

# BERNIE DE LE CUONA

## Weaving wonder from her business in the heart of Windsor



can be found in the little black books of the top designers and most discerning people in the world.

### What inspired you to choose Windsor as a location for your headquarters?

I live in Windsor, and it is a perfect location to live and work in my opinion. It is not far away from London, it is close to the airport, and yet quiet with exquisite views and countryside walks. Our office is based in a listed building with a wonderful story behind it. We also have showrooms in London and New York, with a second showroom just opened in 200 Lex on Manhattan and are represented in more than 23 countries around the world through a network of specialist's purveyors.

### Why do so many interior designers use the word "art" when they talk about your textiles?

I, like any creative person, have my own approach to a design process. It might take two or three years to make fabrics ready to launch. I work with European artisans whose skills are passed down from generation to generation in their families. We can cover a fabric surface with foil and wash it away to achieve an antique appearance as seen in our Treasure linen or sew linen strips to paper and then wash the paper away which gives our Phantom fabric a couture look. Some weaves are quite exceptional, for instance the Victoria and Albert Museum has the Sun-Bleached Paisley in its woven fabric archive collection. We also do more than that, and some of it might sound extravagant, but the results we achieve are worth it.

### Where do you source the finest fibres?

Some fibres are farmed specifically for de Le Cuona in Flanders by local farmers – like flax for our linens, which makes up to 90% of our collection. Flanders is the area between Belgium and France where the best flax comes from due to the special soft climate, which allows the plant to grow tall. In some cases, I know farmers in person and can trace the field where the fibre comes from.



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### What is so special about de Le Cuona collection?

I think it is the unique tactility and the colour palette. I really invest in production in terms of time, human resources and finances which allows us to develop highly tactile products with a special handle. Designers and homeowners who understand quality can feel it from the first touch. The palette is mostly inspired by my childhood in Africa – natural earthy colours, shades of nature – clay, bone, sunset red, deep green. It's a timeless palette for a timeless range, some designs have remained in the collection for over 25 years. New designs always work seamlessly with our originals because of the palette. It is a look you can create which is natural and refined yet raw.

### Where can people see de Le Cuona textiles?

We keep up with technology, so the collection is available to view on our website. It is not possible to purchase fabric online now due to the artisan nature of our products. We talk our customers through the processes our fabrics go through and the differences in batches – our fabrics have their own life, and you need to understand it to live with it. Designers and customers like to visit our showrooms in Belgravia and in the Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour in London – the whole collection of over 300 skus is showcased there. We have a service in our showrooms where a customer can take a metre sample of any fabric home with them to see how it behaves in their spaces at different



times of day, how light plays with it – we want them to be sure they have the perfect product for their interiors.

We also have a collection of home accessories such as cushions and throws. It can be a great way to get to know us and decorate your home with a few pieces at first. The accessories are available to purchase on our website in the UK.

### What if a customer wants to order a special piece or to dress the entire home with de Le Cuona?

Be it fabrics, accessories, or the whole interior tailoring project – we have a team of experienced bespoke executives who can handle the whole process from idea to installation and bring any vision to life. They have extensive experience working with the most exclusive projects imaginable. You are in safe hands.

### Are all products in your collection natural and sustainable?

We try to work with natural fibres which are sustainably sourced, it is in the DNA of my company, and it is how I started it nearly 30 years ago. We also have a small but growing collection of 100% organic linen textiles called Pure, where fabrics are certified to GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard) to ensure that no potentially harmful chemicals were used in production and are not emitted in homes. It is complemented by a collection of organic Pure bed linen, which is available on our website as well. We always pay attention to sustainability and wellbeing, and it is important for our customers too. ■

[delecuona.com](http://delecuona.com)

