

Wholesale Barcelona Chair Buyers Guide

Barcelona Chairs & Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at www.gibraltarfurniture.com

Los Angeles, CA, March 1, 2008--When you buy a Barcelona chair be aware that what you don't see can really impact your purchase. Take the composition of the interior foam cushions for instance.

The Gibraltar Barcelona seating units [[b\]\(www.gibraltarfurniture.com\)\[/b\]](http://www.gibraltarfurniture.com) boast the highest level of comfort in the marketplace. Different people consider different firmnesses of foam to be more or less comfortable. The tastes of countries and cultures vary too. The Americans prefer considerably softer foam than the Germans for example. The average comfort range for a sofa in the United States is 25 - 35, where as the average comfort range in Germany is approximately 30 - 40 ILD. Another consideration is that comfort is dependant upon the specific usage. An ILD that is comfortable in a sofa might be too soft for a lounge chair or a mattress.

For instance Gibraltar Furniture [[b\]800 416 3635\[/b\]](tel:8004163635) uses the best foam that money can buy on the entire series. It is also fully compliant with CA 117 FR foam regulations for all of our pieces.

Foam is a substance - liquid or solid, that is formed in such a way as to trap many gas bubbles within it. The Foam used in furniture upholstery is generally Polyurethane (foam rubber), but latex rubber is also used sometimes.

Polyurethane foam has two basic characteristics that describe its suitability for various uses: Density: Density is the weight of a regular unity of the substance. For example, one type of foam rubber might weight 5 lbs per cubic foot. Commercial foam manufacturers generally measure foam density in kg per cubic meter. Ranging from approximately 15 - 50 kg per cubic meter. Where 50kg is the denser foam and therefore is generally less susceptible to compression.

Resistance and Load Deflection: Measures the change in the cubic dimensions of the foam when compressed by a particular weight of specific size and shape. Or looked at another way: A piece of foam that does not change shape and size significantly under the weight of an 8 inch round metal plate is said to have high ILD, (indentation load deflection). A soft piece of foam would have a low ILD. Specifically - to compress a piece of foam by 25% (for example making a 4 inch piece of foam 3 inch) by putting a 40lb weight on it, implies that the foam sample in question is very firm - and has an ILD of 40.

Although a somewhat subjective matter - ILDs of between 10 - 24 are considered soft, 25 - 32 are medium and 33 - 40 are firm. 41+ are considered to be extra firm. Foam does soften slightly over time with use. (Better quality foam will soften comparably less over time).

Safety concerns about the flammability of foam rubber, has prompted the creation of many governmental standards for fire resistance in furniture manufacture internationally. The most demanding being that of the British BS-5852 certification and Californian CA-117. We are fully compliant with the aforementioned requirements.

To make Polyurethane foam fire resistant a variety of fire retardant chemicals are added to the compound. It is worth noting that latex rubber is naturally fire retardant and does not require the addition of chemical additives to meet and exceed the legal requirements for British BS-5852 and Californian CA-117 certification.

Today the cushions of the Barcelona Chair commonly have color matched, heavy duty, plastic zippers running the length of the bottom edge of the back rest, and, under the seat cushion, along the back edge of the downward facing surface. (running along side the air vent commonly found here).

The zippers allow manufacturers to insert the foam cushion into the leather upholstery. Similarly the seams of the Barcelona chair are quite complex. The seams on our entire Barcelona seating series are perfect and completely hidden. The characteristic patchwork of the cushions is comprised on individual sections, (called biscuits). These are sewn together with the leather tube that constitutes the piping, sandwiched in between them. The corner junctions between these sections have 16 layers of leather that have to be neatly sewn together. Leather needles, also known as Glovers needles have a triangular shaped point for piercing the leather without tearing it. Used on leather, suede, vinyl and plastic. Sizes 3/0-10.

Piping may be made in a variety of different ways, the earliest of which was by simply folding long strips of fabric or leather over cord or thin rope and then hand or machine stitching as closely as possible to the encased cord, leaving the double thick margin to be tacked and then sewn into the cushion itself through four thicknesses of leather. The Gibraltar Barcelona seating series offer perfect piping in strict accordant with the original design. Plastic tubing is most often used today, because it provides a consistent and regular tube. However the highest quality manufacturers still use rope. Knoll has over the years used hemp, cotton and acrylic rope.

Two part hollow metal buttons, comprised of a top and a bottom section, both covered in leather are then pressed together so that the bottom half snaps or fits snugly into the top half. A metal loop which is an intrinsic part of the lower level is then attached via stout generally synthetic, high tensile thread, through the cushion by means of a button hook to a matching button on the other side.

Barcelona chair straps are made of 7 - 8 oz weight leather hide. This thick leather, also called vegetable tanned hide, is color matched to the upholstery. It's very strong and resistant (although not impervious) to stretching. Purchased in whole hides, manufacturers cut the straps out and then either screw or rivet them to the frame. The straps extend from the front edge of the seat frame, to a rod running along the back edge, and from the top of the back frame to the same rod. Straps are wrapped around the metal in such a way as to ensure that rivets and screws are hidden from view.

Poppers and buckles are the two primary fastening mechanisms used by manufacturers of

licensed and reproduction chairs. The fasteners affix the cushions to the frame, so that it doesn't move about too much. Knoll itself has over the years alternated between both methods, and is currently using buckles.

Gibraltar offers the entire line of products from the Architectural Pottery collection, Art Watches Atali, Ameico, Aluma, Ann Kersen, Ares Line, AV, Ballfinger Lighting, Brave Space Design, Burhans, Beau & Bien, Carl Martens, Compar, Conmoto Fireplaces, Dams, Dare D'Cor, David Edward, Davis, DHD Lighting, Diamond Teak, Ezgo, Fabulux, Firefarm, Gaia & Gino, Girari, Gordon International, Gray, Havaseat Chairs, Jeep, Knu, Innovation, IQMatics, Janke, Jet Age, Kenshoma, Logical Progression, Litto Kids, Lucein Gau, Lunar Lounge, Maku, Malik, Modloft, MunNimulA, Newform, Not Neutral, Ogus Design Lighting, Ooba, Offi, Oeuf, OFM, The Phillips Collection, Plodes Design, Produzione Privata, Serralunga, Spazia. Stig Hansen, Straifht Line Designs, Studio4LA, Swanky Design, Touch Design/Lighting, Trevi Outdoor, Veneman Outdoor Colection, True Modern, Venini Artlight, Vig, Zuo Modern, 100Times Better among others.

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