

CASTELLE

LIVING IN SOUTH FLORIDA
heritage

DANIA BEACH

MADE BY HAND

A closer look at Castelle's elegant outdoor furniture reveals much more than meets the eye.

By Laura Eckstein Jones

When furniture looks perfectly streamlined, one has to assume the pieces were constructed at a factory by computers and automated machines. But when it comes to the outdoor sofas, tables and more by Fort Lauderdale-based **Castelle**, that could not be further from the truth. The 40-year-old company creates handcrafted, weather-resistant furniture and accessories out of a production facility in Carrago, Costa Rica, that's surrounded by rainforests, rolling green hills and volcanos. "Nothing can compare to the quality created

by a skilled pair of hands... or 45 of them," says Castelle President and CEO Derek Ritzel. "On average, that's how many pairs touch a single piece of furniture as it moves through our facility. The best goods in any market are always known to be handmade—whether a luxury handbag, a pair of shoes, a scarf, an automobile or a yacht. Folks know that machine-made lacks the details, and love, of a handmade product."

A walk through the lively organized factory reveals the incredible skill and craftsmanship—and numerous steps—involved in creating each item. Every step, from start to finish, is executed with the precise attention to detail—from the first stages of carefully pouring aluminum into molds to weaving chair backs and handpainting intricate wood-grain motifs on cast-aluminum live-edge tables. And being situated in paradise certainly affects the *pura vida* (or good life) attitude that goes into the craftsmanship. "The beauty of our surroundings and the *pura vida* attitude are an added bonus that finds its way into the furnishings we make," Ritzel explains.

Although Castelle focuses primarily



on traditional designs, the brand recently included more transitional looks to its lineup, namely the nautical-chic collection made in collaboration with designer Barclay Butera, which has been highly successful. "The Barclay Butera Outdoor Collection for Castelle will expand with not only additional pieces," Ritzel says, "but also with one exciting new collection that presents his unique vision for outdoor. We see collaborations in general as an area for continued growth."

Looking ahead, Castelle will continue to create the highest quality—and incredibly comfortable—luxury pieces for consumers and designers alike. "From customer's own material to fully customizable furniture, so much of what we do is design-centric," says Ritzel. Whether that be items in trending navy and gray shades; chic, weather-resistant mud-cloth-inspired fabrics; or statement-making daybeds, the award-winning furniture brand will continue to hone its artisan roots and integrity for decades to come. *Inside Out, DCOTA, insideoutfla.com; castelleluxury.com*



Clockwise from left: Decorative finishing pioneered by Castelle is done by hand to create custom wood looks; a cushioned lounge chair from the Barclay Butera Outdoor Collection, \$2,465; an aluminum detail coating for a Barclay Butera chair receives fine grinding prior to welding; Venetura outdoor dining set, \$12,901.



FURNITURE IMAGES BY LORETTA/STOCK; FINISHING PROCESS: MICHAEL; CHAIRS BY CASTELLE/CASTELLE.COM

POOL PERFECT

This isn't your standard patio set—the **Castelle Hermosa collection** brings together both the linear and the curved for a playful, slender set including both lounge and dining options. Twenty items are available in five finishes—including a brilliant Love Gold—and are yours for the creating, thanks to Castelle's custom design program, but there's also a quick-ship option should you need it for urgent projects. Need a little inspiration? Head to their website to read design Q&A's with everyone from Lori Paranjape to Atlanta's own Steve McKenzie. From \$1,200, *AmericasMart, Bldg. 2, 10-A-7, castelleluxury.com*



ASK THE EXPERT

What trends are you seeing in outdoor living spaces?

"Our clients go on vacation and wanting to bring that [resort] environment home... The level of design expectation has increased, such as smokers, pizza ovens, automation, lighting features. The trendiest things we are seeing are outdoor movie theaters that rise up from being buried—Porsche makes this—constellation fiber-optic star floors, underwater speakers and pool lighting that can do shows with music. It is really a fun time to be building luxury outdoor environments."
—Chris Fogleman, Thrasher Pool & Spa, thrasherpoolandspa.com



BRINGING THE HEAT

For his recent collection with **Frontgate**, interior designer, author and television personality **Martyn Lawrence Bullard**—who counts celebs such as Tommy Hilfiger, Kendall Jenner, Cher and other notable names as clients—went characteristically bold with the Arcadia mosaic tile fire table. Rated for 50,000 BTUs and featuring black-and-white granite tiles placed in a striking graphic pattern, the stylish, luxurious fire table will heat up chilly evenings in more ways than one. \$11,995, Phipps Plaza, frontgate.com

