Toggenburg in the form of cheese and butter, and the Abbey of Saint Gall was the largest cheesemonger in Switzerland. However, and this is something particular to Switzerland, Swiss cheesemakers have only been able to make their own varieties of cheese since 1997. Before that, the state prescribed which type of cheese could be made from which type of milk.

In 2006, Schmid and his wife Bea opened up their cheese shop, which they christened “Städtlichäsi”, and he quickly created 25 new varieties of cheese including his famous “Mühlstein”, a natural mould cheese which gets its name from its shape as it looks like a millstone with the big hole in the middle. He then invited the top 25 cheese experts in Switzerland to a tasting and found that



THE MAN WHO  
UNDERSTANDS CHEESE  
The milk has to be fresh  
when it arrives, the quality  
and flavour can be impaired  
by long journeys.



CHEESE CARE  
The wheels have to be washed  
and turned regularly so that they  
mature evenly.

him, he explains with a mischievous grin on his face: “It is a blessing and a curse that nothing has ever gone wrong. You have to understand the milk and think like a cheese.” Once, he even agreed to create a special cheese with a chocolate filling for a chef who made the unusual request.

Each year, Schmid (“I want to stand at the tank and make cheese everyday”) and his small team transform 800,000 litres of milk into 100,000 kilos of cheese by hand, as much as an industrial cheesemaker can make in one day. The resourceful cheesemaker largely set up his production with six tanks himself – combining Swiss frugality with the pragmatism of a mountain farmer’s son. His tank sits on scales and only cost a tenth of the usual price. The milk is heated to a maximum of 40 degrees Celsius by a heat exchanger, and Schmid then adds bacteria cultures that he developed himself.

Cheesemaking is a complex process. It is important to work precisely, maintain exact temperatures and ensure optimal pH values. Where other cheesemakers rely on precision measuring devices, all Schmid has to do is take a look at the cheese to work out its pH value. It would not be an overstatement to say that he lives and breathes cheese. He senses, feels, sees, smells and tastes what his cheeses need and how the whey is developing.

The finished cheeses mature in simple rooms with walls made from red clay bricks. They help to create a perfect climate with a constant temperature and moisture level. The wheels must be washed and turned every day by hand before they end up on someone’s plate several weeks later.



ALPINE LIVING IN A COW PARADISE  
The cows that supply the milk for Willi Schmid’s cheeses graze in local natural meadows that are full of different species of plants. Online orders can only be placed from and to Switzerland, In Germany, you can find Willi Schmid’s cheese on some weekly market stalls, such as the “Jamei Laibspeis” stalls.

Swiss filmmaker  
Myriam Zumbühl has  
made a documentary  
all about Willi Schmid  
entitled “Master of  
Cheese” that can be  
booked for screenings.  
You can check out  
the trailer here:

[hklnk.de/  
the-cheese-whisperer](https://hklnk.de/the-cheese-whisperer)







1

# From hand to mouth

Food is best enjoyed hot. And it tastes even better when eaten at a beautifully set table. WORK is here to share what matters when picking out cutlery.

**K**nives, forks and spoons are what come closest to our bodies when we eat. Despite this, we pay surprisingly little attention to what we put in our mouth. Good-quality, beautiful and functional cutlery can turn any meal into a special occasion. And who would know better than someone that has spent years picking out cutlery for Michelin-starred restaurants, inspecting it, testing its functionality and observing how guests handle and react to it?

Markus Klaas has been working as a manager in top restaurants for many years now. So, what exactly makes cutlery good or bad? “Cutlery is something that we use every day. Lots of cutlery is simply over the top. Good cutlery should have a good shape, feel nice and should not try to be anything more than

it is. It also needs to be resistant and durable as it is used and cleaned every day.”

Anyone who sees cutlery being used several times a day, as restaurant professionals do, quickly notices when it is not really functional. “For example, knives and forks that are not correctly balanced fall off plates when they are being cleared,” explains Markus Klaas. “Waiters hate this.”

## Less is more

Often, hosts want to impress with a range of different pieces of cutlery for different dishes – an approach that does not really make sense to Klaas. “Too many pieces of cutlery on the table take up too much space. Even at Brothers, we have no more than standard appetiser cutlery – a knife that is not too long, a fork and a spoon – plus a sharp steak

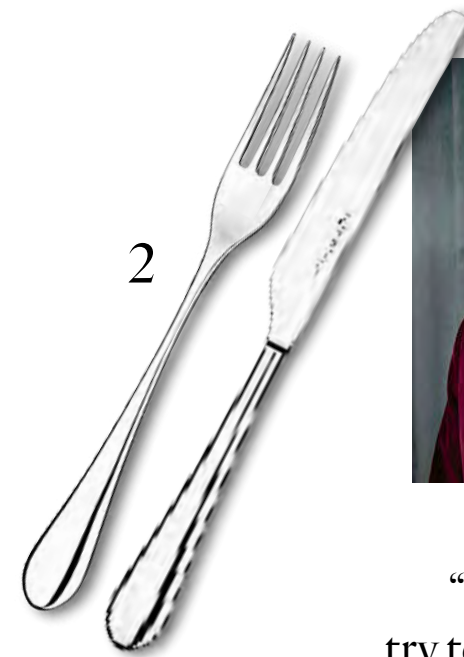
**1 METROPOLITAN SOLID SILVER CUTLERY**  
Robbe & Berking offer great products but they are not really suitable for everyday use.  
[robbeberking.com](http://robbeberking.com)

**2 MULBERRY CUTLERY**  
This range from Studio William is simply stunning and extremely stable.  
[studiowilliam.com](http://studiowilliam.com)

**3 GOA CUTLERY**  
The cutlery from Cutipol is aesthetic, unbreakable and worth every penny.  
[www.cutipol.pt](http://www.cutipol.pt)

**4 SWISS MODERN TABLE CUTLERY SET**  
The knives from Victorinox are sharp and the rest of their cutlery is practical and durable.  
[www.victorinox.com/](http://www.victorinox.com/)

Photos: IRINA BOJSTOCKY, DIMI KATSAVARIS, ROBBE BERKING, VICTORINOX, STUDIO WILLIAM



**PROFESSIONAL HOST**  
Markus Klaas and his twin brother, sommelier Tobias Klaas, run the restaurant “Brothers” in Munich together with chef Daniel Bodamer. Klaas has also worked with Michelin-starred chefs like Tohru Nakamura and was even named “Host of the Year” by “Feinschmecker” in 2019.

“Good cutlery should not try to be anything more than it is.”  
**MARKUS KLAAS**

knife with a serrated blade. To be honest, you do not really even need a steak knife to cut through the tender meat we serve. Why should diners at home need more than this?”

Lots of people inherit valuable silver cutlery that spends most of its time sat in a drawer waiting to be used – but still needs to be polished regularly. What does Klaas recommend doing with treasures like these? “When I go to a friend’s house to eat and they get the ‘good’ 925 silverware from Robbe & Berking out, I think that it is great. But it does not really make sense to use them every day.”

So can cheaper cutlery do the job? For Klaas, a set of cutlery from Victorinox (the creators of the legendary Swiss pocket knife) is perfect for home use. “The knives are nice and sharp and the handles are made from plastic, so they do not need polishing and last forever.”

When he worked at Tohru Nakamura’s “Schreiberei”, he opted for elegant, modern, designer cutlery with durable resin handles from Cutipol in Portugal. “This cutlery is stunning, unbreakable and worth every penny – no wonder that it has been replicated a million times,” says Klaas. He also thinks highly of the Mulberry range from Studio William in London. “They are the most beautiful knives and forks that I have ever seen and are also incredibly stable.”

For professionals, it is important to think about which cutlery best fits their needs. “Very few people put a lot of thought into their cutlery. Simple, well-balanced spoons, knives and forks with a handle that is not too heavy are the best for a perfect dinner. They will make any meal taste even better.”





# Speaking stones

After lying hidden in the mountains for millions of years, large blocks are cut out of the rock and transformed into elegant worktops. Their story lives on in the natural stones.

Photo: MARKUS ALTMANN / GETTY IMAGES



“Customers can feel the coolness and high quality that only natural stone can provide.”  
STEFANIE SCHWANEKAMP

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hen visiting the warehouse belonging to SchwaneKamp in Gescher, North Rhine-Westphalia, you can see rows and rows of “Silver Paradiso”, “Tropical Storm”, “Breccia Imperiale”, “Louise Blue” and “Macaibas Giotto” stone stacked up. The 11-millimetre-thick natural stone panels have certainly had a long journey. They come from quarries in Brazil, South Africa, Austria, Italy and, last but not least, Germany. Our planet is covered in a rock crust that is between 10 and 35 kilometres thick. The oceans and continents sit on top of this crust. These rock masses are the result of a cooling of the earth’s crust that happened between 500 and 800 million years ago. Minerals form the basis for the different stones when subjected to influences like pressure and heat. Quartzite and granite are very diverse in terms of their colour and structure, and they are acid, scratch and stain-resistant. These robust characteristics make them a much sought after material for kitchen worktops. At the moment, colourful stone is very popular. One thing all the different types of stone have in common is that they are naturally pure, authentic witnesses to the earth’s history – and absolutely unique.

In quarries, they are brought out into the light of day after million of years underground. Large blocks of rock are cut out either using diamond wire saw ropes or hundreds of drilled holes. You can still see the cutting marks and drilled holes when they reach the warehouse. The blocks, which weigh several tonnes, measure two by three by two metres when they start their journey to the special processors in Italy. They are then cut into panels before being sent on to Gescher.

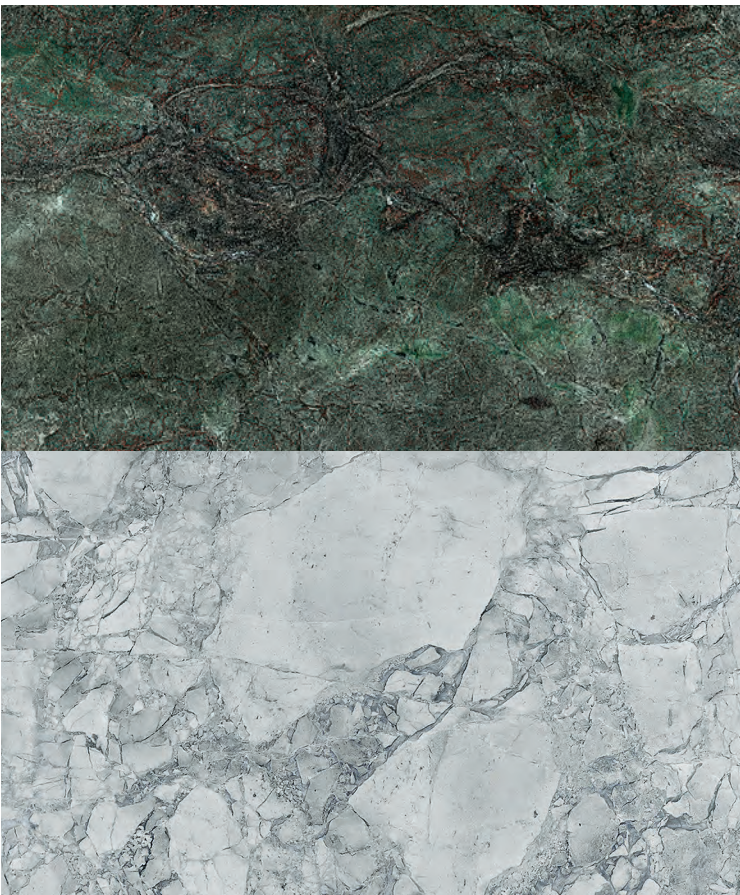
Materials that evoke emotions

Natural stone worktops are very popular at the moment. Due to their uniqueness, history and unusual appearance, they are inimitable. This is perfect for today’s consumers, as individuality and authenticity are in particularly high demand. As Jan SchwaneKamp puts it: “The stone speaks

to you. It tells a story that began over 350 million years ago. There was once a finished stone. The earth moved it, it broke apart and the lava that flowed out brought it back together. And then someone came along and cut chunks of it out of the mountain. We truly do associate emotions with lots of these types of materials.”

“People really feel that,” adds his sister Stefanie. “Often when customers come to the kitchen studio when there is a natural stone worktop on show, they make a beeline straight to it. They can feel the high quality of the material, the unique look that only nature can provide.” Each natural stone worktop is a completely unique piece. Aesthetically, they offer virtually endless variety.

SchwaneKamp, Häcker’s supplier for worktops made from natural stone, granite, quartzite, serpentinite and phyllite, is based in Gescher near the Dutch border. They also manufacture a wide range of ceramic and quartz composite worktops for Häcker. Parents Walter and Elisabeth, their children Stefanie and Jan and their team have sixty years of experience in selecting and working



EXPERTS IN THE FACTORY

- 1 When lifted with suction cups, it becomes clear how surprisingly elastic the 11-millimetre panels are.
- 2 The panels are either cut with a very fine jet of water or diamond cutting tools.
- 3 Up to 75 panels can be cut from a single block of stone. Only panels from the same block of rock are processed together.
- 4 A raw panel on its way to being cut.

Photos: SCHWANEKAMP



“You have to have an eye and a  
knack for the stone and how to work it.”  
JAN SCHWANEKAMP



relatively industrially here, our team still has the same passion for detail and respect for the stone and craftsmanship. You need to have an eye and a knack for the stone and its processing and a feeling that what you are doing is working.”

The panels are given a substructure made from galvanised steel tubes and moisture-resistant wooden cross ribs that can be screwed, making them significantly more stable than the massive stone panels would be on their own. With the worktops, all the necessary cut-outs for sinks and other appliances are already done to industry standards. Schwanekamp can also manufacture sinks made from exactly the same material as the worktop by hand.

The advantages of this are enormous: significantly less natural stone is used and much more can be fit onto the lorries from Italy. The finished worktops are significantly lighter, easier to transport to the customers and – most importantly – can be adjusted and installed by the installers at the same time as the other kitchen furniture. “When they are only 11 millimetres thick, the installers can work on the panels on site as long as they have the right tools,” explains Stefanie Schwanekamp. This means that the installers do not have to go back and forth two or three times and that the kitchens can be ready straight away. This saves an enormous amount of time and ensures a high degree of customer satisfaction.

Just like Häcker’s kitchens, the worktops are made on an individual basis. The experienced production specialists adapt – and this is particularly important with well-structured natural stones – each individual piece by hand to create perfect worktops. The individual panels, no matter how complicated they are with moving parts or large cutouts for cooktops, are precisely fitted together in the factory. They are then taken apart again and delivered and installed at the same time as the rest of the kitchen. This way, the installers can be sure that everything fits together perfectly and that they can put the panels together as precisely as possible and with as few screw connections as possible.

End customers (and kitchen consultants) can benefit from that fact that the Schwanekamp worktops are fully integrated in Häcker’s ordering system and so can be sure that they will get the worktop that they have always dreamt of. Regardless of whether you opt for matt black “Nero Assoluto”, “Mont Blanc Quartzite”, “matrix-cut” quartzite that is gentle on the hands, black-green “Black Musk” with shimmering gold veins or “Tropical Storm”, the worktops all have one thing in common: they are wonderful, natural, one-off pieces.

PERFECTLY PROCESSED

For the Schwanekamp team, exquisite craftsmanship is the be all and end all when they are putting together entire worktops. The sub-structure under the 11-millimetre-thick natural stone provides additional stability and makes the processing significantly easier (top). You can see the result in the photograph on the right: a Häcker kitchen from the systemat range with a natural stone worktop in “Nero Assoluto” and an island in eucalyptus.

with natural stone. They often visit quarries themselves or even select specific blocks from processors near Verona that fit into their extensive range. Sometimes, they even go as far as to pick out a certain piece of rock for a certain order.

Häcker offers nearly two dozen different types of natural stone for worktops from Schwanekamp. Kitchen studios tend to display a few samples to pick from, but if someone wants to see “their” exact worktop, they can have a bespoke picture sent to them showing the entire piece of stone. Some customers even come to Gescher themselves to see their worktop before it is fully finished. After all, a small sample is just a sample.

Simplifying the system

In the past, kitchen studios would have natural stone worktops made by a local stonemason. Schwanekamp has developed a special system that makes everything much easier for all parties involved in purchasing a kitchen.

They have their natural stone panels cut to a thickness of just 11 millimetres in Verona. This means that instead of the standard 28 panels, they can now get 75 from a single block. These 11-millimetre panels are then cut for the respective kitchen plans with computer-operated water jet systems, and the edges are deburred by hand. As Jan Schwanekamp proudly explains, “There is no machine as precise as our team. Even if we work

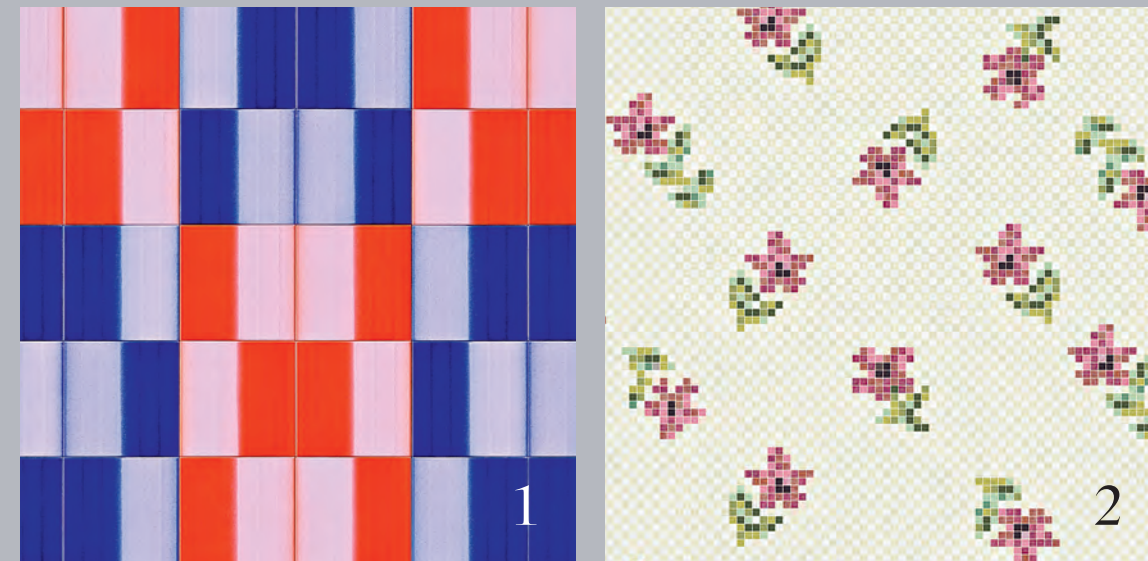


Photos: SCHWANEKAMP, HÄCKER KÜCHEN



# Sophistication on the wall

Individualism, subtle opulence and striking accents are three major trends in interior design right now. They can be combined with another, more classic design element that has recently made a big comeback: tiles.



**T**iles offer undeniable advantages in the kitchen. They are durable, low maintenance and can be tremendously decorative, as the many con-

temporary collections from popular tile designers have proven. Bleak, white tiles that look more at home in a butcher's shop are a thing of the past. The latest generation of tiles can be used to transform kitchen splashbacks into elegant and unique eye-catchers that add additional individual accents to a Häcker kitchen, act as a design feature and give rooms their own character. In addition, glazed tiles reflect light and make kitchens lighter – as can be seen with the rosé metro tiles in the concept130 kitchen on the left.

The choice of tiles is endless and subject to changing aesthetic trends. This means that you can easily give your kitchen a whole new look without going to too much trouble.

Many modern tiles are tiny, colourful and eccentric works of art – you have to be careful when laying them because of their complicat-

ed patterns. WORK has done some research and picked out a few trends and unusual ideas that are very popular at the moment.

## 1 Bold colours, reinterpreted

Some people have had a defiant reaction to the pandemic and the dreariness following constant crises. They long for happiness and eccentricity and want to express this in their homes. In the fashion world, this trend has even been given name: “Dopamine Dressing”. When it comes to tiles, this manifests itself in cheerful colours and striking patterns that boost your mood and make you feel lively, optimistic, playful and happy. Many of today's colourful tiles actually look a lot like traditional handmade tiles but have, in fact, been produced using digital technologies. Each tile appears to be a unique piece full of irregularities which can then be combined with other tiles to create a vivid picture. Masters in this field are Gilles de Brock and Jaap Giesen, two Belgian graphic designers, who create glowing, glazed tiles in enthralling colours in

Photos: HÄCKER KÜCHEN, STUDIO GDB, BISAZZA, MUTINA





3



4



5



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Photos: BAUHAUS AG, CASALGRANDE PADANA, STEULER DESIGN, CLAYHAUS TILE, HÄCKER KÜCHEN

their studio Studio GdB ([studiogdb.nl](http://studiogdb.nl)) that give on-trend stripes another dimension (see photo on Page 21). They are not too dissimilar to the “Diarama” tiles created by Hella Jongerius for Italian tile specialists Mutina ([mutina.it](http://mutina.it)).

2 Floral patterns

In strict, geometric kitchens made up of large sculptural cubes, tiles with floral patterns can bring a nice contrast. A particularly innovative example of this are Bisazza’s “Petit Trianon” glass mosaic tiles that, when carefully laid, create a modern floral pattern ([bisazza.it](http://bisazza.it)).

3 Pearlescent tiles

Small mosaic tiles made from real mother-of-pearl are fixed to tile mats (which makes laying them significantly easier) and give the effect of a shimmering tile mirror. Each tile is a one-off piece and as a whole, they add a refined and unique accent to the kitchen ([bauhaus.info/natursteinmosaik/mosaik-fliese-quadrat-mix-sm-201/p/25914821](http://bauhaus.info/natursteinmosaik/mosaik-fliese-quadrat-mix-sm-201/p/25914821)).

4 Innovative technologies

Technical innovations do not stop at tiles. Thanks to digital printing, we can now add any pattern to tiles and then seal them in permanently with a glaze. You can even get tiles with antibacterial surfaces now. These contain silver ions that kill off up to 99.9 % of bacteria and other microorganisms that are present. In addition, modern tiles with surface finishes in titanium dioxide can purify the air after reacting with oxygen and light. Harmful substances like formaldehyde are broken down and odours neutralised. The photocatalysis process used here is already familiar to us because it is used in the catalytic converters in our cars. These large-format, air-purifying tiles are primarily intended for new builds. One good example of this is the Limpha series created by the Italian company Casalgrande Padana, which

features, quite fittingly, patterns with climbing plants (<https://www.casalgrandepadana.com/product/limpha>).

5 Wallpaper look

If you are bold and looking for a particularly unusual or even eccentric look, you can now opt for bold cross-tile patterns. Just like with certain wallpapers, the motifs of these small works of art are made up of several individual tiles. Not only can they be used to create floral patterns or geometric designs, they even form landscapes or junglescapes like the “Blue Jungle Wonderwall” from Steuler. (<https://www.panariagroup.de/en/steuler-fliesen/kollektion/wonderwall>). Laying these tiles precisely either seamlessly or with only fine joints is an art unto itself.

6 Three-dimensional tiles

In the past, tiles were mostly flat. Now, more structured surfaces are in style. These designs combine aesthetics and haptics. When on the wall, the three-dimensional forms with recesses and reliefs add haptic appeal to single-colour tiles, as can be seen in the “Signal Tile Collection” (left) created by Kristine Morich ([kristinemorich.com](http://kristinemorich.com))



7

or the “Even” tile collection from Panaria Ceramica ([panaria.net/](http://panaria.net/)). New York interior specialist Colin King explains, “Tactile tiles give any surface an organic, handmade feel while offering very subtle contrasts and variations.” A particularly stunning example of this is the small tile puzzle “Micro Multiplem” designed by Mosaicomicro ([nerosicilia.com/mosaicomicro](http://nerosicilia.com/mosaicomicro)). These tiles are actually made from glass powder from old televisions.

7 Kitchen splashbacks

In kitchens, tiles are usually used for low-maintenance and resistant splashbacks behind sinks and cookers. The carefully selected kitchen splashbacks from Häcker fulfil exactly the same function. Not only are they available in the same look and materials as all Häcker worktops, they even come in natural stone, frosted glass with photo-realistic motifs or surfaces that can be written on like a blackboard. When ordered with the kitchen and installed by our team, they can be used to create a stunningly harmonious kitchen. The beauty of this is that recess back panels, whether they are made from tiles or finished splashbacks, are easy to change – so you can easily give your kitchen a fresh, new look.

“Tactile tiles give any surface an organic, handmade feel.”

COLIN KING



# A field full of treasures

The best things often happen all by themselves. All Marko Seibold has to do is discover and collect them. On his leased land just to the south of Bremen, delicious wild herbs and vegetables grow just as nature intended.

TEXT: PETER WÜRTH PHOTOS: RICARDO WIESINGER



**LEAVES  
AND FLOWERS**  
For Marko Seibold, everything that grows in a field is a potential product. “You can eat almost anything, apart from a few herbs that are just too bitter.”

dug up his soil and fed on the fine roots of his plants. Sounds unpleasant, but the process aerated the soils in a natural way, and it never occurred to Seibold to use chemicals to get rid of the small rodents. Instead he preferred to leave the undergrowth around the edge of the field for weasels to hide in, as they are natural predators of mice. Since he has let the mice have free reign, he has also noticed more and more kestrels flying over the field. Some nights, he even hears the “tu-whit tu-whoo” of an owl and has no doubt that the mouse infestation will eventually come to an end naturally. In his experience nature always rebalances itself, and this is especially true for his field.

**The curious gardener**  
Around 20 years ago, Seibold, who originally hails from the Swabian Alb (his accent gives it away), and his wife ended up here in Syke. The landscape is a hilly paradise and Seibold, who actually trained as a communications electrician and then chose to follow an additional special educational training course before ultimately becoming a gardener, was searching for a purpose. The couple moved to a small farm and began looking after physically or mentally handicapped children and young people and then set out to see what else they could do with the surrounding land. They got their hands on some chickens and sheep, and Seibold discovered a field that he could lease just above the farmyard. It was too small for farming but big enough for a curious gardener who “wanted to see

**H**e does not sow anything, yet he has a lot to harvest. Nature itself gifts him his treasure free of charge – all he has to do is leave things to take their natural course. One of the most striking characteristics of this gardener is his unshakable faith in nature and the great serenity that he gets from it. Whatever happens in his field, Marko Seibold is firmly convinced – as the past 20 years have given him reason to be – that everything has purpose and that the best thing that he can do is not interfere. Like this winter, when mice





**EVERYTHING IS DONE BY HAND**

This herb specialist does everything by hand. Only the finest and most perfect leaves and flowers are carefully harvested with a sharp blade. This preserves the plants and ensures that they produce more fresh goods later.

what happened if I didn't do anything. What I noticed next was amusing. Lots and lots of wild plants grew, and I thought to myself: I wonder what they taste like?"

Today, almost 25 years later, he can see what happened on every square metre of land. The ground is covered with small plants. When Seibold bends down, he can spot purslane and watercress, field chervil and ground elder, colourful European field pansies, ground ivy, sweet fennel, mouse-ear chickweed and shepherd's purse. He is always finding something new, "I am constantly surprised by nature's gifts. That is the beauty of my field. There are thousands of plants in each square metre. Nature really uses up every last square inch of space." Over

the years, he occasionally planted something here and there (plants like spring onion or rhubarb, for example) but then he always leaves the plants in peace and watches what they do with their new-found freedom.

With his handy pocket knife, he cuts off a few of the fine leaves and gives them a taste – and what splendid flavours he discovers! A spring onion that is more complex and elegant than any other he has ever eaten, mint, which could be used to make cologne, sweet and delicious peas, a herb with a flavour that is strongly reminiscent of aniseed, wild sorrel, rocket and Helgoland cliff cabbage that tastes hearty and fresh, not at all like the dull cabbage we are used to. Yarrow has also sown itself here ("It has a really lovely flavour") and the geranium plants thrive under the protection of the wild asparagus. Some top chefs order up to 10,000 of the wild sprouts, like field chervil and wood sorrel, each month.

**Nature takes care of everything**

Everything grows where it wants to. Just as it would in most other fields when you leave them alone for 20 years. As Seibold says, "The way that nature works is that ultimately everything takes root everywhere. It just has to be left to do its thing." There is, however, one exception. "When the grass gets too high, we fence off certain areas and send our sheep in," explains Seibold. "We have a good dozen East Frisian milking sheep that we also slaughter when they reach one and a half years old. Our sheep have brown-flecked coats, making them harder for wolves to spot at dusk."

Chefs love Seibold's herbs, which are express-shipped in packages containing 50 leaves or more. They particularly rave about his turnip-rooted chervil and evening primrose roots. "I am always sending out new samples and some chefs call me back straight away. They say 'Oh, that's fantastic', order more straight away and then start experimenting." Some restaurants take up to 20,000 leaves per week.

Seibold works together with a gardener, a student assistant and another helper to carefully select and manually harvest the plants leaf by leaf – even in winter. Some customers go as far as specifying a maximum size for their leaves. Even cutting them is an art form. Seibold makes a small incision in his mildly acidic willowherbs to produce a small, decorative rosette. Chefs absolutely love this.



Photo: MARKO SEIBOLD



**EVERY PART OF THE PLANT**

Marko Seibold's customers are very particular. The top chefs want the freshest produce with the most unusual and strong flavours that bring a unique aesthetic to their dishes. This includes delicate flowers, multicoloured small turnips and rare, fine herbs.

“I wanted to see what would happen if I did nothing. What would happen next? And then later? How would they taste?”

MARKO SEIBOLD



**A TRUE DELIGHT**  
Just a few strands of saffron adorn the risotto at Trattoria Masuelli. The walls are wood-panelled, the stools are originals from the 1920s, and a soft light shines down from the Venini chandeliers designed by Gió Ponti in 1930s.



**S**ometimes perfection can be so simple! A true Risotto alla Milanese does not need fancy mushrooms, mussels or prawns to be delicious.

Risotto rice, onions, oil or butter, stock, saffron, parmesan – everything is added to the pan in the right order, and what may be the easiest holiday dish in the world is ready.

Once a peasant meal, risotto became Italy’s signature dish many years ago. Top chefs no longer shy away from it, with some of them even going so far as to sprinkle it with gold dust. Arborio, Carnaroli or Vialone rice can be used to make a risotto. For Risotto alla Milanese, Carnaroli rice is the preferred choice. It is larger, less sticky, contains slightly more starch than the other varieties and has the most bite. Carnaroli is a cross between Vialone and Lencino rice that “stays hard on the inside but is nice and soft on the outside” when cooked according to the Milanese risotto specialist Andrea Bertone. To him, it is the best risotto rice.

#### A journeyman’s revenge

There are several legends surrounding the creation of “Risotto alla Milanese”. The best story is that of a journeyman who is said to have used saffron to colour the windows of Milan Cathedral but was ridiculed for doing so by his Flemish master Valerio. He wanted revenge and so on the day of Valerio’s daughter’s wedding, he decided to mix some saffron into the risotto served during the wedding meal.

In any case, there were references to Risotto alla Milanese being made at the beginning of the 19th century in cookbooks like “Il nuovo cuoco milanese”, which was published in 1829. The basic principles of

the dish have not changed a bit since then. Onions are sweated in olive oil, butter or – more typically for Risotto alla Milanese – bone marrow, the rice is added and, after a short while, the pan is deglazed with wine (traditionalists use red wine, or leave it out completely, while modernists prefer white wine). Next, fresh and hot vegetable or meat stock is added little by little while the risotto is stirred constantly. The rice should always be covered with liquid. Also, it should always be stirred with a wooden spoon with a hole

in so as not to damage the rice. Strands of saffron are ground in a mortar and then dissolved in stock. This is what gives Risotto alla Milanese its unmistakable golden colour.

#### A perfect wave

The risotto should have a perfectly creamy consistency. When a spoon is stirred through, it should leave a trace that then slowly disappears. Italians call this “l’onda” – the perfect “wave”. Cold butter and grated parmesan is added as a finishing touch. This is an almost solemn act which has even been given a special name: “la mantecatura”.

Risotto is usually classed as a “primo piatto”, a main dish, often served as an accompaniment to meat. Anyone who wants to try a real Risotto alla Milanese cannot go wrong at Trattoria Masuelli, one of the best places for risotto in the world. The Masuelli family has been welcoming guests to this original “Bottega Storica”, which is now run by the fourth generation, since 1921. Andrea Masuelli manages the restaurant and his father Max takes care of the cooking. Even through critics complain about the long waiting times, these are inherent to the restaurant. First of all, risotto is a dish that really has to be prepared at the last minute and secondly, the principles of the slow food movement were devised by Carlo Petrini and his colleagues right here in Trattoria Masuelli.



“Carnaroli rice stays hard on the inside but is soft on the outside. For me, it is absolutely the best risotto rice.”

ANDREA BERTONE

Photos: GNAMBOX, TRATTORIA MASUELLI

## Simple elegance

With Risotto alla Milanese, a few simple ingredients come together to create a heavenly delicacy. You just have to know how to make it.





# White is not a colour

Our emotions and psyche are heavily influenced by colours. For example, certain colours can help you to relax. It is quite fitting that more and more green, blue and red is being included in kitchens – ultimately, it is a room where we want to feel good.



The Dutch were the first to do it. They started the trend of black kitchens, which has stuck around in many countries to this day. But they were also the first to renounce the hype and bring in some colour. Delicate, reserved, elegant shades, not the bold, bright colours you see in the light-flooded kitchens of Southern Europe. Colours like terracotta, eucalyptus and umber. Anyone that visits Häcker's in-house exhibition in Rödinghausen can discover all of these alongside kitchens in cashmere, greige and azure blue. At the last in-house exhibition, Häcker presented the colours amaranth, greige and olive green for the SCALA model from the concept130 range. For decades, there was only one colour used all over the world for kitchens. A colour, that is not really even a colour: white. White brings to mind cleanliness, purity. White is tidy, unambiguous, uncompromising, practical and timeless. Even the tiniest fleck of dirt had no chance of hiding. You knew exactly where you were – in the kitchen, which was a working area separate from the living areas. Even today, six of the top ten concept130 kitchens today are still white. However, with its SCALA model, Häcker offers an entry-level range in a variety of subtle colours. And the PORTO model in eucalyptus is a favourite among customers.

Colours reflect emotions and are important for our psyche. Anyone who spends all their time in all-white rooms can become ill, because their eyes and soul are missing something. When you head to the beach and look out to the horizon over the turquoise ocean, don't you feel more relaxed straight away? We need colour in our lives.

## On-trend green

Colourful doesn't have to mean garish. "At the moment, the trend is for refined dark brown with metals like gold and earthy, natural colours that are not too striking," explains Yvonne Vogler, Häcker-Campus Training Manager and Colour Specialist. "Colours that are in harmony with nature and let you escape from virtual reality. For example, I never thought that green would come back as a trend like it has over the past two years. Green comes in a wide range of tones, like our pastel or eucalyptus shades, for example."

Unlike with fashion, with kitchens and interiors you do not have to worry that the on-trend colour will change quickly and that

# 2000

*The systemat range lets customers choose from shades in the NCS colour system.*

next year, a bold red might be the popular shade. As Vogler learned, "it tends to happen in smaller steps."

You have to learn to be courageous with colour. Look at kitchen studios, for example, which often showcase colourful kitchens and where samples are available in a wide range of hues and shades. "Theoretically, you can get kitchens in any colour. We can offer seven programmes from our systemat range in any NCS or RAL shade. This way, we can meet



## COLOURFUL NOT BRIGHT

The SCALA model from the concept130 range (left) was presented in amaranth. The systemat kitchen below is painted in NCS shades of blue.





everyone’s colour wishes,” explains Vogler. “It has enabled us to fully lean into the trend of kitchen customisation.”

NCS, a scientifically based colour notation system, was introduced as the Swedish national standard for colours in 1979. Today Karl Johan Bertilson, creative director at NCS, is responsible for the further development and new trends. “NCS can be used to explain a few aspects of colour differently,” says Vogler. “With NCS, it has been possible to get men, who would not normally be interested, excited about the topic of kitchen colours. It works so well because NCS approaches colour in a mathematical way that anyone can understand quickly and easily.”

Not everyone perceives colours the same way. If you said “apple green” for example, everyone would imagine something different. NCS offers up over 2000 standard colours that have been mathematically defined. Using a formula, the colours can be precisely determined and nuances can also be taken into account. This means that lighting conditions and surrounding colours can be incorporated in the final colour identification.

**ADDING CONTRAST**

The NCS colour of this systemat kitchen is “NCS S 4040-Y50R”. The kitchen island in crystal white adds a nice contrast (right). The AV 6000 systemat kitchen in olive green has been combined with white tall cabinets (below).



“We can offer seven programmes from our systemat range in any NCS or RAL shade.”

YVONNE VOGLER

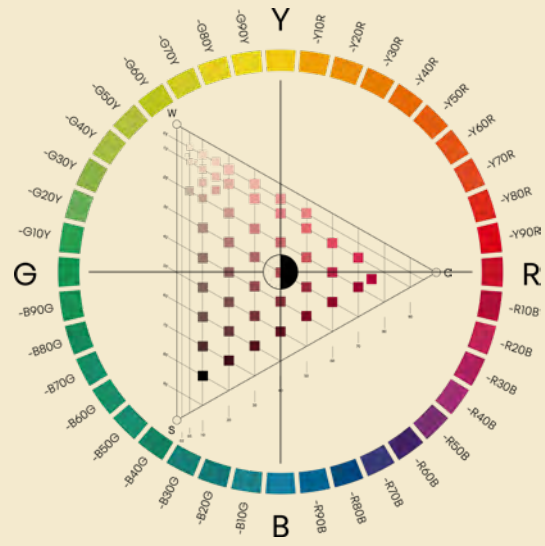
Once the end customer decides on a colour, the paint colour is carefully created based on this information. The free NCS Plus app helps consultants to offer complementary colours and can be used to ensure that the colours always fit together perfectly.

Vogler has another tip: “A Colourpin linked with the app can determine the exact NCS colour of a sample that a customer might bring with them, regardless of whether it is a curtain, tiles, furniture or flooring.”

When it comes to kitchen colours, it often comes down to the nuances. And this is exactly what helps to create a harmonious overall image. A kitchen with fronts painted in NCS S 2005-Y20R instead of white contains – at least according to the formula – 20 per cent black and 5 per cent colour, the latter being a yellow that contains 20 per cent red. “You might then notice that this NCS white looks a lot better with another front colour, wood or decorative element than with standard white,” explains Vogler. “The kitchen appears to be of a higher quality, has a wow effect and the customised paint actually only costs a little more than the standard colour.”

**COLOUR FORMULA**

The Swedish NCS colour system makes it possible to precisely define over 2000 colours and match them with complementary colours. Yvonne Vogler (below) runs the Häcker-Campus and is a colour specialist.



“Lots of people worry about choosing an on-trend colour when investing in something like a kitchen,” explains Vogler. “They think that fashions will change and then they will be stuck with an outdated kitchen for the next 20 years. It can be difficult to convince them that opting for a colour would be good. They often take the easy way out and say: well, we’ll take the kitchen in magnolia but we’ll make the wall, the neighbouring room or the opposite wall bolder. You can also play around with colour on the walls, not just on the fronts. And you can add accents. For example, you can try painting wall cabinets in a different colour to the base units. You can then match them to other elements in the dining or living room.”

**Playing around with colours**

Light plays an important role when using colour. “With NCS we are able to produce colours that are as precise as possible down to the last half per cent, but then it can all be ruined if someone installs poor lighting,” says Vogler. “This issue often starts with the display kitchens. Most do not have natural light and are not optimally lit. As a customer, I want to see the kitchens in the right light. But when it is too dark and there is only artificial light, it can be difficult to differentiate between cashmere and satin, anthracite and a dark blue. And with black, it is really complicated. For colourful kitchens to work, they need good lighting. Colour simply does not work without light. For me, the best kitchen consultations happen at the customer’s home when I can see the space and the lighting conditions and show them the samples in the lighting that they actually have in their kitchen.”



## Digital colour training

**WORK: Häcker has created a new Campus training programme that focuses on colour. Why is this so important?**

**YVONNE VOGLER:** Lots of consultants are afraid to talk about colour. It is completely different to measuring the worktop and putting things together correctly. It is a more emotional subject. You cannot just whip out your RAL or NCS colour charts. This can be really overwhelming for customers.

**How can you help with the Häcker Campus?**

Well, we have put together a great online course on the Campus website. Anyone who takes it will end up knowing everything they need to know about colour. It gives examples and we talk about the origins of colours and the psychological impact that they can have on people. Everything is explained in such a way that it can also be used as arguments to win over customers.

**And what about the practical training courses on site in Rödinghausen?**

We include the same content in our design-oriented kitchen planning training. We spend a lot of time looking at colour trends, we show mood boards and present colour theory. The training course lasts two days and we even introduce participants to the NCS app and Colourpin. This way, they can familiarise themselves with these tools and then use them in their day-to-day work.

**Do you think there will be a lot more colour in kitchens in the future?**

Of course, we know that kitchen sellers do not get customers who want a colourful kitchen every week. But having this expertise and the ability to advise them conveys a feeling of competence that encourages customers to spend more time in the kitchen studio. If they still opt for a white kitchen at the end, I can always give them a few colour suggestions for their wall. They walk out inspired, and I get a sale.

You can find more information at: [haecker-kuechen.com/en/campus](https://haecker-kuechen.com/en/campus)



Photos: HÄCKER KÜCHEN, NCS COLOUR



# Sinks in the spotlight

When it comes to kitchen planning, sinks and taps often play a supporting role. With a new series of contemporary designer sinks and matching taps, Blaupunkt hopes to bring these elements back into the spotlight.



**INNOVATION  
AND DESIGN**  
The Dark Grey sink  
and chrome tap  
form a perfectly  
matching unit.

Photo: HACKER KÜCHEN

“Blaupunkt places great value on innovative technology and modern, contemporary design.”

OLAF THULEWEIT

# F

ronts, handles, tall cabinets and worktops often take the limelight during kitchen planning. Samples are compared, colours and types of wood discussed, organisation systems created and the perfect electrical appliances picked out. Planners and customers only really think about sinks and taps right at the very end – as if they are insignificant additions to the actual kitchen. However, no handle is used quite as much as tap handles, and sinks are an important workstation.

Sinks and taps are important elements in the harmonious overall design of a kitchen. They are frequently the focus of attention and use. A functional and aesthetic tap and a large, perfectly integrated sink add design accents and can make a new kitchen perfect.

## Black, grey and chrome

To round off the overall look of your kitchen, Blaupunkt offers a range of contemporary sinks in black and two shades of grey along with taps in matt black and chrome. They fit in perfectly with black or grey but stand out thanks to their first-class surface characteristics, like high scratch- and heat-resistance, colour-fastness and the fact that they are safe for food, easy to maintain and durable. All Blaupunkt sinks are made from a robust quartz composite. It consists of 80 per cent

natural quartz sand, the hardest component of granite, combined with up to 20 per cent acrylic resin. Something that is worth mentioning and proves that Blaupunkt really believes in their products: the sinks have a five-year guarantee, which is quite unusual.

The “Iseo” and “Maira” sinks are available in Black Matt, “Alento” and “Tesino” come in Black Granit, Dark Grey and Light Grey. For a perfect finishing touch, the “Nera” tap comes in an on-trend matching black matt finish. Like the chrome version “Croma”, it is available either with a fixed or pull-out spout.

With the new built-in sinks and taps, Blaupunkt is able to meet the wishes and requirements of their customers. “Alongside sustainability, this is always the driving force behind our innovations,” explains Olaf Thuleweit, Managing Director of HK Appliances. “Our product development is primarily oriented towards ensuring that our products are practical for our customers to use. Not only does Blaupunkt place great importance on innovative technology, they also focus on modern, contemporary design.” This is clear to see with the new sinks and taps.

You can  
find more  
information at:  
[hklnk.de/  
sinks-in-the-spotlight](https://hklnk.de/sinks-in-the-spotlight)





# In the right light



**ENLIGHTENED**  
Lighting expert Ulrike Brandi has already put many major projects in the right light. Light and its effects are her passion.

No-one knows the effects of light better than Ulrike Brandi. The Hamburg-born lighting planner has taken care of many international projects over the course of her career. In this issue of WORK, she tells us all about how to put your kitchen in the right light.

INTERVIEW: PETER WÜRTH PHOTOS: MAJID MOUSSAVI

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risp green vegetables, juicy red tomatoes, shimmering silvery fish – as the old adage goes, “you eat with your eyes”. Really fresh ingredients can look incredibly appetising on the worktop or kitchen island as long as the lighting is right. However, if the lighting has been poorly designed, the colours can look undefined and muddy, it can be hard to spot small bones, you can create shadows and any kitchen magic evaporates under harsh neon lights. The right lighting in a kitchen is a – somewhat neglected – art form. This is why WORK sat down with Ulrike Brandi, the world’s best-known and most experienced lighting planner, to find out how to perfectly light a kitchen.

**WORK: Ulrike Brandi, what matters when it comes to getting the right light in a kitchen?**

**BRANDI:** The first and most important question you have to ask is: where is the window, where does the natural light come from? I would always put my worktop in this light. Maybe also a little table for cosy breakfasts with your other half in the morning. These two elements should always be as close to the natural light source as possible. This way, you can also always enjoy a – hopefully beautiful – view outside when working in the kitchen and when eating your breakfast.

**So the natural light is always the starting point for you?**

Yes, every lighting concept starts with the room and its position with regards to natural light. If we are lucky, we get to work with architects early on and the client says that they want to work around the natural light that their building gets. Then we can have some influence. I once worked with an architect who actually changed the location of a restaurant in a hotel in his ground plan. He wanted the restaurant to be oriented east and I pointed out that anyone eating breakfast in the restaurant would not stay for long. The best orientation for a restaurant is towards the west so that diners can watch the sunset. I thought it was fantastic that he listened to what I had to say.

**Does this principle apply to private homes and apartments, too?**

Of course. I advise all self builders to think about their lighting early on while they are still in the planning stages. Lighting is not simply about installing a light here or there. You have to start with the natural light. How does it behave in the space? How far into the space does it reach? What kind of mood do I get from the room? In some places, you even have to ask yourself: where should I block out the natural light because it might be too much? There are a lot of good options here, too. It is surprising how important shade has become, even up here in the north, because of climate change.

**What are the advantages of natural light when you can always create optimal lighting with good lights?**

Natural light adds atmosphere and also serves as a guide. The worst thing about living in a windowless space is that you lose all concept of time. There is also the

health aspect to consider as we do not get enough natural light when we are inside, and artificial light really does not do much to help. Not only is natural light important for your mind, it can also help you sleep better. Studies in hospitals have shown that when you try to simulate natural light, people actually heal quicker and need less medication.

**Now, not everyone has a massive window in their kitchen or can choose the ideal**





room. So what should you think about when planning the lighting in your kitchen?

We use our kitchens at many different times: on bright summer and grey November days and in evenings when the world outside the window is dark and you cannot really see anything outside. A subtle, delicate light in the garden can help to make a space feel larger. To accommodate changing natural light, you may need and want different artificial lighting options. Grey November days need the most light. Indirect light with high colour temperatures around 4000 Kelvin cast onto the ceiling in living areas can make a space look taller. When the sun is shining, I mainly need my light on my worktop if it is not directly in front

of the window. Then I have evenings, when only artificial lighting is truly effective. When I am working in the kitchen, I like my worktop to be well lit. As such, I like to position a well-oriented light above it that does not – and this is very important – blind me. I also like to add another low light over the dining table, something like a pendant light, that is quite close to the table but not in the way. If you use candles, the point of light should not be too high; otherwise, it prevents you from seeing the person sat opposite. Candles are nice and cosy, though. They look beautiful if you put them on a sideboard, for example. The wonderful thing about them is that the flames move, and this movement can be seen on the walls.

“You need to make sure that the light can move. The most important thing is to make the light reach where you actually need it.”

ULRIKE BRANDI



Let’s go back to the height of the point of light...

Of course, I can make sure that light is directed downwards from the ceiling onto my dining table by using a downlight and creating an island of light. But if the light comes from a point on the pendant light that is quite low, it gives an even cosier effect. From an atmospheric point of view, it is important to have several other points of light in a room. This can be achieved with wall lights or a small desk lamp. This way, you do not simply sit around a well-lit area, you can also see the other areas of the room. With this method, not everything around you is dark. You can find your bearings within the space and understand that it is not endless but has its limits somewhere. This makes me feel safe and secure.

Do you not often feel that it is too dark in modern, “cosy” restaurants?

Well, it creates a lovely atmosphere, but when I am eating, I like to know what I am eating and what it looks like. I want to see the colours. As someone of a certain age, I feel somewhat discriminated against when I cannot read the menu. As soon as you hit 40, you need more light to see well. Often, there is a general dim light, but that is not necessarily comfortable. Or the island of light that it provides is far too small. It should fill the table and the place where I hold the menu or have my plate. You must – and this, of course, also applies to lighting in your home – ensure that the light can be moved if you want to shift a table and change the seating arrangement. There are lights that you can move, but I also think that lights with cables running from a plug in the ceiling to the middle of a table are still better than having lighting in the wrong place. The most important things is to make the light reach where you actually need it.

A problem that taller people often experience is that they cast a shadow on their worktops. How can this problem be solved?

By not positioning the lights directly in the middle of the worktop. Instead, they should be a little further back, closer to the wall. Then it comes back to the actual light fittings. The best are those that you can adjust yourself. You can even add classic anglepoise lamps to the ceiling that can be pulled down and positioned exactly where they are needed. The worst is when there is no worktop lighting at all, just the main room light that provides light from behind.



AN ILLUMINATING EXAMPLE

In the kitchen of the shared housing project Hamburg Leuchtfeuer Festland, Ulrike Brandi opted for a movable ceiling light that emits enough light to illuminate the entire dining table (left). With the linear LED lights from Häcker, the light temperature can be adapted as needed. They have a CRI value of 90.

What do you think about lights under kitchen cabinets?

I think they are great, but you need to make sure that the light is hidden a little at the front. Otherwise it can blind you when you sit at your table. I use linear lights that you can tilt slightly so that they do not shine into the room so brightly.

How can you tell if something is wrong with the lighting?

You perceive light subconsciously because it is everywhere and we take it for granted. But lots of people notice if, for example, the light is not the right colour. If warm white LEDs and a cold white light are used in the same room, for instance. Oddly, the person that installed them usually never notices. LEDs are available in a range of different colour temperatures ranging

from 2000 or 2200 Kelvin, very warm, to 2700 Kelvin, similar to older light bulbs, and up to 3000 Kelvin, which is suitable for offices. We actually developed lights with 4000 Kelvin for a project in Malta. This was done at the request of the customer, and as they live further south, these lights had a cooler effect inside the building. The temperature of natural light is around 10,000 Kelvin, so these were a lot cooler but also fresher. I suspect that it is not just about the colour temperature but also the quality of the LED...

The LEDs that we use everywhere today are a great source of light because they are very energy-efficient, but we no longer really pay attention to the quality of the lights. LEDs have a thin light-emitting layer. They actually pro-

JIGSAW PUZZLE  
In Ulrike Brandi’s studio in Hamburg, a range of objects show her studies on the effects of lighting.



You can find out more about lighting in our video: [hklnk.de/in-the-right-light](https://hklnk.de/in-the-right-light)





duce blue light that is then transformed into white light by this light-emitting layer. Lower-quality LEDs emit a white light directly forwards but more of a green light towards the side. So you have to pay really close attention to the quality of the LED if you want to have good lighting. In any case, the colour rendering is particularly important. How naturally are colours rendered under an artificial light source compared to natural light, or even light from a lightbulb? Both have a colour rendering index of 100. When LEDs were first developed, nobody really paid attention to this so most of them have a colour rendering index of just 80. This means that all colours looked slightly muddy. We look forward to a beautiful sunset by the sea and completely forget that we can have a huge impact on how our kitchen looks if we skimp on lighting. You probably spent hours thinking about the colours of your cabinets, chair cushions or floors and took the time to carefully pick out the wood you want only for it to all look grey because you chose the wrong light. That is a well-deserved punishment (laughs). Luckily,

there are more and more LEDs with a CRI of 90. Most museums try to use LEDs with a CRI of 99. Anything between 95 and 99 is already pretty good.

**How can you find out the colour rendering index of an LED if the packaging only features the number of watts and the Kelvin, i.e. “warm white” or “cool white”?**

You can find the RA or CRI value, often in very small print, on the packaging. This is the colour rendering index. Unfortunately, DIY shops usually only sell LEDs with a CRI of 80.

**So how can we improve the lighting in our homes?**

Think about it early on. It is a real tragedy that lighting is often not planned from the very beginning and only thought about at the end of a project when the budget is already all used up. I think that the only thing we can do is keep discussing it and let home-owners try different things to see what suits them best. You should ask yourself questions like: Does the lighting blind me? Does it blind me when I stand up or when I sit down? Is this really a light colour or temperature that I will enjoy throughout the day and in the evening? Would I like to dim it? Even though it is a bit gadgety, being able to control lighting from your mobile phone is making people more aware of lighting. You can even try out two different lighting situations in your home. Here is a tip: simply take a desk lamp with an extension cable and point the light up towards the ceiling and then down. It is really cosy and lovely. There are also smaller lights that can be placed on the floor. This can make a huge difference. They almost develop their own life. I think that trying out opposites can help to create a really good lighting plan.

**LIGHT GAMES**

How does light refract in cut glass? Ulrike Brandt is fascinated by the effects that light can create.



**THE LIGHT BIBLE**

Ulrike Brandt studied under legendary designer Dieter Rams at the University of Fine Arts Hamburg. To date, Ulrike and the team from her office, which is located just opposite Hamburg’s warehouse district, have successfully completed over 1,000 projects. These include designing the master plans for the British Museum and the new Royal Academy of Music in London, the French National Natural History Museum in Paris, the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Terminal 2 of Munich Airport, Rotterdam Central Station, the Victory Column in Berlin, the lighting concept for the new ICE 4 trains and numerous plans for private houses and apartments – including their kitchens. In 2012, she founded the Brandt Institute for Light and Design to train professional light planners. Her book “Light, Nature, Architecture: A Guide to Holistic Lighting Design” was published by Birkhäuser Verlag last year.



# The sweet smell of memory

When cooking and eating, smell is just as important as taste.  
Making a case for garlic, cheese and cinnamon.

COLUMN: PETER WÜRTH

**SERIES**  
COLUMN  
PART 3  
SWEET SMELL

Illustration: ALINA GÜNTHER

In Germany there are lots of books that talk about smell in the title – “The Sweet Smell of Success”, “The Sweet Smell of Blood”, “The Sweet Smell of Power”, “The Sweet Smell of Evil”. And for some reason, the smell is always sweet. “The Sulphurous Smell of Evil” or “The Pompous Smell of Power” would probably be more accurate. At least there is a book entitled “The Bitter Smell of Chrysanthemums”. However, this is an outlier and based on the fact that chrysanthemums actually smell so bitter that, in South-East Asia, they are used to make incense coils that are burned to keep mosquitoes away.

Smell is our most primal sense. Olfactory information goes from the nose directly to the cerebral cortex without being processed in the thalamus beforehand. The paleocortex – “paleo” means that it is the oldest part of the brain – is responsible for processing

smells. The things that we smell affect us directly. We do not have to think too much, specific scents automatically trigger memories. We all have an olfactory memory.

The wonderful smells of Grandma’s biscuits, the mouth-watering aromas of Uncle Jacques’ roast dinner, the delicious scent of morning tea on holiday in Morocco. Whenever we smell something similar, our brain magically conjures up an image: Grandma with her apron in front of the oven, Uncle Jacques carving his roast with a good glass of red wine next to him, the bazaar in Marrakesh with its colours, noises and array of exotic smells.

**The nose never forgets**

When we eat, we only ever talk about taste: salty, bitter, acidic, sweet and umami (which was first discovered in 2000). These are the different flavours that our tongues can differentiate. We season our food to seduce our tongues. And we forget all about our noses.

We often forget about our sense of smell, even though it completes the eating experience. Some chefs do not really think a lot about how their food smells. And food from the microwave does not smell very pleasant at all. The right smell can add another dimension to food, evoking memories and stories, triggering associations, inspiring us. When chewing, we combine smell and taste and so can experience the full complexity of a dish.

So let’s give smell a chance. Thank God that kitchens are not longer separated off from the living areas and from the non-cooking inhabitants of the home. In the open kitchens of today, everyone can get a whiff of what is about to be served – and notice if something is burning. Let’s leave the smells to linger for a bit without rushing to open the windows. Let’s ban cheese from the fridge – it does not really even belong there. Let’s be brave with garlic and use so much that the neighbours can also enjoy it. Let’s add branches of rosemary and thyme to our roasts, let’s use cloves, cinnamon, vanilla, cardamom or cumin. Just like with perfumes, you can compose smells in the kitchen and awaken emotions. And that’s what really matters with cooking.



# Construction is going organic

Construction work has never been particularly environmentally friendly – until now. New and rediscovered organic materials should change all that. International material researchers are building with mud, wood, algae, hemp and even fungi.



**INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES**  
3D-printed visualisation of a building façade in Berlin made from earth from the AEDS exhibition “Living Prototypes” (left). 3D-printed prototype of an interior building component made from bone glue (top).

Photos: IAC, CITA

**W**e need more apartment buildings and houses and, even though Covid and the rising popularity of working from home have left many workplaces abandoned for now, we will also need more offices and public buildings in the long term. Not to mention poorer countries, where decent housing is little more than a pipe dream for billions of people. There is also growing awareness of the fact that standard construction work places a massive strain on the environment.

For the most popular of all building materials – concrete, the “addictive drug of modern construction” as the architectural journalist Gerhard Matzig called it – cement is needed, the production of which releases massive amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>. According to information from the EU Commission, the construction industry is responsible for 50 per cent of raw material consumption and 36 per cent of solid waste in the EU.

This cannot, should not and will not continue – after all, humanity has found more sensible solutions in the past. Traditionally, organic materials like wood or mud were used for construction before the idea of reinforcement using concrete, a material known since antiquity, and steel mesh came about. From the start of the 20th century, this has made it possible for us to construct large building structures, steel concrete bridges and skyscrapers without really taking into account, or wanting to take into account, the consequences for the environment.

## Clever nature

Now, we have to take a small step backwards to take a huge leap forwards. Natural construction materials consume less energy during the manufacturing, have short transportation paths, are easier to recycle and healthier to live with. Whether it is tear-resistant spider silk, hard bones or flexible quills: natural materials are superior to most man-made construction materials and constructions.

Norway’s 86-metre-tall Wood Hotel is currently the tallest wooden building in the world. Similar buildings with a height of up to 350 metres are currently being planned. Technically, these wooden skyscrapers, which save significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub>, are quite an accomplishment. Aesthetically, they open up a whole new world of possibilities, and environmentally, they are an excellent solution.





Natural materials are superior to most man-made construction materials and constructions.



Photos: iStock, Stefanie Holzheu, iStock, Wood Hotel by Frichs

**1 CORK INSULATES**

The bark of cork oaks grows back and is a poor conductor of heat.

**2 ALGAE REINFORCES**

Algae can be used to produce ultra-strong carbon fibres, which stabilise concrete.

**3 GREEN INSULATION**

Plants like flax or hemp are ideal for use as insulating materials.

**4 FUNGI BRICKS**

Mycelia, the fine root network of mushrooms, can be used to make bricks.

**5 WOODEN SKYSCRAPER**

The Wood Hotel in Brumunddal, Norway shows can that we can also make stable buildings from wood.

Surprisingly, wood is relatively fire-resistant. If a fire does break out, the water contained in the wood evaporates first. Only then does the temperature rise and the material burn. In comparison, metal deforms quite quickly and loses its load-bearing capacity. However, anyone who believes that they can achieve significant amounts of construction with wood is mistaken. While it is a sustainable raw material, the amount of wood needed simply cannot be produced quickly enough. Wood – for building, you need good wood, not leftovers like those used for heating pellets – is already a rare and expensive material. Despite this, more and more houses are being built from wood, and while this is good, it is not a real solution in the long term.

**Algae makes concrete stronger**

More innovative ideas are needed to make needs and reality come together, at least in the long term. How about walls made from algae? Well, indirectly. At the Chair of Synthetic Biotechnology of the Technical University of Munich, researchers are growing microalgae that produce oils. These oils contain glycerine, which can then be processed into ultra-strong carbon fibres. Concrete reinforced with these algae can be much thinner but still offer the same level of stability, thus reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The algae themselves only need salt water, light and carbon dioxide to grow, all of which they can get directly from the air. One kilogramme of algae binds around 1.8 kilogrammes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

With another approach, magnesium silicate, which can be processed at low temperatures, replaces limestone, the traditional cement base material. C-Crete, developed at the legendary Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) amongst others, uses sodium bicarbonate, commonly known as baking powder, and other similar substances to mineralise CO<sub>2</sub> during the manufacturing process. Mud is one of the oldest construction mate-

rials in the world; it is completely renewable and available practically everywhere. It can be used to create a pleasant living environment and maintain a decent temperature. It also prevent odours and mould. It is perfect in terms of building biology. Excellent load-bearing walls can be made from solid adobe blocks or pre-manufactured rammed earth elements, but it is not (yet) a financially competitive alternative to concrete. In addition, mud absorbs moisture from the ground and must be well insulated.

Speaking of moisture, researchers are currently testing façades made from pumice or lava rock. Both materials soak up water quickly and effectively, like a sponge, and store it until it gradually evaporates and cools the surrounding environment. This could be particularly useful in regions where it rains a lot.

Earth is a traditional and cost-effective construction material. As last year's "Living Prototypes" exhibition at the Berlin Aedes Architecture Forum showed, researchers and

companies are currently experimenting with using earth in 3D printing and computer-assisted design to re-establish it as the organic construction material of the future for modern architecture. It offers a higher degree of flexibility and improved aesthetics in the architecture it is used to create. In addition, the construction process would be more efficient and practical for densely populated areas.

Plants also make excellent construction materials and particularly effective insulation. Straw and seaweed are not really newcomers when it comes to insulation, but they have recently been rediscovered. The "House of the Year" 2024 in Pfaffenhofen, designed by Florian Kaiser and Guobin Shen from Stuttgart, is made from straw bales, wood and mud. The floors, walls and roof are made from straw that has been pressed into a timber formwork. When combined with mud rendering, it creates a thermally optimised envelope. There are already around 1000 straw houses in Germany.







50%

*of raw material consumption and 36% of solid waste in the European Union can be traced back to the construction industry.*

**COLOURFUL AND STYLISH**  
The insulating material “Acoustic Pulp” is made from organic materials like pine, fir, wax, wheat, potatoes and citrus fruits.

and hemp surround a core of roasted maize, also known as popcorn. Hemp, sheep’s wool, flax and straw are all used as organic, environmentally-friendly insulating materials. There is a practically unlimited supply of these materials, and they do not need a lot of energy to grow.

Likewise, developers are focusing on cork, which can be obtained from the renewable bark of the cork oak. Cork is impermeable but breathable and resistant to moisture and many acids. As it is also a poor conductor of heat, it is ideal for insulating roofs, ceilings and walls.

A new, environmentally-friendly type of bulk insulation developed by the Fraunhofer Institute for Building Physics together with Baufritz is intended not only to store heat but also capture CO<sub>2</sub> at the same time. The material used to make this is pyrocoal, which is produced during the recycling of plant residues.

Materials that turn biomass into construction materials are also becoming more popular. Fungi are particularly interesting as they can grow without needing intensive farming and do not require a lot of space. Dried mycelia, the fine root network of fungi, are already being used to create sound-absorbing materials for inside buildings. Mycelia can also be used as a type of organic glue. New York architect David Benjamin built the Hy-Fi-Experimental building using self-supporting fungi construction blocks in Brooklyn in 2014.

Even plastics can be made from biological materials. For example, Qmilk is made from a natural product: milk, which is available in abundance. Each year, 1.7 million tonnes of colostrum is thrown away in Germany, but the substance could be so useful. When milk goes off, casein is formed. Initially it can be moulded, but when it dries, it becomes a material with the same properties as Duroplast that can then be used for construction foam, pipes, window profiles or insulation. Cellulose and bone glue are two other renewable, affordable and biodegradable components that can be used to make bioplastics, which are set to have a big future in the form of 3D-printed elements for interiors.

**Bacteria form bricks**

Material researchers are placing great hope in their smallest helpers: bacteria. US architecture professor Ginger Krieg Dosier is working on bricks made from special bacteria and a watery solution made from sand, which slowly grow together to produce bricks, completely without chemicals or heat. And the Delft University of Technology has developed a self-healing concrete in which bacteria excrete calcium carbonate and form new limestone along cracks.

The British scientist and experimental architect Rachel Armstrong is taking things one step further. She is designing a house of the future made from clinker bricks that are alive. “At least a little bit,” as she says. The empty space in the bricks will be filled with microbes and algae that generate energy, clean water, oxygen and even cleaning products using sunlight, carbon dioxide and waste water. “Until now, our buildings have been largely passive,” explains Armstrong, who is a professor for experimental architecture at Newcastle University in the UK. “But living construction materials could change all this by actively recycling waste products.”

CO<sub>2</sub>-binding hemp is an alternative additive that can be mixed in to plaster and concrete or turned into fibreboard. As hemp is not very stable under pressure, hemp bricks can only be used for non-load-bearing walls or in combination with other supportive fibres as insulation boards. Hemp is easy to cultivate, it grows extremely quickly and needs less pesticide and fertiliser. Hemp construction materials are tear-resistant and breathable.

Other plant fibres are also used as a basis for innovative construction boards. The Swedish company Baux uses natural ingredients like pine, fir, wax, wheat, potatoes and citrus fruits to create their sound-absorbing material “Acoustic Pulp”.

The Munich-based company Smarter Habitat has worked together with the University of Göttingen to develop plant-based lightweight construction panels for roofs, ceilings and exterior walls. Weather-resistant laminate made from natural fibres like sisal

**DRAW HOUSE**  
The Hoinka “House of the Year 2024” is located in Pfaffenhofen, Bavaria. The walls are mostly made from straw, which provides good insulation.



Photos: BAUX ACOUSTIC, BRIGIDA GONZALES, ATELIER KAISER SHEN/PATRICK SCHNEIDER



## Orto Botanico di Brera

Anyone looking for a bit of peace and quiet in the uptown neighbourhood of Brera should head to the botanical gardens of the Palazzo Brera and its impressive art gallery, both of which belong to the city's university. Via Brera, 28 [pinacotecabrera.org/](http://pinacotecabrera.org/)



### Bar Luce

Cult director Wes Anderson designed Bar Luce in the beautiful Fondazione Prada in his own unmistakable style but with a touch of Milanese flair. Largo Isarco, 2 [fondazioneprada.org/barluce](http://fondazioneprada.org/barluce)

## Where to visit in Milan?

The city hides its stunning gems and hot spots in courtyards and industrial districts.

During EuroCucina and the Salone del mobile, Milan resembles a coop full of startled chickens – loud, chaotic and impenetrable. You get the opportunity to see and experience a lot, but you do not get to know the real Milan. The once rather grey and featureless northern Italian industrial metropolis has undergone a serious makeover thanks to Prada, Armani, Dolce+Gabbana, Rossana Orlandi, Michele de Lucchi, Ettore Sottsass, the Sozzani sisters, Antonio Citterio and the determined SaloneSatellite curator Marva Griffin. All of them – and many more – have transformed Milan into a global, colourful, innovative, inspiring and creative hub that is worth visiting at any time of year. WORK has put together a list of fascinating and unusual addresses for you.

## Bosco Verticale

A forest that grows in the sky: architect Stefano Boeri likes to integrate nature into his creations as much as possible. With his Bosco Verticale, he created a landmark in the north of Milan. 900 trees and over 2000 other plants grow on 7000 square metres of terrace and balconies on the towers at Porta Garibaldi train station. It is enchanting to see, even from below. [fondazioneprada.org/](http://fondazioneprada.org/)



Photos: FABIO TURA/UNSPLASH, FONDAZIONE PRADA, BOERI STUDIO/DIMITAR HARIZANOV, ROSSANA ORLANDI GALLERY, BLENDIA STUDIO, ARMANI SILOS/GIORGIO ARMANI



### Rossana Orlandi

The eponymous location belongs to the godmother of the Milan design scene. She presents exciting local and international newcomers all year round in her idyllic courtyard gallery. Via Matteo Bandello, 14, [rossanaorlandi.com](http://rossanaorlandi.com)



### La Vecchia Latteria vegetariana

Hidden on a small side street near the cathedral is perhaps one of the best vegetarian restaurants in Milan in a former dairy shop. Tiny, lively, cheap and absolutely delicious. Via dell'Unione, 6 [facebook.com/la.vecchia.latteria/](https://facebook.com/la.vecchia.latteria/)

MILAN — TRAVEL | WORK

### EVEN MORE TIPS

## Milan

**Osteria dell'Acquabella**  
An affordable and picturesque spot to eat  
Via San Rocco, 11  
[acquabella.it](http://acquabella.it)

**Pasticceria Marchesi**  
Impressive atmosphere in the "Golden Triangle"  
Via Monte Napoleone, 9  
[pasticceriamarchesi.it](http://pasticceriamarchesi.it)

**10 Corso Como**  
Legendary concept store  
Corso Como, 10  
[10corsocomo.com](http://10corsocomo.com)

**DMAG Outlet**  
Top fashion at purse-friendly prices  
Via Vincenzo Forcella, 13 u.a.  
[dmag.eu](http://dmag.eu)



## Armani Teatro

Fashion aficionados can experience the world of Giorgio Armani and regular fashion exhibitions. Almost more exciting is the construction material: the legendary, almost velvety concrete of Japanese architect Tadao Ando.

Via Bergognone, 59  
[armanisilos.com/](http://armanisilos.com/)



## RENDEZVOUS IN RÖDINGHAUSEN

From the 21st to 29th of September, the kitchen world will come together at Häcker's headquarters. The focus this year is on the innovations in the systemat range.



## GOURMET MUSHROOMS

In Saarbrücken, Mirko Kalkum grows the finest mushrooms for gastronomes across the country.



## SWISS CHOCOLATE FROM COSTA RICA

In the north of the country, Simon Brugger and his family produce cocoa beans for some of the best chocolates in Switzerland, and they even make their own bars.

**IN-HOUSE EXHIBITION** From 21st – 29th of September, Häcker presents all the latest innovations in the systemat range in Rödinghausen • **COCOA** Visiting a farm run by a Swiss family in Costa Rica • **MUSHROOMS** The best mushrooms for Germany's gastronomes grow in the Saarbrücken underworld.

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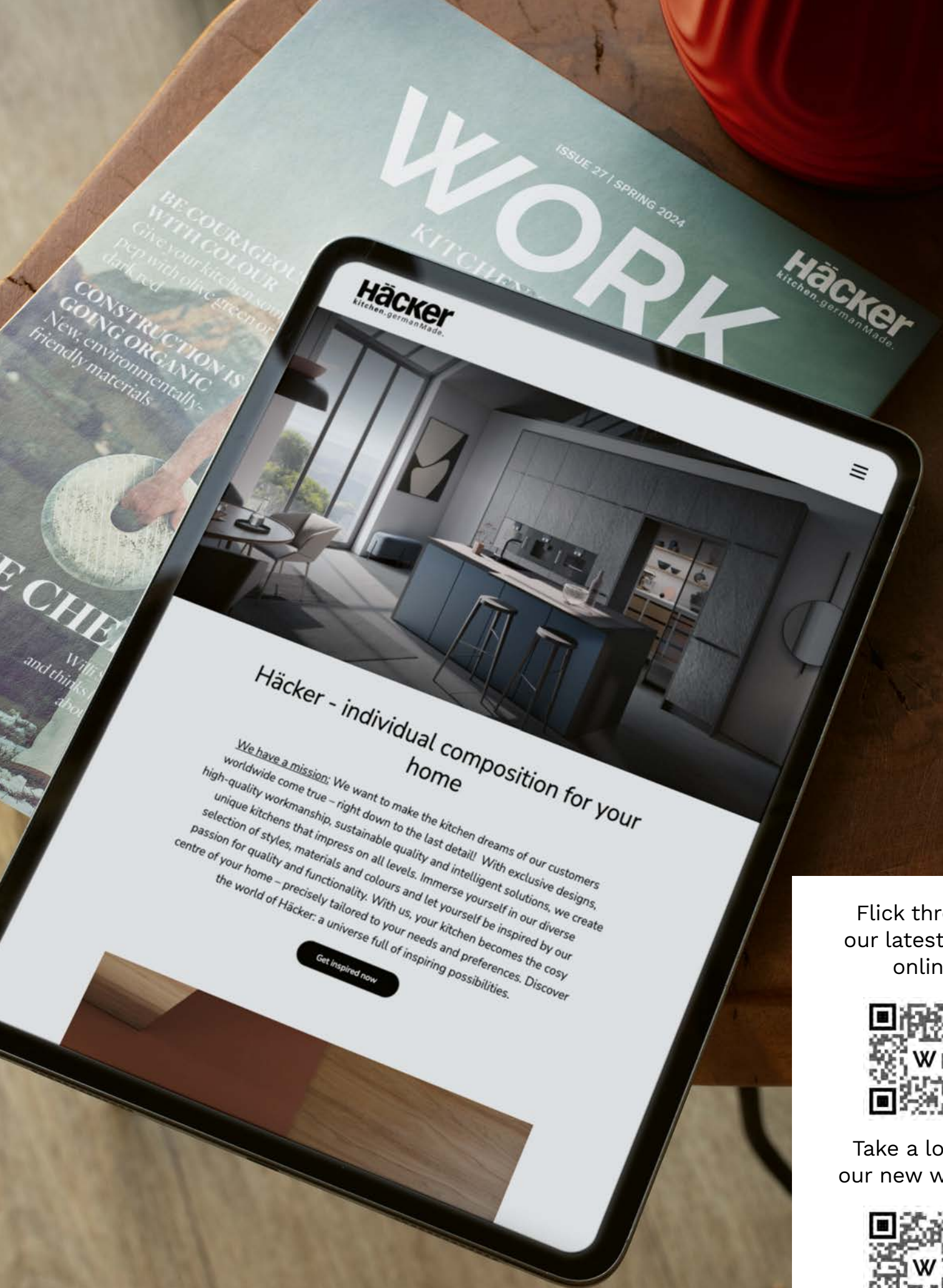
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