

Press Release

July 2019

Classic or quirky: what will be hanging on Christmas trees in 2019? Christmasworld exhibitors flag up the trends

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The countdown has begun: in a few weeks' time, the retail trade will be putting on show the latest Christmas trends – with original accessories, unique Christmas tree baubles and ideas for sustainable decorations. At the end of January, over 45,300 specialist buyers from 123 countries ordered the latest trends for Christmastime at Christmasworld in Frankfurt. 1,085 German and international Christmasworld exhibitors reveal which products buyers have been particularly keen to buy from their extensive ranges.

'Tender festivities', 'essential ceremonies', 'sweet traditions' and 'luminous celebrations' – that is how Stilbüro bora.herke.palmisano describes the four major trend scenarios for the up-coming 2019/20 festive season. 'Tender festivities' is a calm and peaceful trend, with a reductionist style. Central features are unusual shapes and surfaces, combined with matt finishes, stone effects, crushed, creased or pleated surfaces and high-quality paper. Naturalness and modernity, combined with raw, rustic features are the distinguishing characteristics of 'essential ceremonies'. This is a trend that finds expression in raw, untreated surfaces and warm, burnt tones. In contrast, 'sweet traditions' bring joy and charm skipping into the home: surfaces remind us of icing and sugar pearls, with handwritten messages and hand-drawn images. At the same time, naïve motifs and also Norwegian patterns are equally indicative of this style, as are fresh colours such as peach, red and berry tones. When it comes to 'luminous celebrations' the clue is in the name: elegant, luminous and dark shades with intense colourings and shimmering metallic colours, iridescent surfaces, sequins, sparkly discs, ultra-glossy finishes and lurex effects, as well as velvet and feathers conjure glamorous Christmas decorations.

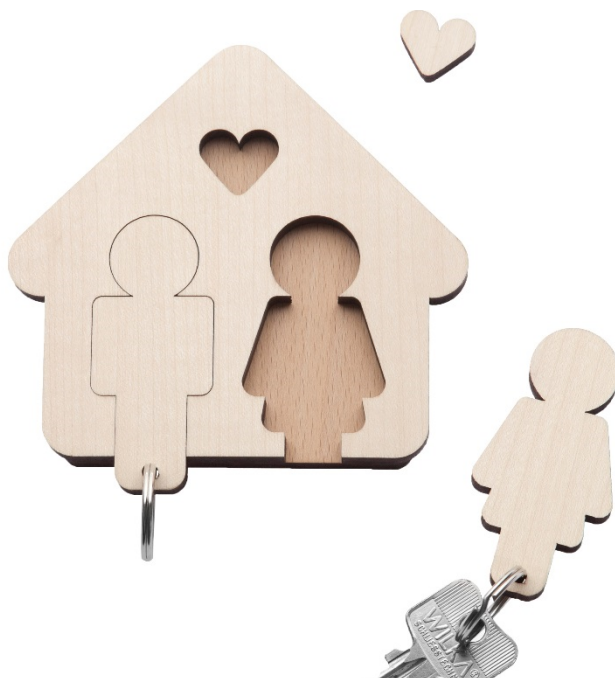
High quality, sustainability, tradition – spiced with humour

Four trends, four worlds, each with their unique product ranges. But what have people actually ordered in especially large numbers? What will we be able to find in the high street and in online retail sites in a few weeks' time?

"The fat-ball bird feeder, the key holder and the reindeer figures – all products in wood," are what **Benjamin Wolffs, Marketing Director at Designimdorf**, quotes. This company, from the upper reaches of the Black Forest, is all about original products that are modern, reductionist in style and characterised by a concern for sustainability. "There is a trend for traditional items with a reductionist slant and that is reflected in

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our sales figures,” he explains. Also getting lots of orders is the ‘Smoky Dwarf’ and the house shaped fragrance burner, as well as a laser-cut star made from walnut to hang on the Christmas tree. “We thought, to begin with, that a contrasting item on the tree – i.e. one in lighter wood – would sell well, but the darker one is more popular. Basically, the star is definitely our strongest Christmas item,” Wolffs tells us. On the other hand, it is the **key holder** that is the buyers’ favourite, when it comes to gifts at Christmastime. In general, Wolffs observes, there is a growing customer base for high-quality and sustainably produced products. We are also finding that wholesalers and retailers are increasingly interested in manufacture and materials. They want to know how the wood is treated, what oils we use, for instance.” However, the end customer is not yet really ready to pay the higher price. And sustainability, too, simply costs more.



Home Sweet Home! The key holder is one of Designimdorf's most popular items. Source: Designimdorf

Quality is something that interests buyers. A conclusion also reached by **Christian Schmidt from Gift Company**: “Products, which, from a craftsmanship point of view, involve more work, are the ones that are in demand. We get a clear sense of that. “It has to be either very cheap or very expensive, there’s not much activity in the mid-range,” he suggests. And he has been observing this for some time. “So, for instance, our labour-intensive vases have been getting plenty of good orders. Being able to apply enamel over such a large surface needs a huge amount of skill and that’s what makes these vases special.” In addition to that, the little glass pine tree has been very popular. Its charm lies in the fact that “you decorate the inside with pinecones and even flowers or strings of lights and it is this variety that has appealed to buyers,” explains the Managing Director.

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The little glass pine tree is a very popular item from Gift Company. Source: Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH / Pietro Sutura

And **Helmut Schmidt, Managing Director of Weihnachtsland**

confirms: “There is an increasing trend for more and better quality. At all events, in my experience, it is the Americans and the Swiss, who are more willing to spend more for better quality. That may have something to do with the fact that the Americans decorate their trees on 1 December and display it proudly. In our neck of the woods, it often doesn’t happen until Christmas morning.”

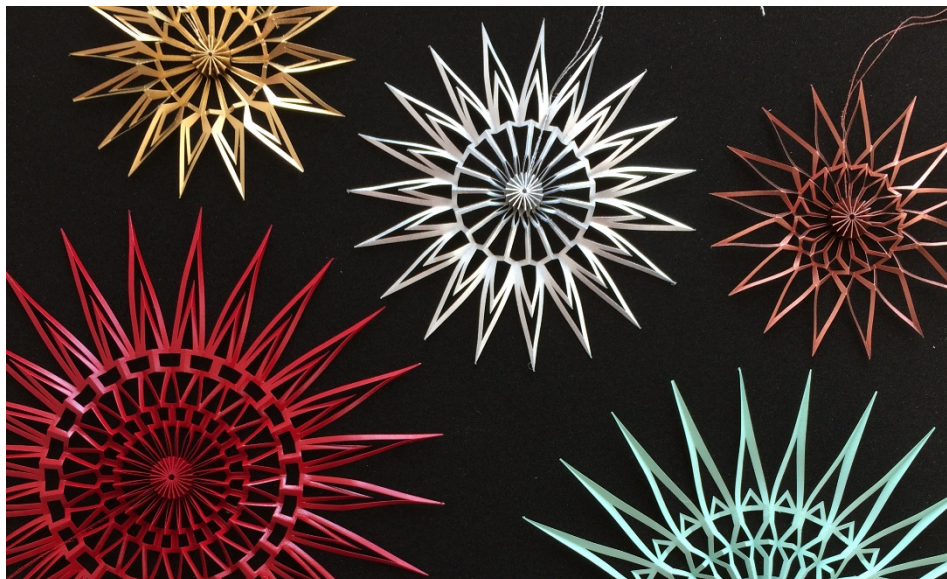
As far as colours are concerned, Helmut Schmidt can see no overall trend: “Whilst we offer countless different colours – over 100 with the Oberfränkische Glas brand, for example – Christmas remains, in my view, a relatively conservative business. Red and gold are the classics and so are natural colours i.e. greens and browns.” Variety is then provided in a whole range of different shapes and forms. Sometimes owls seem to be a strong trend, then birds in general. Things are, he suggests, different when it comes to the Sereno brand: “Here, our ‘fun’ items are aimed rather more at a young target group. The Star Wars figures for the Christmas tree are part of this, too. They are now into their third season and still going strong,” continues Schmidt. With their Christborn selection, on the other hand, the company offers things like the ‘Italian’ theme, for instance. This includes a Christmas tree bauble in the form of a Fiat, a Vespa, a pepper, a lemon and some round spheres, painted like Amalfi plates. These are proving popular, particularly with Americans,” says Schmidt. But ‘Made in Germany’ is definitely a recommendation, from a buyer’s point of view. “For us, German products are nothing unusual, but for Americans they are something a bit special.”

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Vintage car in Christmas garb from Christborn. Source: Weihnachtsland / Christborn / Sereno

German craftsmanship is in demand across regional borders, too. A fact from which the **Deutsche Weihnachtssterne Manufaktur** is also benefitting. The company was founded in 2012 and produces Christmas stars in various sizes, made from paper and folded, cut, glued and painted all by hand. The owner, designer and founder, **Nicola Tennie**, observes: “Whilst our main customers are in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, we also sell to Japan and the USA – Las Vegas and New York, for example. German handicraft work is highly valued there, as is the fact that we produce high-quality one-offs that are all hand made. That is proving very popular.” The company offers the stars in gold, silver, red, white and copper. “Gold is the runaway best seller, it is, of course, the most natural one to go with stars,” says Tennie. She has also noticed that dark red has been more popular this year. But, then, that is also a traditional Christmas colour.



Gold is the bestseller at DWM, followed by dark red. Source: DWM

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Red is also an important colour at **Inge's Christmas Decor**. The “Red and Glorious” principle, for instance, has been doing really well for the

company. “In previous years it has been rather a purist approach that people wanted, but this recent trend is for more opulence and weight. In terms of the details, it is characterised by reds, blues and gold, accented with black, pinks and purples. To go with it are floral patterns, jewels and an exotic bird, that has been selling really well,” says designer **Birgit Müller-Blech**. In America, on the other hand, it is food motifs that have been doing well, including cheese and cooking pans; as, indeed, have all sorts and kinds of animals and birds. According to her, things related to the “Real and Calm” theme have received lots of orders: “It’s a quiet, peaceful range, with rock grey, snow white and warm beige tones, combined with stripes. Animals to go with it are typically golden eagles – and rams, too,” she explains. A third scenario that is popular with buyers is, moreover, ‘Warm and Protected’, which includes warm reds and toffee shades, together with cones, acorns, birds and, indeed, a little dog or a child with skis.

Müller-Blech also confirms: “The upper end of the market is doing better.”



Child with skis or animals in warm beige tones relating to a ‘Real and Calm’ theme have had a goodly number of orders at Inge’s Christmas Decor. Source: Inge’s Christmas Decor

Christmas decorations are unthinkable without animals and this, too, is borne out by the figures at **Vondels**. Owner, **Loesje Donner-Raedts**, comments: “Nature is a major trend, without a shadow of a doubt; greens are modern, together with any of the animals that inhabit the natural world. So, our bestsellers are the lobster, the tiger’s head and also the unicorn cake and our funky lips.” In her view, the upcoming festivities will be dominated by animal prints. There’s nothing to stop Christmas decorations being just good fun, particularly the items for the tree. It’s ‘fashionable’, as she puts it. High-quality and uniqueness are a trend that Vondels also cater for in their collection.

But ‘quality’ doesn’t necessarily mean ‘conservative’. “Younger customers, in particular, have, for some time, no longer decorated their homes in traditional fashion, but more individualistically, according to

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taste and mood. Our ‘pouting lips’ are a good example of that,” she confirms.



Unicorn cake, funky lips and a tiger’s head are amongst Vondels’ bestsellers. Source: Vondels

Orders for candles have been relatively traditional. “Flat-top pillar candles are among those that have always sold well and continue to do so. But it’s our marbled candles with a rustic look that are increasingly in demand,” **Vanessa Wagner from Wiedemann** tells us. We’ve seen significant growth in this area. In summer, it’s ice-blue, pink and biscuit that are the trendy colours, in winter, traditional colours do best – so that’s red, gold, silver and cream. And there’s a shade of olive that is particularly in demand this year and has been doing very well. As far as traditional candles for the tree are concerned: red sells best, followed by gold. Consumers remain traditional in this area. But I am not surprised to see that other colours, too, are extending the Christmas spectrum more and more amongst younger customers,” she says. Customers are increasingly interested in the ‘Greencandle’ label from Wiedemann, too: for candles, where particular care is taken in manufacture to reduce the Co2 emissions towards zero and thus make a contribution to environmental protection.



Red, followed by gold, are the classics at Wiedemann. Source: Messe Frankfurt Exhibition GmbH / Pietro Sutera

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So far, on the other hand, **Tavio Piller, Designer and Owner of Shishi**, can't distinguish any one single real trend: "We have around 3,500 Christmas products and sell in over sixty countries worldwide; so, it's difficult for me to talk about a single trend. And even when it comes to colours, we offer almost the same spectrum and the whole range is used. From where I am standing, all the collections are selling almost equally well. At all events, the trend is for high-quality products, including luxury ones. That much I can say," he explains. Just like the trend for sustainability, not least in terms of packaging, too. That's why Shishi are now redoubling their efforts to use the most eco-friendly packaging materials. And it is not only the Norwegian-Estonian company that is making more effort in this regard. Designimdorf and Wiedemann also have sustainability very much in mind, in terms of both production and packaging.



All collections are selling well for Shishi – and, here too, high-quality products above all. Source: Shishi

Note for journalists:

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Christmasworld: Seasonal Decoration at its best

Christmasworld is the world's most important order venue for the international decoration and festive articles sector. Held annually in Frankfurt, it presents the latest products and trends for all festivities of the year and provides innovative concept ideas for decorating large-scale and

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outdoor areas for the wholesale and retail trades, shopping centres, DIY markets and the green sector. Christmasworld is characterised by the complete spectrum of festive decorations while a wide-ranging complementary programme with Trend Show, special exhibitions, events and expert lectures is a valuable and informative source of supplementary inspiration for everyday business life in the sector. The 2019 event was attended by 1,085 exhibitors from 44 countries and over 45,300 visitors from 123 countries
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