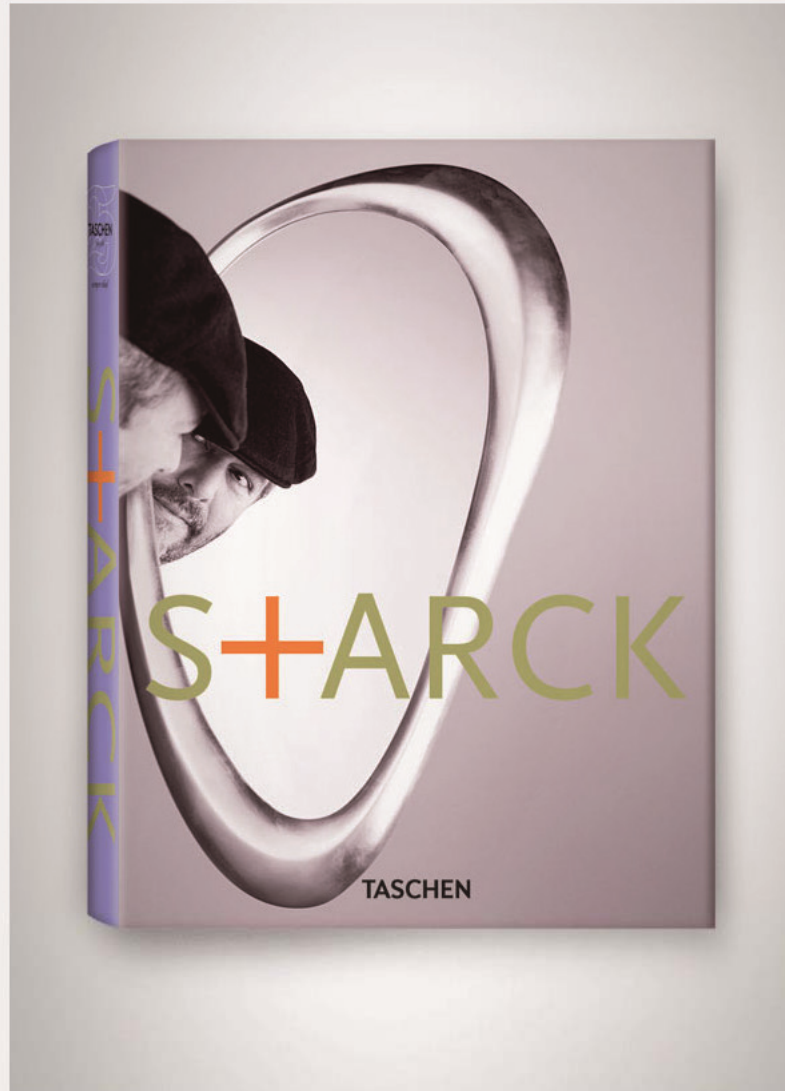


Design Icons: Philippe Starck



This volume traces the entire career of Philippe Starck design superhero.

"We have to replace beauty, which is a cultural concept, with goodness, which is a humanist concept." –
Philippe Starck

Philippe Starck (Taschen, ISBN 978-3836521086, \$10.37) is a world-renowned designer whose work covers an extensive, if not unsurpassed, range. His interior design work has ranged from nightclubs and cafes to, notably, President Mitterrand's private apartment in the Élysée Palace. His oeuvre includes architecture, from Tokyo's La Flamme building, to museums and commercial buildings. Products he has designed feature in galleries and exhibitions, but they can also be purchased through chain stores and retailers. The man who refitted New York's Royalton Hotel and the restaurant at The Peninsula Hotel, Hong Kong, also designs juicers and hard-drive enclosures.

Philippe Starck was born in Paris in 1949. His father was an aircraft designer and this early influence remained with him. Starck's website attributes his "desire to create" and "capacity to dream" to his father. He attended the École Camondo School of product design and interior architecture in Paris.

He founded a design firm in 1968 which produced inflatable objects but throughout the 1970s it was his interior design work, notably for Paris nightclubs, for which he became increasingly noted. He refurbished President Mitterrand's apartment in 1982 and throughout the 1980s designed the interiors of Parisian cafes and international hotels. His work on hotel interiors proved especially influential, putting increased emphasis on the interior design and creating the concept of the "boutique hotel".

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Probably his most famous furniture design is the [Luis Ghost Chair](#) (roughly \$288) produced by Kartell. This product exemplifies Starck's utilitarian but off-beat style. The *Ghost* uses ultra-modern materials to produce a near transparent plastic chair which contrasts with the old-world style of the design. The chair is made from transparent polycarbonate, while the style is Louis the Fifteenth. The contrast between design and materials, along with the chair's near-transparency, lends the object its particular fascination. Crucially, it is an ergonomically designed and utilitarian chair.

The ethos behind Starck's product designs is profoundly democratic. One of his most popular products was the [Juicy Salif](#) (\$91.88), a household juicer produced in 1989. Starck refers to his *Starck Reality* line of household goods, begun in 2002 for the American Target chain stores as a "democratisation of design." Starck's product designs always attempt to put a different slant on everyday items and re-imagine the simplest of objects.

Starck was an environmentally-aware designer, long before it was fashionable to have a "green" ethos. Through his concept of "democratic ecology" he ties together his belief that well-designed products should be available to as many people as possible and his environmentalism. This resulted in his designs for environmentally beneficial products which are affordable to many. The prime example of this is Starck's wind-turbine, designed to power individual households.

The guiding principle to Starck's wide-ranging design work is his opposition to the idea that good design is only for the elite. Starck has stated *"If I had a good idea I wanted to give it to a million people"*. This notion of aesthetic democracy, as well as impelling Starck to design affordable products, also influences the range of products he works with. It ensures that, along with designing boutique hotels, Starck's designs can be found on the shelves of retailers, or as off-beat quotidian street furniture. As Starck has claimed: *"Good design can and should be part of everyday life. I'm always looking for magic in reality."*

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