

Boutsen Aviation's Aircraft Interior Design

by Mike Vines



DANIELA BOUTSEN

It's very difficult not to be captivated by the sheer enthusiasm that Daniela Boutsen exudes for her Aircraft Interior Design department based at the family-run Boutsen Aviation operation in the Principality of Monaco. Daniela's operation is best described as the 'finishing touch' to the luxury cabins of medium- to long-range business jets.

"We deliver professional advice, acquisition and after sales of 'art de la table', which includes chinawares, crystal and flatware, but also table linen, bed linen, plaids, amenities and all the small items and equipment that gives 'la touché finale' to the cabin," she explained. "We represent the best and most prestigious manufacturers: Christofle, Bernardaud, Bacarat, Cristal Sevres, Hermès, Haviland, Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur, home, Slabbinck and Theresienhal, just to name a few."

Boutsen Aviation (which is headed by ex-Formula 1 race driver Thierry Boutsen) already has a very successful cabin completion/refurbishment management department alongside aircraft sales/acquisitions and asset management arms, but Daniela identified her



niche market approximately a year ago.

At that time, Boutsen Aviation was overseeing the completion of two ACJs for an undisclosed customer. "The question was asked, 'where can we get the right cutlery, chinaware, glasses and ancillaries for the bedroom and the bathroom?'" Daniela recalled. After plenty of research, she found this niche market needed improvement.

"I found that most of the completions companies and constructors were pre-occupied with the major parts of their programs, and less thought was given to those final little details. Until now no one has had the time or the energy to concentrate on this, but it's this paying attention to detail and those final touches that are so important to discerning customers when they sit in their aircraft for the first time."

WARM RECEPTION

Her department was launched at last November's Dubai Airshow and is already showing signs of bringing in business. Daniela was delighted with the response from the recent Dubai Airshow. "People were very pleased to meet someone willing to take on this work. The designers from completion and management companies were very enthusiastic about my company activity, because I'm doing something that few others want to do. For them it's time consuming work and extra stress having to research these items at the end of a long completion program."

Another advantage for completion center designers is that by working with someone like Daniela at an early stage they can

integrate her elements into their renderings.

"Some people have already asked me, 'Can I use your services even if I'm not buying an airplane from Boutsen Aviation?' Definitely: We're currently writing offers from potential business that we picked up in Dubai. There are not so many companies doing what I'm doing - possibly only two or three, but I want to do it better; I want to do it professionally, with good taste, and with passion.

we have set up an after sales operation which can arrange to stock some items to speed replacement to within a very short timeframe," Daniela revealed, adding that she can also advise flight cabin attendants on cleaning and storing items.

ESTABLISHED QUALITY

Some of the companies that Daniela sources from have literally existed for hundreds of years - some even dating to before the 1800s.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

"I like face to face contact with my customers," Daniela outlined. "The procedure is that once a request comes in, I'm very happy to jump immediately into a customer's airplane and discuss with them what they'd like to have - what their specific needs are.

"I then make compositions of potential table place settings either in situ or by supplying detailed photographs before I make them a business proposal. If that is successful, we



"I found that very often it is the flight attendant's job to go to a department store and buy these kinds of items for the aircraft. Problems often come a few months later after something gets broken. They will go back to the store for a replacement and find the item is no longer stocked."

To overcome this problem, Daniela only orders from the "top branded" companies. "The most important thing that I look for in a supplier is sustainability of product so that I can buy that same product in three, four or five years' time without a problem. I'm dedicated to finding the right articles specifically for each customer," she emphasized.

"Replacing breakages is one of the biggest problems facing the operation, so

"When I first started work after I left school I worked for three years at Königliche Porzellan-Manufaktur (KPM) Berlin which was established in 1763 - and this is where my love for fine porcelain was born," she explained.

The legendary King of Prussia, Frederick the Great, gave KPM its name and symbol, and the company continues to produce classic porcelain from past ranges as well as continuing to lead modern design trends.

Yet even with these prestigious ranges, Daniela pointed out that a high degree of personalization is still possible (as proven by the hand-painted Airbus decoration incorporated into the table wear of DC Aviation's Airbus ACJs).

enter deeper discussion."

"Since Boutsen Aviation opened its doors in 1997 (with the husband and wife team of CEO Thierry (in charge of sales) and Daniela (research, events and marketing) the company has sold over 200 aircraft and helicopters (new and pre-owned) and has grown to become one of the most respected European companies in its field. The couple also have the distinct advantage of being able to converse in five different languages.

Asked how big her business is going to get - could it eventually be bigger than Boutsen Aviation - Daniela smiled, "I hope so! We sit in the same office, and now we are challenging each other, no?"

➔ More information from www.boutsen.com