



Cape Cobra Leathercraft

Cape Cobra Leathercraft is a third-generation family-run business with over 45 years of luxury artisanal excellence. Established in 1972, the brand's name pays homage to the Cape Cobra snake, native to the city, Cape Town, South Africa.

Cape Cobra Leathercraft found international acclaim in the 1990's and has since become Africa's largest exporter of luxury exotic leather goods, manufacturing for some of the world's top international design houses. Their distinguished group of collectors span the globe and adore the brand for its timeless luxury, refined designs and impeccable craftsmanship. Wearing a piece from the atelier is an eloquent expression in the art of eternal style.

The Schäfer Family

The late Lothar Schäfer once patriarch of the business, honed his skills in maroquinerie in his native Offenbach, Germany, during the 1950's. Travels to Egypt would bring him to meet his future wife Denise, of Frano-Italian and Lebanese decent. Together, they embarked upon a courageous journey down the continent, bringing classical European skills and influence along with them. At the very southernmost tip of Africa, they found the meaning of home and prosperity in Cape Town.

Lothar and Denise's legacy continues to thrive in the hands of their sons Robert, second-generation master artisan with over four decades of experience and Richard, whom heads up the sales department of the business. Their granddaughter Justine, a graduate of Parsons New York, joined the company nine years ago to rise through the ranks, becoming the Creative Director of their in-house brand.

Together, they oversee over 80 South African artisans and continue to instill the unwavering quality, pursuit of beauty and age-old traditions of the handcraft brought to them all by Lothar and Denise.



The Raw Materials

Nile Crocodile, Ostrich, Python and Asian Vine Snake skins make up the range of exotic leathers used to handcraft into unique designs by Cape Cobra's artisans. The atelier sources their raw materials from trusted sustainable farms throughout South Africa and the Far East.



'Each bag has a soul'

- Denise Schäfer, Matriarch of Cape Cobra Leathercraft

The Products

What gives Cape Cobra Leathercraft's pieces their elegance and depth is poetry of the past combined with meticulous moments spent in the present, concentrating on elevating the raw materials available today

“Our specialist artisans respectfully preservethe natural beauty of the skin”

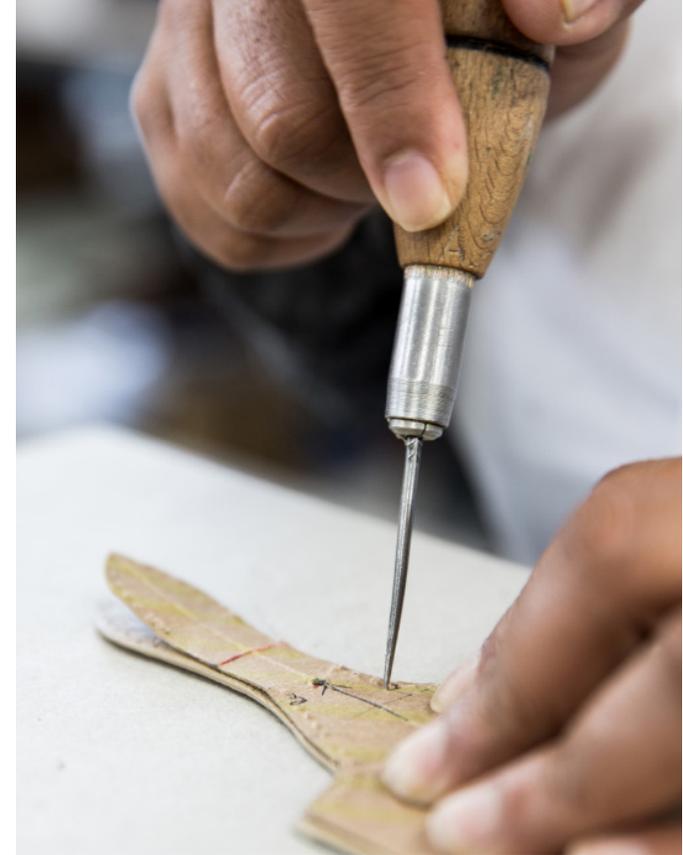
Cape Cobra Leathercraft's collection of designs include Day and evening bags, business accessories and small leather goods. Each item made by the atelier can be embossed with personalized lettering with gold or silver leaf for an individualized touch.

The brand's atelier showcases all styles available to be made bespoke by the artisans, with your choice of skins and hardware. The highest form of luxury is to take part in the customization of such a valuable purchase, knowing that only one exists in the world.

“Manufacturing an exotic leather handbag is an intricate and timely process, not only because it is handmade, but also because each skin is unique in its patterns, scale composition and scars. Our specialist artisans respectfully preserve the natural beauty of the skin and allocate them to specific designs. Allowing the perfect culmination of design and detail. No piece will ever be the same and that is what gives exotic leather products their luxurious allure’ Justine Schäfer Creative Director and third generation family member.

The Ethics of Luxury

The sustainable practices upheld by Cape Cobra Leathercraft is what set's them apart against the backdrop of the global luxury exotic leather goods market. The company respects all protected species and obtains its exotic skins under the strict laws and regulations of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), which ensures the sustainability of international trade in wildlife. The Schäfer family played an integral role in the establishment of ELSA (Exotic Leather South Africa) – an organization responsible for developing best-practice industry standards to improve the long-term sustainability of the exotic leather industry itself.



These standards and practices allow for the clientele of Cape Cobra to feel at ease purchasing their beloved pieces, knowing they are handcrafted using ethically farmed exotic skins. Cape Cobra Leathercraft is a pioneer in their industry for building ethics, provenance and preservation into their brand philosophy. Support of the luxury industry is of paramount importance, for all the age-old skills collected over time by the artisans themselves, is the very foundation of the fashion industry's repertoire for years to come. Cape Cobra Leathercraft feels just as strongly about preserving the fine techniques used during production as they feel about the sustainability of the skins being sourced.

‘We are not trying to prove that sustainability in luxury fashion is possible; we are proof that it is possible. Luxury fashion is the example the rest follow and we are responsible for the changes we want to see in the industry going forward’

– Justine Schafer, Creative Director



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CCL Today

Through their decades of operation, the Cape Cobra Leathercraft atelier has fashioned an impressive archive of sought after handbag styles and leather goods, all of which will remain available for bespoke orders.

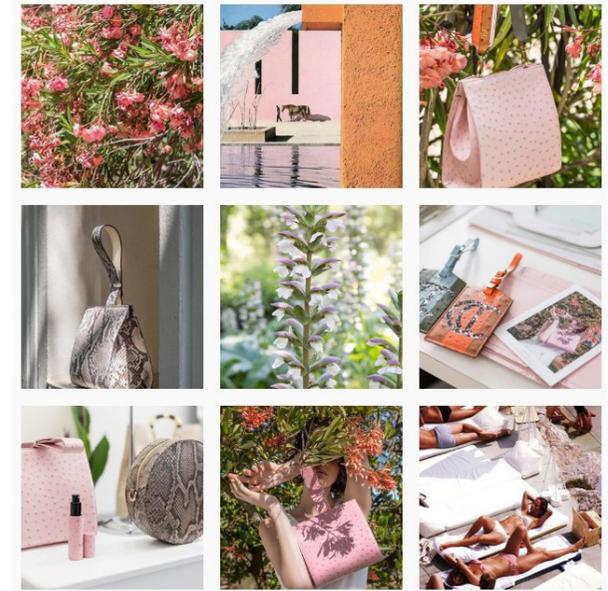
The in-house designs of today are an edit of their repertoire aptly named the 'Classic' collection and will be available to shop online with their website launch. These best sellers remain timeless heirloom pieces, with an allure of yesteryear's glamour and elegance, informed by beauty, a sense of the exceptional and the mastery of traditional craftsman. The changing seasons will bring re-interpretations of styles in reworked colour palettes that suit the trends of the day.



The Cape Cobra Woman

She is a tastemaker, loyal to herself, her legacy and not to any particular brand of the 'moment'. Her choices are unpretentious, deeply personal and the beautiful objects she surrounds herself with have been curated slowly over time. She understands the power of her choices, and chooses wisely, knowing that her buying power helps shape the world around her.

Cape Cobra Leathercraft allows for understated luxury to accompany her on her travels, enhance her professional life, uplift her through the everyday and celebrate her at special occasions.



Instagram

Cape Cobra's Instagram pays homage to creators, artists and makers of high caliber by weaving original content into a colourful narrative, placing their unique African products amongst iconic imagery. Their international trunk shows are advertised on Instagram and the platform offers the global market an instant line of communication with the brand.