



Personal profile IKEA of Sweden

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Iina Vuorivirta, Designer at IKEA of Sweden

MY BACKGROUND

I was born in Anjalankoski, Finland, in 1988. I’ve been an IKEA designer since 2015.

WHAT IS YOUR SPECIALITY?

Single products and small families. I’m a classical minimalist. I prefer using materials in their natural state so that the material and the process produce the look. I like the untreated, naked look of pure materials. I’m inspired by traditional techniques and the handmade. I work best with smaller objects.

HOW DO YOU WORK?

I love togetherness. I really need people around me to discuss with; I get energy from being surrounded by other people. But at times in the actual working phase, I need silence and stillness. I work best in the early mornings and late evenings. During the day, I prefer enjoying the pulse and drive of the people around me.

WHICH FORMATS DO YOU WORK IN?

I love working hands-on and on the factory floor. I enjoy spending time in the workshops, but in the early stages, pen and paper are my most important tools. Later on, the computer becomes more relevant for visualising ideas, but before that are mood-boards, drawings and sketch models.

NAME A PROJECT YOU ARE PROUD OF!

The set of vases and a terracotta planter for the IKEA PS 2017 collection. I’m always incredibly happy when working with ceramics and glass. Also, the summer JASSA collection, where I designed three lamps and a basket/stool.

A PROJECT WHERE YOU LEARNED ABOUT DEMOCRATIC DESIGN

The JASSA collection. A real learning experience with natural fibre in a sustainable process. It was amazing being part of everything – seeing how the water hyacinth is picked, woven and then turned into finished products. *

HOW CAN YOU AND IKEA BE INNOVATIVE IN THE FUTURE?

I think it’s key not to slow down, but to explore things and ask the stupid questions. To have the courage to question everything: could we do this even better? It’s also important to give the customer an experience, something surprising.

YOUR IKEA DREAM ASSIGNMENT

To design IKEA 365+, the ultimate basics – timeless, high-quality pieces for every day! And it’s glass and ceramics. I love being taken out of my comfort zone – when I’m completely puzzled and make mistakes and ask stupid questions.

YOUR BIGGEST MISTAKE?

Oh! There’s lots I’d like to do differently. The list of mistakes is long – but I see that as a good thing!

HOW DO YOU WANT PEOPLE TO FEEL WHEN THEY MEET YOUR DESIGN?

That this is a product that’s made just for them. That it meets an important need. Not just a beautiful design: there has to be something more, something lasting. It’s important to show the process, to let people know it’s handmade, raw, untreated material. Materials and technique should be in focus.

** Democratic Design is the IKEA approach of always considering form, function, quality, sustainability, and low price in order to make better everyday products for more people.*