

Ten Years of VitraHaus

Originally conceived as a showroom for the Vitra Home Collection, the VitraHaus exemplifies the diversity of the Vitra Campus in Weil am Rhein. The striking building designed by Basel architects Herzog & de Meuron is simultaneously an experimental laboratory and flagship store for the Swiss furniture manufacturer. The VitraHaus has been visited to date by 3.5 million people from all over the world. On the occasion of the building's tenth anniversary, Vitra is encapsulating the accumulated experiences and insights of the last decade in a new interior.

In 2006 the architects Herzog & de Meuron were commissioned to design a space for the Home Collection, which had been launched two years earlier. The concept of the building plays with archetypal proportions and dimensions to create living scenarios and work settings with a home-like feel. Since its opening in 2010, the VitraHaus has welcomed more than 3.5 million visitors.

'The VitraHaus is a unique building that has been a focus of our attention for ten years now. During this time we have learned a lot about the building and about interiors in general: What does the building want? What best suits it? What are the formulas for creating a good space? What is missing in our collection that would make interiors even more effective or appealing? The newly designed VitraHaus interior reflects our answers to these questions', notes Nora Fehlbaum, CEO of Vitra.

Fictional inhabitants and characters

Over the past years, well-known interior designers such as Ilse Crawford, India Mahdavi and Raw Edges have developed interiors for fictional residents in the VitraHaus loft on the top floor. To mark the building's ten-year anniversary, the US design studio Charlap Hyman & Herrero has now transformed the loft into the apartment of a film director. But other parts of the VitraHaus also showcase living areas furnished in different ways, inspired by the lives of imaginary occupants. A visit to the VitraHaus should encourage visitors to think about and experiment with their own home interiors, while also demonstrating Vitra's conviction that designing living spaces is always a deeply personal process.

Typologies, manufacturing processes, designers and sustainability

Vitra has been producing chairs since the 1950s. Along with the dining table, they form the focal point of everyday family life. Often accompanying us our whole lives, these objects deserve special attention – also in regard to the manufacturing process involved and their materials. A chair can be more than a seating object when its design and production methods are founded on decades of experience.

The new exhibit also showcases the classics of furniture design. At Vitra, classics are understood as contemporary products from another era that provide a sense of certitude and constancy, and which are still relevant and a source of inspiration to this day. For instance, the Eames Lounge Chair has been in production since 1957, and the Eames Aluminium Chair has been manufactured on the Vitra Campus since 1958. This connection to Charles and Ray Eames has shaped Vitra as a company: consistent with the Eames philosophy, the longevity of all Vitra products is the mainstay of our contribution to sustainability.

Consultation and inspiration

The interior design competence acquired by Vitra over the past ten years has been given abundant space in the VitraHaus. The new Interior Studio is conceived as a workshop to facilitate the creative process, where VitraHaus visitors can take advantage of pre-booked or spontaneous appointments

for a comprehensive approach to the design of their interiors. In addition to Vitra products, the concept also integrates third-party products from other partners, such as accessories, rugs and wall paints.

'People generally refurbish their homes three or four times over the course of their lives. A new piece of furniture remains with a family for many years – you see it every day, and it becomes a part of your life. It's no wonder that people seek the advice of an expert when making such an important decision', says Nora Fehlbaum.

VitraHaus Café and Shop

The café's new ambience was inspired by the interiors of mid-century American designer Alexander Girard. The newly refurbished shop is adjacent to the café on the ground floor, and in the Lounge Chair Atelier situated opposite, customers can still configure their own personal Eames Lounge Chair and watch as it is being manufactured.

Vitra Campus app

Visitors to the Vitra Campus will soon be able to take advantage of special digital features. They can scan products to receive background information, read stories and learn more about the Vitra collection. The app can also be used to book guided architectural tours on the campus or personal appointments in the Interior Studio. The Vitra Campus app will be available in the Apple App Store from mid-September.

Till Weber, Creative Director VitraHaus, and the freelance interior stylist Connie Hüsser, Co-Creative Director VitraHaus, were responsible for the concept and redesign of the VitraHaus.

VitraHaus

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Monday – Sunday, 10am – 6pm

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