

Panton Chair

Developed by Vitra in Switzerland

Design: Verner Panton, 1999

The Panton Chair is a design icon of the twentieth century. Jointly developed by Verner Panton and Vitra fifty years ago, this unique design finally reached the production stage in 1967, followed in 1999 by a new version made of polypropylene. As the first all-plastic chair to be manufactured in one piece, the Panton Chair is found in the New York Museum of Modern Art and other major design collections. This spring, Vitra is launching a special limited edition in the colour 'sunlight', thereby expanding the palette of this design classic with a fresh, bright hue.

The story of the Panton Chair began in the 1960s, when Verner Panton came to Vitra to show Willi and Rolf Fehlbaum a deep-drawn prototype of a chair made entirely out of plastic. The Fehlbaums were fascinated by the idea and decided to pursue mass production of the chair under the Vitra name. The prototype of the Panton Chair is now in the holdings of the Vitra Design Museum.

In the following years, Verner Panton and Vitra worked together on developing the cantilevered plastic chair, which was first presented in 1967 and subsequently mass produced. Thanks to the combination of its cantilever design, biomorphic shape and slightly pliant material, the chair provides a very comfortable seat.

Vitra remains committed to Panton's maxim that 'you sit more comfortably on colours you like'. Guided by this principle, Vitra expands the colour palette of the Panton Chair at occasional intervals with new special editions. Sunlight – a bright, clear shade of yellow – has its origins in Verner Panton's classic world of colour and brings a touch of summer to the dining room, garden, balcony or terrace. The special edition Panton Chair Sunlight is available for a limited period.

Since its introduction to the market, the Panton Chair has advanced through several production phases. Only in 1999 did it become possible to manufacture the chair in accordance with its original conception – out of durable, dyed-through plastic with a lustrous matt surface. The original version of the chair with a glossy lacquer finish is still marketed today under the name Panton Chair Classic.

Verner Panton was an influential figure in the development of design during the 1960s and 1970s. In addition to his bold experiments with shapes and colours, he was very enthusiastic about the potential of plastic – a new material at that time. The Panton Chair has been distinguished with many international prizes and is found in the collections of numerous major museums. It is now regarded as a classic of modern furniture design.

The Panton Chair Sunlight is available from April to the end of August 2017.

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