

Made in Germany – From happy cow to the honest bag



Berlin, 2021 – LEIT & HELD stands for honest products with timeless design, produced as closely as possible to their natural origin along a sustainable and traceable supply chain.

The Berlin label was founded by Pia Held (art director), Nina Conrad (sustainability consultant) and Dana Mikoleit (interior designer). Their goal is to create more awareness for the responsible manufacture of leather goods and allow a more mindful consumer behaviour while at the same time offering high-end products that will last for a lifetime – or two.

At LEIT & HELD it happens on German soil: it all starts with animal welfare on organic farms, a gentle slaughtering process, tanning with vegetal extracts and finally the production of the final product in a family-owned leather manufactory. The result is a limited slow fashion and unisex collection of leather bags and accessories – timeless and minimalistically designed.

A NEW DIMENSION OF TRANSPARENCY

If you want a revolution, you need to start from scratch. This is exactly what the three founders did. They asked themselves one essential question: „What does it take to wear leather products with a good conscience?“. Since 2017, they have been investing their time alongside work and family with the creation and prototyping of designs, at trade fairs, conferences and researching. Nina Conrad has already gained experiences in sustainability within the leather industry when she joined Pia Held and Dana Mikoleit a little later in their story. In the process of researching a traceable production of textiles and leather, LEIT & HELD has since then acquired extensive knowledge about innovation in the areas of materials research, traceability und animal husbandry. Detecting gaps and defects in the production of leather goods has paid off: LEIT & HELD created a truly unique supply chain. But the story does not end here: The founders invite others to participate in this journey.

FULL DISCLOSURE: IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE ANIMAL

LEIT & HELD reveals its entire supply chain and allows their customers full insights to where their product come from: First, there is the animal – a grass-fed cattle from Southern Germany whose hides is in fact a by-product of the meat and dairy industry. Working with Fairfleisch ensures that the cows have had a good life as they only select animals based on strict guidelines from certified farmers. The butchers take their time with the animals: a maximum of four animals per hour are slaughtered. Sounds brutal? In industrial slaughterhouses 40 animals per hour is the norm, leaving only one and a half minutes for the act. The animals come from farms which are no more than 30 km away. Traveling shorter distances is less stressful for them. Besides the traceability of the hides, the cooperation also guarantees good treatment of the cattle throughout their lifetime. Not too far from there, the hides are tanned in the pit tannery owned by August Renz, who continues the family tradition of 1888 in the 4th generation. His factory truly honors the term slow-fashion as using traditional vegetable tanning takes up to 3-4 months.

Finally, the leather is sent to the family owned manufactory H.F. Anton in Solingen. There, the leather goods are sewn by hand with the same industrial sewing machines which are normally used to produce ship straps – durability secured. Any additional parts required for the production of the bags and accessories are carefully selected according to the label's trademarks: sustainability and longevity. The team packs and ships every single package with love and a personal greeting from their studio in Berlin Mitte.

HONEST SKIN - A NEW BEAUTY STANDARD?

The brand uses the hides „nose to tail“, which means that all parts of the leather are used and there is little waste. When you look at conventional leather bags it is usually very difficult to be reminded of their natural origin: they just don't look like the skin of an animal. Instead, you see perfect finishing, polished edges, shining colors, linings, studs, seams and locks deflecting the beauty of the material. Bags made from honest leather do not need any of that. Genuine beauty is durable, natural and unsophisticated. Every bag is unique, just like the animal. The minimalistic design leaves room for honest skins. The traces of a life on the meadow, such as mosquito bites or scars, are signs of quality - at LEIT & HELD, these are also used and not hidden by finishing. The natural characteristics make it clear: they prove that each product comes from a unique source and therefore has its own story. This is what LEIT & HELD is truly about. The collection consists of purses, a shopper, a backpack, laptop- and phone cases, a wallet, a cardholder and a key strap. Prices range from 75€ to 450€.

TAKING A STANCE

The bag speaks for itself: It shares the entire story of the farm animal to the final product. The haptic of the material explains what vegetable tanning and manual production mean. This story is now continued by the usage of the bag. The users don't just wear it – they carry it with them through their lives. Honest skins allow unique stories to leave their marks. Due to the high quality of the materials, they will continue to be storytellers for the rest of their lives.

LEIT & HELD COLLECTIONS

The demand for organic milk, meat from grazing cattle and free-range eggs has been growing strongly for several years. But for leather, there is no possibility of obtaining it from good sources. Even the manufactories don't have any insights in where the animals were coming from whose hides they process. And this is where LEIT & HELD steps in. In an innovative way, they combine the strengths of mindful leather production, sustainable agriculture and a mature design.

This connection is new, creates interest and allows for an uncompromising and sincere access to leather products. The awareness of the origin and the reflection on durable materials opens the perspective of a more conscious consumer behavior. LEIT & HELD collections are honest bags, that embody what the „Big Ones“ in the fashion- and luxury industry not yet fulfill: complete transparency in the leather industry. LEIT & HELD are pioneers in the leather industry and are willing to share their expertise and their scalable supply chain with other actors in the business. Collaboration is key in order to create change in the production of leather and textiles.



Additional information

www.leitheld.com | #honestskin

Instagram: @leitheld

Facebook: LEIT & HELD collections

hello@leitheld.com

Press Contact

Ellen Grace Albers

dila Design & Communication

hello@dilaberlin.com

+49 176 80 755289