



'It's okay to be a bit dramatic'

If you did not know, you probably would not have guessed that the colourful, almost opulent lamps from Ebb & Flow originate in Denmark. Though elegant and simple, they do not have that purely minimalistic look many associate with Danish design, and indeed, the inspiration comes from across the sea – from the British willingness to be daring and different when it comes to design.

By Signe Hansen | Photos: Ebb & Flow

Founded by Danish Susanne Nielsen in 2013, the design of Ebb & Flow's beautifully shaped glass pendants and colourful fabric shades is inspired by the founder's background in London's fashion and interiors industry. "When it comes to fashion and design, the British culture is a bit more open-minded. In the Nordic countries we have a largely shared understanding of what good design should look like, whereas in the UK it's okay to base what you like on individual preference. If you want colours in your home or want to dress a bit out there, then that's cool too," says Nielsen. "It's an eccentricity that I really like, and which I apply

to our designs: it's okay to use rich fabrics like velour and to create something that's a bit voluptuous and opulent, a bit dramatic."

Despite being comparatively unknown in Denmark, Ebb & Flow's poetic lamps have struck a chord with other markets, including, perhaps unsurprisingly, the UK.

Light should make a difference

After 16 years working in London's fashion and interiors industry, Ebb & Flow's founder returned to Denmark to start a new chapter. Initially throwing herself into her passion for vintage furniture, she

was soon inspired by the beautiful shapes of old glass items and began focussing on creating unique vintage glass lamps. In 2013, she set up Ebb & Flow and began working on the design and production of a collection of beautifully handmade glass lamps. Like the original vintage lamps, these lamps are not inspired by current design trends, but by colours and shapes. "I am not particularly influenced by trends; rather I am influenced by colours and shapes and how they work with glass and lighting," stresses Nielsen. "My designs have to make a difference to the person who looks at them. Lighting is an everyday object that can make you feel either warm and welcome in a room, or not, as the case may be."

Traditional craftsmanship

Designed by Nielsen and produced by talented craftsmen and women in Poland, the glass pendants in Ebb & Flow's collection are full of colour, patterns and artistic

expression. "All our products are made by people; the glass is mouth-blown, the fittings are assembled by people. It's really rather amazing when you take an old craft like cutting crystal, and the pattern is always 100 per cent precise," says Nielsen. "It's almost impossible to understand that it's done by hand, but I think it's really cool that you can bring back an old traditional craft like that and make it relevant in today's designs."

While glass pendants are handmade in Poland, fabric shades and electrical parts of the lamps are assembled in Denmark. All materials are made and produced in Europe, using only real materials such as glass, metal, and fabric sourced for a large part from, of course, Britain. This results in more flexible production, which

is especially handy when working with handmade glass, where products often need to be adapted and tested several times. "The design process does take longer with handcrafted items like ours. Sometimes it might take up to half a year from when I draw something, maybe more. You can't actually finish the design before you feel the glass in your hand. It's a very crafts based way of designing, and one of the reasons I can do it is that my company is located just outside Aalborg next to my parent's company, which is a construction company, so there is always someone around to lend a hand in tricky situations," explains Nielsen.

From Aalborg and into the world

Ebb & Flow's distinctive mix of Scandinavian elegance and British drama has

won the company fans in many corners of the world. The Lute lamp has, for instance, been nominated for the Restaurant & Bar Product Design Awards as part of the prestigious One Twenty Club at Wembley Stadium. But despite their luxurious touch, the price of the products is not set to create a hyped exclusivity, but rather to reflect the value of the work and materials. Besides, whether it is a posh club or a small living room, the goal is the same, says Nielsen: to create a special atmosphere through the lamp and its light. "If the light evokes a feeling in people, I've done my job well."

Web: www.ebbandflow.dk

