

Press release
Frankenberg, September 2025

New standard material for Thonet furniture: the DARK MELANGE canework

In 2024, Thonet presented its new elegant dark canework, which is a material innovation based on natural dyeing processes. This process has now been patented, and the dyed-through material has been officially added to the Thonet portfolio as a standard material. A variety of models with the DARK MELANGE canework are now available for purchase. This dark version of Thonet's "Viennese canework" lends the popular classics a whole new character, allowing them to serve as statement pieces in a variety of interior spaces.



DARK MELANGE canework shimmers, oscillating between a rich black, dark chocolate brown and light natural tones. The naturally reactive dyeing process produces subtle irregularities in the colour that give the material a particularly individual finish, accentuating the beauty of the natural product and its distinctive texture. DARK MELANGE provides a whole new interior design option, giving planners more scope to play with different hues, be it in the contract sector or in people's homes. This new range with the patented DARK MELANGE canework also has excellent technical attributes, including exceptional non-fade properties, durability, abrasion resistance and high material stability. As part of his work within Thonet's Product Development department, up-and-coming designer Jan Christian Schulz worked together with the Thonet team, experimenting with numerous techniques that led to the final colour of the new canework with all its unique characteristics. DARK MELANGE is now available for the following Thonet models: S 32 V, S 32 SPV, S 64 V, S 64 SPV, S 64 VDR, S 64 SPVDR, S 32 VH, S 32 SPVH, S 32 VHT, S 32 SPVHT, S 32 VL, S 32 SPVL, 118, 118 F, 118 FV, 118 H, 118 HT, 204 RH, 214 RH, 209, 210 R, 214, 215 R, 218 and 119 F.

A sustainable natural material for timelessly beautiful furniture: canework made from rattan palm

Canework is a renewable and durable material that has been used in furniture making for centuries. One reason that we still find canework visually appealing today is without doubt its decorative, cut-out pattern, which gives furniture a transparent look. This is why the seat and back of many Thonet chairs continue to be made of this natural material, harvested from the Calamus rotang or rattan palm. These tropical creepers grow in the rainforests of South-East Asia and produce long shoots that climb trees like lianas. To create the fibres for the canework, the outer layer of the harvested

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rattan shoots is peeled off and cut into strips. These strips are then glued together to create one long continuous fibre. The raw material for the canework is mainly imported from Indonesia. Nowadays, the canework used in Thonet's furniture is industrially woven. However, since this prefabricated material only includes the vertical and horizontal fibres, the diagonal fibres – which are characteristic of Viennese canework and cross over the pattern – are still woven by hand. This canework is then hammered into a groove running round the seat frame or back and then secured with wood glue.

From an environmental perspective, which is becoming increasingly important, canework is also sustainable because the rattan palm is dependent on biodiversity. It can only thrive in symbiosis with its neighbouring trees, which means that the use of rattan contributes to preserving the rainforest. The rattan palm also grows back quickly after it is harvested, absorbing more CO₂ than trees. Canework offers two characteristics that are essential for a chair: stability and elasticity. It is a natural material that is robust but also has a bit of give, creating a seat that is comfortable without a cushion.

About Thonet

Thonet has been making furniture for the residential and contract sectors since 1819. With a passion for bentwood and tubular steel, the German company produces iconic designs – from its famous coffee house chair and Bauhaus classics by Mart Stam, Marcel Breuer and Mies van der Rohe, to contemporary pieces by leading modern designers. Combining the latest production technology with traditional craftsmanship has made Thonet one of the world's favourite furniture makers. Its production facility in Frankenberg continues to create innovative products that are designed to last. Thonet furniture is synonymous with quality, functionality and a timeless design language. Sustainability is engrained in the Thonet story. From the earliest days, Michael Thonet's first bentwood designs were not just aesthetically remarkable. They expressed a deep understanding of efficient use of resources. Thonet furniture has a very long life cycle and is built to be handed down from one generation to the next. It can also be revitalised in Frankenberg upon request. Thonet's commitment to sustainable design, which is firmly anchored in its DNA, was recognised in 2024 with the German Ecodesign Award: the iconic 214 coffee house chair picked up the special Timeless Design award in the Product category.

Thonet press contact international

neumann communication
Claudia Neumann, Anouk Freund
Eigelstein 103-113
50668 Cologne
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 221 – 91 39 49 0
E-Mail thonet@neumann-communication.de
Website: <https://www.neumann-communication.de>

Thonet GmbH
Susanne Korn
Michael-Thonet-Straße 1
35066 Frankenberg
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 6451 – 508 160
E-Mail susanne.korn@thonet.de
Website: <https://www.thonet.de>

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