

Product information

OFFICINA ALESSI tea service SAARINEN

Art.Nr.: OAL11 / manufacturer: [Officina Alessi](#)



154.700,00 €

incl. 19% VAT incl. Shipping

■ Delivery time: 6-8 months

Dimensions / Technical data:

Material: 925/1000 sterling silver

Set consisting of:

- 1 milk jug
- 1 sugar bowl
- 1 samovar

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1 plate Ø 45cm

Edition: Limited to 99 pieces

Year: 1985

Design: Eliel Saarinen

Note: The set is made to order by hand for you.

"Tea & Coffee Towers"

The "Tea & Coffee Towers" project, which Alberto Alessi and Alessandro Mendini launched in 2002, has long enjoyed legendary status. Three new interviews have now been published in which David Chipperfield, Greg Lynn and Gary Chang explain how they went about it.

Alessi has always managed to combine the practical with the fashionable in a special way. Many sources of inspiration have been brought to life, shapes and materials have been looked at in new and unusual ways to create extraordinary products. The list of well-known architects and designers who work and have worked for Alessi is correspondingly long. It ranges - to name just a few - from Aldo Rossi, the Castiglione brothers, Richard Sapper and Enzo Mari to Philippe Starck, the Bouroullecs and Jasper Morisson. In this way, incunabula for everyday use have been created time and again.

But that is not all. As a scout, Alberto Alessi has also looked around in areas that lie beyond everyday practicalities. As early as 1983, in the midst of the spirit of optimism of postmodernism, the designer Alessandro Mendini developed the "Tea & Coffee Piazza" project together with Alberto Alessi. With this project, he provided the impetus for a radical approach to the design of silver tea and coffee sets, as well as to design itself and its many possibilities. Alessi and Mendini were able to inspire eleven of the most important young international architects to approach the task analytically and in the manner of an architectural manifesto. The results were surprising and original. All the designs sharpened the sense of construction, composition and symbolism - sometimes with a strong dash of irony. Michael Graves designed jugs that look like fortified towers, Charles Jencks explored the formal language of ancient columns and Aldo Rossi's jug lids look like pointed gabled roofs. And all the sets are grouped together as an architectural ensemble on the tray piazza.

In 2003, Alberto Alessi and Alessandro Mendini took up the idea once again, once more with a view to the interaction between the disciplines of architecture and design. What they were now concerned with was the relationship between creating on the large scale of architecture - and on the small scale of design. The crème de la crème of architects were invited to take part in the experiment, whether they were Gary Chang or David Chipperfield, Morphosis, Greg Lynn or SANAA. Once again, a new path of design was taken, in which reflection on one's own profession is combined with a concrete task. The "Alessi Tea & Coffee Towers" emerged from the project, in which each participant plays with the dimensions of individual parts and the combination of different functions in their own way.

A total of 31 tea and coffee sets have been created, each one a chic and sophisticated object for domestic use and at the same time a small stage for design experiments, all solitaires that form an urban landscape in which body and space play a central role.

As part of a collaboration between Museo Alessi and Edizioni Corraini, two DVDs with interviews have been released on the "Tea & Coffee Towers" project, in which some of the architects involved provide information about their intentions and the approach they chose for their "micro-architectures" and "multiples". We present three of the interviews - with David Chipperfield, Greg Lynn and Gary

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Chang exclusively - which were produced in collaboration with the author and director Anna Pitscheider.

As David Chipperfield explains, he was less interested in designing a tea and coffee set directly inspired by architecture than in transferring the design process from which his buildings emerge to the design task. His two pots, which he sees as liquid containers, deliberately do without handles, which gives them a special haptic quality. What should something that contains liquid look like? - and: What does it mean to pour out liquid? - these are the questions that drove Chipperfield.

Gary Chang consistently thinks of building and design as a cooperative process. He has therefore observed a local tradition and then transferred it to a global scale. In his "kung fu tea service", each element corresponds to a part of the ritual of drinking tea. Each one looks different, each one can be played with, but the living process of tea drinking only emerges from the interaction of all of them.

Greg Lynn has taken a very radical approach. Inspired by high technology, he forms four parts from titanium, which form a single body, but also a group or family. What he constructs appears organic, expressive and erotic at the same time. Transformation and interaction play a central role in the creation of the form. Lynn plays with volume as well as with use and the space that is created and changes in the process, when a kind of flower emerges from the four elements at the end.

Anyone listening to the three architects and looking at their tea and coffee sets will not only gain a unique insight into the design process. Each time, it is also an encounter with human creativity, its richness and diversity.

about Officina Alessi

The Officina Alessi collection contains the most sophisticated, sophisticated, experimental and innovative products from Alessi. It also includes limited edition items and those that are only available in small quantities.

Since 1983, Alessi has been running the Officina Alessi product line, for whose experimental design Alberto created the "Tea and Coffee Piazza" project, for which eleven renowned architects such as Robert Venturi, Charles Jencks, Hans Hollein and Richard Meier designed limited edition tea and coffee services. The "Tea and Coffee Piazza" project of "architecture en miniature" (miniature architecture), which was initially launched as an advertising campaign, brought Alessi international recognition as one of the leading representatives of postmodern design.

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