

# *Handbag Guide for*

# *Smart People*

*eBook*

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# FOREWORD

Smart people are not easily misled or made to look foolish. They are knowledgeable and savvy because they always do their homework and always check out the claims made. It is the smart thing to do especially where the stakes are high.

This eBook contains enough information for you to determine whether a handbag warrants the value placed on it by the seller especially in the case where a bag is presented as authentic, fashionable, and of impeccable quality, and for that reason commands a high price.

On the internet under the search title “genuine leather handbags” you will find iLouis Vuitton handbags advertised as authentic LV bags and on the same page bags advertised as LV handbags but which on investigation are shown to be fakes. This deception is allowable under Australian law but in New Zealand it is legally an offence to do so. In this regard the law protects you better in New Zealand than in Australia.

The purpose of this eBook is to inform you of what constitutes an authentic fashion handbag and more specifically:

- ◆ what is real leather as distinct from fake leather
- ◆ what is false (or faux) leather
- ◆ how you can spot a counterfeit leather handbag and so not be sucked in to buying a fake
- ◆ what is special about the making of a quality handbag

Another important purpose of our eBook is to demonstrate to you as a reader, that we take our professional responsibilities most seriously. That is one of the reasons why we have prepared this guide.

If you are the type of person who makes smart decisions, after reading this eBook you will be in a much better position to make the right choice when it comes to buying a genuine leather handbag that is just right for you.

We wish you well.

Jan & Dean

**Bibliographic Detail** – articles sourced from [www.comeandshop.com.au/blogs/leather-handbags](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/blogs/leather-handbags)

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# HANDBAGS FOR SMART PEOPLE

Foreword

Introduction

## Section A—**Real leather, faux leather, spotting a fake**

- Ch 1 Find out all about leather
- Ch 2 Leather—real or artificial—how can you tell?
- Ch 3 Faux leather or real leather—what is the difference?
- Ch 4 How to spot a fake designer handbag

## Section B—**The features of a luxury handbag**

- Ch 5 What are the essential features of a luxury handbag?
- Ch 6 What is an IT bag?
- Ch 7 Would you love to have a luxury real leather handbag?

## Section C—**Where are luxury handbags made?**

- Ch 8 Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China.
- Ch 9 France, China and Italy—world leaders in handbag design & manufacture

## Section D—**Popular types of bags—photos and descriptions**

- Ch 10 What is a tote?
- Ch 11 What is an evening bag or clutch?
- Ch 12 What is a cross body bag?
- Ch 13 What is a hobo?
- Ch 14 What is a shoulder bag?
- Ch 15 What is a backpack
- Ch 16 What is a nappy bag?
- Ch 17 What is a wallet/purse?
- Ch 18 Other bags

## Section E—**About Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> Handbags**

- Ch 19 The making of a Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> Handbag—luxury leather and impeccable finish
- Ch 20 Be part of the Bella Charis experience
- Ch 21 how to identify a genuine Bella Charis leather Handbag
- Ch 22 It's Official

## Section F—**Protecting your Handbag**

- Ch 23 Caring for your valuable Bella Charis genuine Leather Handbag
- Ch 24 Protect your valuable real leather handbag—keep it clean & fresh, and make it last longer
- Ch 25 Protect your valuable leather handbag from mould
- Ch 26 When to have your valuable leather handbag cleaned, restored and repaired

## Section G—**Social Media**

- Ch 27 Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Google+

# INTRODUCTION

We have written more than 50 blogs on [www.comeandshop.com.au/blogs/leather-handbags](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/blogs/leather-handbags) and [www.facebook.com/BellaCharisHandbags](http://www.facebook.com/BellaCharisHandbags) with the majority of them dealing with handbags.

The articles have been collected together in this eBook so that you as the reader can download the complete set at the one time. The book then becomes an easy reference tool for you to use as you wish.

If you really enjoy our conversation with you about handbags, tell your friends so that they too can benefit and contribute to the discussion if they wish.

Come & Shop® is a brand that has only recently been launched, but with continued exposure will become increasingly well received.

Likewise Bella Charis bc® is new to the fashion scene, but with the passage of time will become known and more increasingly accepted across a growing community of friends and supporters.

Bella (beauty) Charis (charm) epitomizes what we seek to achieve for the range of handbags and other fashion accessories we have on offer to clients.

The following chapters of this guide take us across a comprehensive range of handbag related topics.







# SECTION A

**Real leather, faux leather,  
spotting a fake**

# Chapter 1— FIND OUT ALL ABOUT LEATHER

The website - <http://www.all-about-leather.co.uk/> - provides excellent background reading on leather generally:

- leathermarks
- what is leather?
- what is not leather - bonded leather fibre, coated leather, laminated leather
- faking it
- cowhide areas
- what is a cowhide made of?
- leather care - looking after different types of leather and different categories of leather goods

The website is highly recommended for those wanting objective answers to many leather related questions.

However for particular care inquiries about your valuable leather handbag, contact specialist organizations such as - [www.mybagspa.com.au](http://www.mybagspa.com.au).



## Chapter 2 - LEATHER—REAL OR ARTIFICIAL —how can you tell?

Leather, real leather, genuine leather, genuine Italian leather, PU leather, false leather, faux leather, artificial leather – these are some of the names used to describe the products used for making handbags. What could be more confusing?

In this article we will talk about some of these 'leathers' and you will find some of the so called leathers are not leather at all. Given the large variety of interpretations it is easy to be fooled by advertising pitches that don't tell the whole story.

In New Zealand, Denmark and Britain, to represent anything as leather which isn't genuine (real) leather is regarded as a misrepresentation and is not allowed.

However in Australia this ruling does not apply. It is no more obvious than when doing an Internet search under the key words 'leather' and 'real leather' under the Australian umbrella. Confusion reigns in Australian listings because the opportunity exists for a business to misrepresent the facts and to not suffer any penalty for their deception.

Let's look at various names used for leather and what they actually represent.

**PU leather** — is also referred to as Bicast leather, and is made of one layer of polyurethane sheet to which leather offcuts or split (thinner) leather are glued using an assembly line process. It could just as well be called 'Bicast polyurethane'. PU leather was originally used on furniture - for instance to cover writing desks. The underlay of leather pieces is placed on the inside against the desk top so that the pieces were not visible. Also by embossing the PU surface it can be made to look more like real leather at a first glance. However on closer examination it quickly shows that the embossed pattern is overlarge and unlike real leather which has a finer and more detailed pattern in its original state (similar to the finger print of the human hand).

PU leather is easy to clean using a wet cloth. However it does not stand up to wear and tear as genuine leather does. For instance PU leather shoes quickly deteriorate when subject to hard wearing, whereas a pair of R M Williams stockman's boots, made of real (genuine) leather, are famously hard-wearing and resilient.

There is a significant cost difference between the manufacture of PU leather and genuine (real) leather. PU leather handbags are cheaper to make and should be cheaper to buy. They are nowhere near as durable as genuine leather and do not stand up to wear and tear as does real leather.

If New Zealand and Danish laws applied in Australia PU leather handbags would not be allowed to be advertised as leather, genuine leather or real leather. It would be a misrepresentation do so.

**Real leather, genuine leather, and genuine Italian leather** — strictly speaking these should have meanings that are clearly understood by everyone, but as Wikipedia says – “The use of terms like ‘leather’, ‘genuine leather’ or 100% leather’ in relation to bicast treatment [reference to PU leather} is considered a misrepresentation and therefore not permitted in some countries, eg Denmark and New Zealand”. The opportunity for there to be false representation exists in Australia because the 'leather loophole' has not been eliminated.

In many countries the purchaser has to be very aware of what it is they are buying otherwise they could easily be deceived by what is clearly a misrepresentation.

Other articles in Section A discuss further the properties of genuine (real) leather.

We can say in summary that:

- most of the real (genuine) leather comes from cowhide. Others sources such as sheepskin and crocodile hide are in the minority.
- the highest quality cowhide comes from cows raised on controlled pastures, that is paddocks that have well-trimmed pastures that do not cause damage to the hide of the cows , and so the hides are free of imperfections
- leather is made from cowhides through a tanning process. Genuine (real) Italian leather is a world class leather made in Tuscany, Italy in the “Leather Region” between Pisa and Florence.
- The tanneries of Tuscany use age old vegetable based ingredients that are environmentally safe and that produce the highest quality leather, generally referred to as genuine Italian leather, or 100% genuine Italian leather.
- Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> real leather handbags are made from 100% genuine Italian leather.





## Chapter 3 - FAUX LEATHER OR REAL LEATHER - what is the difference?

We have often been asked that question, especially by those who want to be sure they are purchasing an item made of **real leather**. They don't want to be caught out buying a product they didn't actually want in the first place.

Faux is the French word for false. So faux leather is false leather and is made from materials other than real leather. It is artificial leather.

One common faux leather product is polyvinyl chloride (PVC). There are many other types of man-made faux leathers.

Faux leather may look like real leather, and at first touch it may even feel like real leather.

To determine whether your material is real leather or not may well require you to apply the odour test. If it doesn't smell leathery, it may well not be real leather.

One other major indicator is the fact that faux leather can easily be mass produced for a much lower cost than natural leather. If it is low cost, it is most probably not genuine leather.

Be especially careful if an item is advertised as 'leather' because faux leather is sometimes described as leather implying that it is real leather when it actually isn't.

So our advice when purchasing a handbag (or for that matter any other 'leather' product) is to first of all establish whether the leather is actually real (genuine) leather or faux leather.

In other words, when buying a leather handbag the buyer must truly be aware of what it is that they are purchasing - real leather or faux leather! It is most important to be able to tell the difference.

If you are wishing to purchase a real (genuine) leather handbag don't hesitate to ask questions of the seller. When you inspect the handbag make sure you read any attached print material, see whether it smells and feels like real leather, and if in any doubt ask more questions about its authenticity from whomever is selling or has sold you the handbag.



On the other hand, if a handbag is specifically advertised as a **genuine leather handbag** you have less reason for doubt - it should be genuine leather most likely made from cowhide (or possibly sheepskin). The leather for a handbag made from **genuine Italian leather** will in all probability be sourced from one of the famous Tuscany tanneries.

The leather for all Bella Charis bc® handbags, like many other luxury handbags, is sourced from a tannery in the "Leather Region" of Tuscany.

If you are told the truth that is fine. You will then have every confidence that what you are getting is what you asked for.





## Chapter 4 - HOW TO SPOT A FAKE DESIGNER BAG

The following tips have been contributed by Elizabeth Bernstein, Director of Handbags, Portero.

Portero buys and sells only pre-used handbags such as Hermes, Chanel, Louis Vuitton, Prada and Gucci. Prices can be of the order of many thousands of dollars, but if you wish to simply feast your eyes on what is an extensive collection of expensive bags that are for sale, Portero is the site to browse.

Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> handbags is a newly trademarked brand. Come & Shop is busy marketing and presenting its first class collection of bags to the public and are proceeding on the path pioneered by brands such as those mentioned above, all of whom were established many decades ago. In fact Bella Charis already competes strongly in design and manufacture quality with the most famous of brands currently on sale at Portero. So Bella (beauty) Charis (charm) has already come a long way in a relatively short period of time.

In the article "How to spot a false designer bag: Tips from Portero expert Elizabeth Bernstein, by Kim West 10 March, 2014, Beauty World News", the following questions were asked of Ms Bernstein, and the answers are reported in italics:

- "Is it easy to spot a fake designer handbag?"  
*"It really depends on the bag. If it is a good fake, most people cannot tell the difference. For me, it is all in the touch and feel of the material and those few key spot checks where I can decipher the authenticity."*
- "What makes it hard for the average shopper to tell the difference between a real bag and a fake bag?"  
*"Counterfeiters have managed to replicate many key details of authentic bags, which can make it extremely hard for the average shopper to spot a fake. Due to the plethora of information on the Internet, counterfeits have become so sophisticated that they now reproduce date codes, holograms, hardware and zippers, stamps, monogrammed canvases, leather, and more."*
- "Are fake bags still prevalent for mainstream shoppers, or is this a black market industry?"  
*"Unfortunately, there are many venues online as well as on the streets that sell counterfeit products, making them widely available to shoppers."*
- "What brands are the most popular amongst the counterfeit industry to replicate?"  
*"As you can imagine, some of the most desirable brands are among the most counterfeited in the industry: Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Prada, Gucci, Celine, Balenciaga, Fendi, Bottega Veneta, and the list goes on."*

- "What tools can we use to spot a fake designer handbag?"  
*"Always remember there are not the same quality controls in the counterfeit world as there are in the luxury world. We always recommend having an authenticator evaluate your secondary marketplace purchase. If you want to avoid buying a fake bag, you should stick to sites like Portero.com that guarantees 100% authenticity through its Portero Promise. Here are some basic guidelines Portero uses to authenticate:*
  - *Check the material's quality against a real bag.*
  - *Zippers should be properly marked and have a smooth pull. etc. If it is meant to twist shut, the clasp should turn smoothly.*
  - *Examine the stitching and assembly of the piece. High quality bags will either be hand stitched or almost perfectly made"*
- "What tips and tricks should you arm yourself with?"  
*"Be extremely careful whom you are purchasing from. Make sure the website or store has an excellent reputation and is an actual company. One of our mottos at Portero is, 'if a deal is too good to be true, it is.' Don't be fooled by extreme discounted pricing. If you see a Chanel classic flap bag for \$200, chances are it is a fake."*
- "Any additional advice?"  
*"Buying and selling luxury items is fun. It is a great way to constantly rotate your collection. Enjoy your item for a while; then, resell to buy yourself a new treasure."*
- "Are there any glaring differences between a fake and a real bag?"  
*"Above all else, it's quality. Counterfeiters cut many corners in order to make bags affordable/cheap. The quality of leathers, hardware, zippers, linings, etc. will not be nearly as fine as a real bag."*

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The answers given by Ms Bernstein are excellent and are thus a most welcome addition to the Come & Shop list of related articles.

## References

1. [www.beautyworldnews.com](http://www.beautyworldnews.com) (publisher of the above mentioned article)
2. Elizabeth Bernstein is the Director of Handbags for Portero - [www.portero.com](http://www.portero.com)

For additional sources consult other blog articles on the Come & Shop website, [www.comeandshop.com.au](http://www.comeandshop.com.au). [The Come & Shop website is very proud that it is one of very few websites retailing handbags, that provides a blog on a range of fashion accessory topics. It separates us out as a business genuinely interested in engaging customers and fellow professionals alike.]



## **SECTION B**

### **The features of a Luxury Handbag**

# Chapter 5 - What are the ESSENTIAL FEATURES of a LUXURY HANDBAG?

In a nutshell, it can be said that a luxury handbag has the following features:

- it is 'high class'
- The handbag is made from genuine Italian leather. This real leather must be sourced from the 'Leather District' located between Pisa and Florence in Tuscany, Italy. The leather is known by the trademark name, "Pelle Conciata al Vegetale in Toscana" (Vegetable Tanned Leather of Tuscany).
- The design is artistically pleasing and the handbag is entirely functional
- The manufacture of the handbag meets the following specifications:
  - the leather is without blemish
  - the design templates ensure that each bag of the same type is exactly the same throughout its production run
  - the stitching is faultless
  - the hardware complements the overall handbag design and is attractive, functional, precision made and long lasting
  - tags for guarantee purposes, brand identification, and handbag care are included
  - a quality brand logo is included
  - an embossed leather tag with brand name is stitched to the bag interior
  - the handbag is made to the highest possible standard being virtually perfect in design and manufacture. It will look impeccable
  - the real leather handbag will have a very long life span and after many years of satisfactory use, it will be able to be restored by a qualified restorer virtually to its original condition.



## Chapter 6 - What is an IT BAG?

An **IT BAG**, otherwise known as a **status bag**, is generally regarded as a **luxury handbag** that held the status of being a 'must-have' bag over a fashion season or beyond that period.

The term was invented in the 1990's as designers increasingly produced products that were recognizable and marketable. The desire created by the ensuing sales campaign caused sales to increase dramatically.

Just as certain models of cars can become very desirable because of the special nature of the vehicle, so handbags can also be made to similarly exhibit certain attractive features making them a 'must-have'.



## Chapter 7 - Would you love to have a LUXURY REAL LEATHER HANDBAG?

Most people have a fairly good idea of what a luxury motor car is. The first thing that comes to mind is price - a luxury motor car is expensive. Second is that it is well crafted, and its fittings and fixtures are of the highest quality.

For example one would expect to see the upholstery in a luxury car made of genuine (real) leather, which looks first class, not for just a short time but for many years.

Similarly luxury designer real leather handbags have many of the same features of a luxury motor vehicle:

- expensive - being made from the finest genuine (real) leather, such as 100% genuine Italian leather, means that the leather itself is relatively very costly to produce. The hardware is made of first class materials. The handbags are handmade by skilled crafts men and women to exacting standards.
- designed not only to look wonderful but to maintain its aura of beauty and charm over a very long period of time - years and years rather than just a few months.
- overall a luxury designer handbag looks fantastic and exudes quality and class.

In summary a Luxury Designer Handbag will:

- most probably be made of 100% genuine Italian leather
- the hardware will be made of the best materials
- the design will impress with the quality of materials, its balance of line, shape and composition, and excellence of workmanship.

A handbag only achieves luxury design status if meets such criteria.

For a brand to reach the pinnacle of success, it must consistently maintain the high standards of excellence.

Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> real leather handbags meet these very high standards of design, materials, and workmanship.

Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> quality handbags are made from 100% genuine Italian leather by our manufacturer to the same high class standards as they apply to the making of luxury handbags for a range of their other internationally well known client brands.

*"... luxury is indeed democratic: it's available to anyone, anywhere, at any price point."* "Deluxe" by Dana Thomas—p12





# SECTION C

**Where are luxury handbags made?**

# Chapter 8 - WHERE ARE LUXURY HANDBAGS MADE?

## The rise of China

These days, the question of where luxury handbags are made is much harder to answer for some brands but not so much for others. But the overall situation is steadily becoming clearer and the public at large have become increasingly accepting of the changes that have occurred.

As far back as the early 2000s Coach, well known in the New York for their luxury handbags, let it be known that their handbags were being manufactured in China. They lead the way in proceeding with what then was considered to be an innovative action. Every one of their handbags is made to a very high standard of quality (refer quotes later in this article), and the response by the North American market to this initiative turned out to be highly positive.

Similarly, Come & Shop customers know that:

- Bella Charis handbags are made of genuine Italian leather. The leather itself is made from quality cowhide supplied to tanneries located in Tuscany Italy.
- Like most luxury handbags Bella Charis real leather handbags are also made in China to the luxury standard as specified in Chapter 5, "What are the essential features of a luxury handbag?"

Other fashion houses have not always been as forthcoming with information as to their place of manufacture:

- a bag might be made in China but finished in France or Italy
- a bag might be made in Prato, Italy by Chinese machinists stitching the templated pieces together

[What others have to say about the question regarding the place of manufacture?](#)

From time to time information comes to light about the source of handbag manufacture for a fashion house, but a lot of this information can be highly fragmented and not necessarily correct. Nevertheless the clear trend is for more information to be made available and for it to be a



more accurate description of what is actually happening.

A most authoritative account of what is known about this important question, has been given by Dana Thomas in her book "Deluxe", published by Penguin Books in 2007.

The New York Times in reviewing the 349 pages, plus detailed notes, bibliography and extensive index has said:

"Thomas's message is relevant to shoppers of every stripe", and

"Thomas shows how far illustrious houses have moved from their roots" (refer back cover of Deluxe)

The following quotes from Deluxe provide comment about the transition of handbag manufacture from Europe to China. If you choose to purchase and read the book you will find the answers to many other questions, but if all you wish to find out is where handbags are made, the following quotations from 'Deluxe' will give you a broad understanding of what was happening up to 2007 and by inference what has happened since then.

Since the end of World War II there has been continuous change in the fashion industry. The most noticeable change over the last two decades has been the shift in manufacturing of leather handbags across to China. The change has been anticipated, welcomed and ultimately accepted.

"The luxury industry has changed the way people dress ..... It has changed the way people interact. It has become part of our social fabric." (p13)

"The workroom was simple: white, with cement floors, long tables, and overhead fluorescent lights. On each table sat piles of bags from [four couture brands mentioned by name] in various states of completion. Gold cowhide clutches with linen lining, bronze crocodile purses with enamel snakehead clasps. ... The craftsmen worked on twenty bags at a time. ..." (p197)

"That's how it is done in Europe. In China, luxury handbag manufacturing is a completely different business. Yes, luxury handbags are made in China. Top brands. Brands that you carry. Brands that deny outright that their bags are made in China make their bags in China, not Italy, not in France, not in the United Kingdom. I visited a factory in Guangdong Province and held the bags in my hands." (p197)

"There are three or four factories that specialize in manufacturing luxury brand leather goods in China, most in Dongguan, an industrial town about an hour north of Hong Kong. ... The change came in the mid-1990s when Coach decided to move a small portion of its production from the United States to China." (p138).

"... the perceived quality of Coach products has risen since it shifted production from the United States to China, and other countries." (p200)

"Emboldened by Coach's trailblazing success, other luxury brands quietly began to look into producing leather goods in China." (p200)

"As labor costs mounted in Europe in the 1990s, businesses began to source to cheaper labor elsewhere in the world." (p200)

"The most obvious place for luxury brands to trim costs was the same place that every other industry was trimming costs: in the price of labor. And the cheapest and most plentiful labor today is in China. Once Coach proved that Chinese workers could meet luxury brand quality standards, several other brands moved a small amount of production there too. Like [brand name mentioned], they started with short runs of classic and basic designs of leather goods." (pp201-202)

"With each successful run, the brands got braver, ordering more, and other brands joined in the exodus. By 2006, hundreds of thousands of luxury brand handbags, toiletry cases, and satchels were produced in China each year." (p202)

"The luxury brands are fiercely protective of their logo" (p202)

"Today, the luxury brand handbag is a study in globalization: hardware, like locks, come from Italy and China (primarily Guangzhou); the zipper comes from Japan; the lining comes from Korea; the embroidery is done in Italy, India, or northern China; the leather is from Korea or Italy; and the bag is assembled partly in China and [less so] partly in Italy." (pp202-203)

"Another has the entire bag made in China except for the handle. The bag is shipped to Italy, where the Italian-made handle is attached." (p202)

"... in Europe, companies do not have to declare where their goods are produced." (p221)

"The evening after I visited the factory in China, I met some friends for a drink at the bar at the new Harvey Nichols store in Hong Kong. As I entered the store from the Landmark luxury shopping mall in the heart of the Central business district, I passed through the handbag department. To my right, on the shelf, sat the exact same bag I saw the Chinese girls making in the factory. ... It was for sale at Harvey Nick's for \$1,200." (p204)

Since 2006, luxury brands have become more open about the fact that their manufacturer is a Chinese company. The brands are more confident about revealing their manufacturing sources as the public becomes more accepting of that arrangement, because manufacturers, and the artisans they employ, are recognized as being 'world class'. Any concern as to the quality of the product coming from China has steadily and surely diminished in its intensity. Initial doubts have disappeared.

There is increasing confidence in the professionalism of Chinese manufacturing companies, and their ability to produce handbags of the highest quality.

The prediction is that luxury handbag manufacture will spread into those Asian countries where both labour costs are competitive and manufacturing skills are of the highest order.



# Chapter 9 - FRANCE, CHINA AND ITALY - world leaders in Handbag design and manufacture

In the field of handbag fashion three countries have become dominant players in design and manufacture. France, China and Italy together hold pride of place in this part of the luxury leather handbag world.

## Real leather

Historically by reputation the world's best quality leather comes from a single region in Tuscany, Italy. Located between Pisa and Florence, the Pelle Conciata Vegetale in Toscana (Vegetable-Tanned leather of Tuscany) holds sway for three main reasons:

- the cowhide from which the majority of fashion handbags are made comes from cattle bred on open pastures. The hides are as far as possible without blemish - no marks, no scars to speak of.
- The hide is 'full grain' meaning that the full hide is used, not hide that has been split into a thinner product making it lesser in grain.
- The tanning process is controlled by long time tanneries using vegetable based tanning materials. The outcome is a leather that is of the highest quality and meeting the most demanding standards.

The leather is described as Genuine Italian leather because it is not only real leather - the cowhide has been processed in Italy and in such a way as to meet the world's most demanding standards for a luxury product. Genuine Italian leather is at the pinnacle of leathers and is the natural choice for the luxury handbag brands.

## Muddying the waters

Unfortunately some countries allow products to be called real leather when in fact they are not the real thing.

However in countries like New Zealand, Denmark and Britain the law requires that only leather made from cowhide can be called real or genuine leather.

The name faux leather or false leather refers to material that may look like real leather or is bonded leather fibre but in fact is not real leather at all.

## Manufacture of Handbags

As a result reputable designers and manufacturers go to extreme lengths to protect the image and name of their product range. They want their customers to know that their handbags are **real leather** as in genuine Italian leather for example.

Most of the handbags sold by the luxury brands are now made in China. This started in the late 1990's and is now an established practice.

The brands generally feel comfortable letting people know this fact as they now ship their Italian leather to their Chinese factory of choice where people highly competent and experienced in their trade make high quality handbags that for the purchasing public are regarded as being highly desirable and therefore a most valuable item.

There are very few exceptions to this practice. Hermes is one such example - their bags still being made in France, Spain and Italy.

"... most luxury companies have raised their brands prices exponentially." "Deluxe" by Dana Thomas—p 10

In this regard Bella Charis is one of the exceptions in not raising their prices exceptional levels.





# SECTION D

**Popular types of bags  
—photos & descriptions**

## Chapter 10 - What is a TOTE?

A TOTE is a medium to large handbag - particularly useful for shopping. It is very popular amongst younger people and those 'on the move'.

The bag generally has twin straps/handles and an open or zipped top.

Stylish and impressive but also very useful and practical.

The best quality totes are made of genuine Italian leather by skilled craftsmen and women - well trained, experienced and highly competent in traditional skills gained over the generations.



# Chapter 11 - What is an EVENING BAG or CLUTCH?

An EVENING BAG or CLUTCH is generally a smaller rectangular shaped handbag, without a handle or strap, that needs to be 'clutched' by the user.

It is used as an accessory for evening wear, but it can also be used for the appropriate occasion during the daytime as well.

Some clutches designed particularly for evening wear have a long strap, often a chain, to enable the user to secure the bag.

Extremely popular for formal occasions it represents the ultimate in beauty and charm for the elegant user.





## Chapter 12 - What is an CROSS BODY BAG?

As its name suggests, a CROSS BODY BAG features a long strap which reaches from the shoulder across the body with the bag itself resting on the opposite side of the body.

It allows the wearer to be hands free, while at the same time allowing the bag itself to be securely held in place.

A real leather Cross Body Bag has a laid back and casual appearance but at the same time looks modern and sophisticated.



## Chapter 13 - What is an HOBBO?

A HOBBO bag is characterized by its crescent shape and a top zip covering a roomy compartment.

It is often worn over the shoulder and designed to present a casual, stylish and modern look.

It is an essential in any genuine leather handbag range.





## Chapter 14 - What is a SHOULDER BAG?

SHOULDER BAGS come in various shapes and sizes with single or double handles/straps long enough for the user to hang the bag over their shoulder. The handles are very generally able to be adjusted to suit the user.

Bella Charis real leather Shoulder Bags are very popular, making a strong fashion statement, with their classy and alluring effect.





## Chapter 15 - What is a BACKPACK?

BACKPACKS are not just for backpackers and school children.

They come with double handles that go across the back so that the pack is supported by both shoulders.

Bella Charis real leather backpacks are designed to be both functional as well as stylish.



## Chapter 16 - What is a NAPPY BAG?

A real leather Nappy Bag is designed to provide the look of luxury while carrying nappies and all kinds of other materials needed when caring for a baby or young child.

It is generally a storage bag with many pockets, and with handles that allow the bag to be worn over the shoulder.

Many have linings which can be removed for washing.

A designer nappy bag reminds a woman of what she was before having a child - elegant and mature.

Specially designed nappy bags provide an exciting bag for the style conscious mother.



## Chapter 17 - What is a WALLET/PURSE?

A PURSE refers to a small bag designed for holding coins. It normally has a clip top whereas earlier bags designed for holding coins were a pouch with a drawstring.

WALLETS are designed to hold both paper currency and coins with the addition of a purse section.

A women will most likely hold her purse or wallet in her handbag, while a man will carry his wallet in a pocket (trousers or coat).

In today's world the appearance needs to be both practical and stylish.





# Chapter 18 - Other bags—Men's, Multi-function, Weekend, Laptop, Barrel

**Men's Bag** — Come & shop has a range of bags especially for men

- see [www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Men's](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Men's)

**Multi-function Bag** — a large bag which can be used for many purposes

- see [www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Multi-function](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Multi-function)

**Weekend Bag** — bag large enough and versatile enough to carry clothing and accessories for a weekend trip, also sometimes used by young mothers as a Nappy bag or Multi-function bag, and designed to be stylish and appealing.

- see [www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Weekend](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Weekend)

**Laptop Bag** — get a laptop bag or satchel to store you laptop computer and/or tablet

- see [www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Laptop](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Laptop)

**Barrel Bag** — generally more rounded in shape with a leather strap pull-cord for the top closure

- see [www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Barrel-bag](http://www.comeandshop.com.au/collections/handbags/Barrel-bag)







# SECTION E

About  
**Bella Charis® Handbags**

# Chapter 19 - The making of a Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> handbag—luxury leather and impeccable finish

Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> is already creating its own character and personality as a luxury label of the future with interest and demand gathering pace.

The Italian leather handbags, purses and wallets are of outstanding design and quality. Come and Shop<sup>®</sup> is proud to be associated with Bella Charis as a fashion brand of the future.

**Luxury represents exclusivity.** To qualify, a luxury item must first of all be impeccable in regard to the materials from which it is made and the workmanship devoted to its manufacture. This is an absolute minimum requirement, no ifs or buts. More than that, the item must also be unique compared with its competitors.

**Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> genuine leather handbags easily meet the criteria for luxury:**

- The hide comes from cows and calves brought up on controlled pasture so that the hide is blemish free.
- The hides are converted into leather in a tannery located in the "Leather District" situated between Florence and Pisa in Tuscany, Italy. The leather is truly genuine Italian leather.
- The finished leather is ecofriendly and RHOS compliant as no dangerous chemicals are used in the vegetable tanning process.
- The handbag hardware is made to the highest standards.
- The bags are made to perfection in Gaungzhou by craftsmen and craftswomen who have lived as artisan families in China for generations.
- Each Bella Charis handbag is made and labelled with the Bella Charis name - metal logo, card, leather tag sewn into the inside of the bag, and on the dust bag.

Discover the secret - our manufacturer also makes the highest quality handbags for many of the worlds leading fashion houses. The quality of Bella Charis handbags is exactly the same as those for these fashion brands - world's best leather and perfection in the design and the making.

Bella Charis handbags are in the process of increasing markedly in value as brand recognition grows.

**What is genuine Italian leather?**

Genuine Italian Leather is reserved for luxury handbags, shoes, leather jackets, upholstery for high class furniture, and for high end motor vehicles such as Ferraris and Alfa Romeos.

Italian leather is the world's best leather and comes from top quality (or top grain) calf skin and cow hide and very soft sheepskin that is transformed by tanneries located between Pisa and Florence in the Tuscany region of Italy. The Tuscany tanneries have been operating for centuries. More recently these highly skilled artisans have banded together as a consortium known under its trademark name "Pelle Conciata al vegetale in Toscana" (Vegetable tanned leather of Tuscany).

The fashion market for luxury leather products is insatiable and Italian tanneries are at the forefront of the leather manufacturing sector of the global market.

The finished leather is ecofriendly and RHOS compliant meaning that dangerous chemicals are absent from the tanning process.

### Your Perfect Choice

The luxury leather used for Bella Charis hand bags, purses and wallets is sourced from a supplier who is a member of the Tuscany Consortium located in an area between Pisa and Florence in a region that has traditionally been known as the "Leather District".

Like many other very well-known fashion house brands, the manufacture of the Bella Charis range is handled by a highly specialised and professional team of skilled workers in Guangzhou, the long time centre of the Asian leather goods industry. These artisans have operated their trade for many generations and have built a reputation that is most enviable and long lasting. (For verification refer Chapter 8 - "Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China.")

The leather is the world's best and the standard of manufacture is of the highest order. The outcome is perfection - something one can only dream of.

### Manufacturing of leather products

Except for the last few paragraphs, the following remarks have been taken directly from our manufacturer's description of the processes perfected over many years.

"After we get all the leather from Italy, we make our leather handbags in our factory located in Guangzhou, China. (refer to - "Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China." in which there has been a mass shifting of manufacturing of luxury handbags to China) In this way we can use the finest quality leather, employ the services of the highest skilled workers while at the same time controlling all aspects of the production.

The luxury leather handbags we are making involve many kinds of leather and leather embossed effects – including crocodile, python and many other patterns.

### Custom hardware

All hardware components are professionally designed and made. Each item is lovingly prepared and skilfully blended into each of the luxury items produced. Only top grade hardware is used for handbag embellishments in either gold, silver, brass or gun colour.

The hardware fitted to each bag is carefully selected to match the many outstanding designs and styles. Nothing is left to chance when it comes to putting together the pieces of the jigsaw to create the stunning collection of couture handbags, purses and wallets.

### The highest level of craftsmanship

Every leather piece to be used in the manufacturing process is carefully selected. Items not up to standard are rejected. A series of paper moulds are made for each handbag style and then every single leather piece is accurately cut using the template provided.

Highly skilled craftsmen and women then stitch the leather pieces together, while at the same time fixing the hardware onto the bags. They follow a fine tradition of expertise and excellence that extends back many generations in the city of Guangzhou and that has been renowned over the ages for its proficiency and expertise. (refer to Chapter 8 - "Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China.")

All this ensures that the finished object is stunningly gorgeous and perfect."







### Packaging the handbag

The finished handbag is most carefully and professionally packed:

- The attached Bella Charis bc logo and the embossed Bella Charis brand, marks your unique luxury handbag.
- The bag is first wrapped in white tissue paper.
- It is then placed in the special Bella Charis breathable dust bag.
- All of this is then packed in a plastic bag with the bag code item attached.



- The package, packing slip and covering note from Come & Shop are then transferred into a DHL Express delivery box which is then shipped to you at your nominated address.



### First class delivery service

DHL Express delivers your handbag to you at your chosen address. They provide an incredibly fast and secure door-to-door service.

Provided the handbag is in stock it will be shipped within 48 hours after your order and payment have been received. Come & Shop will send a tracking number to your email address immediately after the parcel has been shipped from the manufacturing point.

Your bag should arrive at your nominated delivery address within 3-5 working days. The parcel **must be signed for** at the time of delivery, so please make sure you provide a delivery address where there will be someone who is able to accept and sign for the parcel.

If it is not possible for the parcel to be signed for at a home or work address, **DHL Express will make delivery to your nearby Post Office** where you can then sign for and pick up your package.

All the effort and energy you have put into choosing your special Italian leather handbag will be rewarded the moment you receive your DHL parcel and then proceed to reveal its contents.

For every handbag and purse purchased you will receive a special handbag hanger courtesy of Come & Shop. This will allow you to hang your bag from a table or bench. The hanger will help you keep your precious handbag off the floor so preventing scuffing and damage. The hanger will arrive at your shipping address in a separate parcel.



Come and Shop is the store that gives you the very best possible customer service. We look forward to seeing you in the future on [www.comeandshop.com.au](http://www.comeandshop.com.au) where you will receive service that is outstanding in every respect.

### Reward points to collect for your purchases

For every \$60 of goods purchased earn 1 point. When you reach 8 points you can apply for and receive a Silver 925 necklace\* with silver pendant to the value of \$120.00, and delivery will be free.

\*925 Silver is the classic 'mix' of 92.5% silver and 7.5% copper. This alloy is commonly known as Sterling Silver

### Reference:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/leather> - this website talks about the different forms of tanning that transform hides into leather and describes each of the main four types of leather as well as numerous other less common leathers. Production processes are many and varied encompassing a range of traditional practices that have stood the test of time, through to present day technological refinements.

# Chapter 20 - Be part of the Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> experience

Come & Shop<sup>®</sup> has worked hard and long to prepare for the introduction of Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> as a luxury brand.

Bella Charis is already creating its own character and personality as a luxury label for now and for the future. Interest and demand is growing strongly.

Bella Charis real leather handbags, purses, and wallets are of outstanding design and quality. Come & Shop is proud to be associated with the range on offer and the regular updates.

Whereas one could only dream of beauty (Bella) and charm (Charis) as theirs to have and to hold, the reality is that anyone can reach for and attain that goal.

Bella Charis literally epitomizes beauty and charm by bringing together Genuine Italian Leather produced in Tuscany, and a highly talented group of people based in China to create high class set of fashion real leather handbags, purses and wallets. Our manufacturer also makes quality handbags for many other respected well known fashion brands. This means that Bella Charis handbags are made to the same exacting standards of perfection as other well-known fashion brands. (Refer chapter 8 "Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China.")

## Genuine Italian Leather

The finest calf skin leather and top cow hide leather comes from Tuscany, Italy. where generations of tanneries located between Florence and Pisa have collaborated to produce the world's best quality leather. The region is famously known as the 'Leather District'.

The elite tannery artisans have banded together to form the Consortium known by its trademark name "Pelle Conciata al Vegetale in Toscana" (Vegetable-Tanned Leather of Tuscany). In particular, the leather is RHOS compliant, which means that dangerous substances are not used in the tanning process. In other words the vegetable tanning process is completely safe.

## Perfect Craftsmanship

The team of craftsmen (and women) assembled in the Guangzhou factory in China are amongst the best that can be found anywhere in the world. The region is famous for its leather manufacturing industry and the extensive range of beautifully formed leather products. Chinese craftsmanship at its best is world renowned for excellence over many centuries. (Refer chapter 8 "Where are luxury handbags made? The rise of China.")

Each piece of a 'Bella Charis' genuine leather handbag is accurately cut using carefully prepared paper moulds.



The highly skilled team of machinists expertly stitch the segments together eventually forming a gorgeous handbag, purse or wallet. The finished product is a work of art, like it is for all handbags made by our manufacturer for its many other luxury clients.

### Exquisite Hardware

All hardware components are professionally designed and made.

There are four classes of metalware. These come in gold, silver, brass and gun colours.

All items are lovingly prepared and skilfully blended into each and every one of the luxury items produced.

Nothing is ever left to chance when it comes to putting together the pieces of the jigsaw to form the stunning collection of 'Bella Charis' fashion handbags, purses and wallets.

### More to come

With every handbag and purse you will receive a specially made handbag hanger courtesy of Come & Shop. This will allow you to hang your accessory off a table or bench. The floor is not the place to leave your luxury handbag.

### Reward points to collect for your purchases

For every \$60 of goods purchased earn 1 point. When you reach 8 points you can apply for and receive a Silver 925 necklace\* with pendant to the value of \$120.00, and delivery will be free.

\*925 Silver is the classic 'mix' of 92.5% silver and 7.5% copper. This alloy is commonly known as Sterling Silver and on Come & Shop Silver jewellery, the '925' is stamped. Jewellery without such a designation is probably not genuine Sterling Silver.

**Come & Shop** at the store that gives you great value for money and the best possible customer service.

# Chapter 21 - How to identify a genuine Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> leather handbag

The following steps can be taken to verify the **authenticity of a real leather Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> handbag**.

## Step 1 – Metal logo

The bc logo is made in silver, gold, brass or gun colour to match the handbag hardware. The letters bc as shown on the logo overlap each other



## Step 2 – One swing tag

This tag has Bella Charis and 100% genuine Italian leather printed on a black background



## Step 3 – Another swing tag

This tag has an overlapping bc printed on a black background, and care tips are printed on the other side



## Step 4 – Dustbag

Stamped on the dust bag is the name Bella Charis bc



### Step 5 - Tag inside the bag

This is an embossed leather tag stamped with 'Bella Charis'



### Step 6 - Leather Tag outside the bag

This is an embossed leather tag stamped with Bella Charis bc hanging outside the bag



### Step 7 – The bag is genuine leather

Apart from using the above steps to authenticate your Bella Charis handbag made from 100% genuine Italian leather, use the senses of looking, smelling and touching to verify that the bag is indeed real leather.

- The leather looks impeccable and free of defects
- The leather smells like real leather
- The leather feels like real leather as you touch it and move it

### Step 8 – Luxury handbag

- The leather is without blemish
- The hardware is top quality
- The cutting, stitching and interior is first class

To be **classed as a luxury item**, the handbag **must be impeccable as far as materials and workmanship** are concerned.

## Chapter 22 - It's Official

Our two brands Come & Shop® and Bella Charis bc® are officially trademarked brands. The normal waiting period for approval of ownership of intellectual property such as Come & Shop and bc is close to 12 months.

Our plan is to make Bella Charis bc an Australian standout as far as handbags fashion is concerned.

The bc presence shows up on our website and related social media sites with bags carrying the Bella Charis logo and tag.

Those of you who have been following Come & Shop since its launch in late 2013 will know that we have a presence in the upper level of the fashion accessory market.

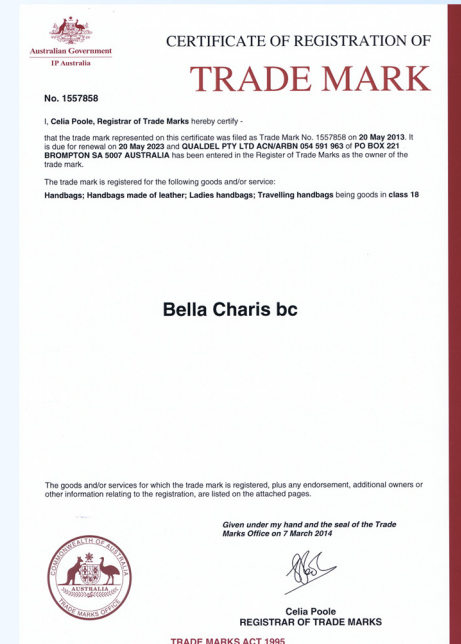
- Sterling Silver Jewellery that attracts and inspires
- Bella Charis handbags that like most fashion bags these days, is made from leather sourced from tanneries located in Tuscany Italy, includes hardware of the highest quality, and is then made by highly qualified and experienced artisans in China
- a range of perfumes coming from the best known perfumeries of Europe and USA

You can find out much more about our ranges of fashion accessories by browsing through the many blogs that have been produced by Come & Shop.

Our website and our social media entries regularly report on the latest releases from our fashion accessory suppliers.

Do you know what Bella Charis means? Bella means 'beauty' - your beauty and Charis means 'charm' - your charm.

Your beauty and charm are paramount.







# SECTION F

## Protecting you Handbag

# Chapter 23 - Caring for your valuable Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> genuine leather handbag

Bella Charis bc<sup>®</sup> - beauty and charm for you

Keeping your newly acquired Bella Charis real leather handbag in first class condition is not in the least bit difficult when you know what to do.

There are two main options:

- Perform the essential maintenance yourself, or
- Pay a specialist 'bag cleaning' service to do the maintenance and any repair/s for you leaving you to deal with the day to day care requirements

## Handling

Your genuine leather handbag is an elegant and fashionable accessory for your wardrobe.

Over time its beauty and presence can be dulled by scuffing and contact with surrounding objects and surfaces.

With proper handling your handbag can look great and last a long time:

- Avoid placing your handbag on the floor.
- Use a handbag hanger which fits easily over the edge of a table or bench and will hold your accessory (handbag, jacket, scarf, umbrella) off the floor thus helping to keep it clean, or hang it over the back of a chair.
- Avoid placing your real leather handbag in direct sunlight or in front of a heater for an extended period as this may cause the leather to dry out, fade and/or crack.
- Avoid dye transferring from clothes to your handbag. New denim is one of the most common offenders.
- Avoid contact with body oils and oils generally (eg buttered popcorn).
- Avoid placing your handbag on a kitchen bench or table where raw food is processed. This is sensible 'handbag hygiene' practice.
- Avoid contact with water or excess moisture.
- Avoid sponging with an artificial sponge as the dye may rub off the sponge.
- Never use baby or hand wipes to clean your handbag as the alkali in the wipe may damage the leather.

## Storage

- Always store your real leather handbag, purse or other accessory in a dark, cool and dry space. Never store in a 'wet' area such as a bathroom or laundry.
- Avoid storing in a plastic bag, Instead use the breathable fabric dust bag in which your bag arrived - even a clean white pillowcase will suffice.
- Avoid contact with other items to prevent any dye transfer
- If possible, hang your genuine leather handbag on a rack in its breathable fabric dust bag such as the one in which DHL delivered your handbag.
- Provide good air circulation so allowing what was once a living hide to breathe.

## Maintenance and care

While always recommending the services of a cleaning specialist to clean your bag, there are some general steps to follow should you wish to spruce up your precious accessory:

- Empty all contents.
- Unzip all internal and external pockets, tip the bag upside down, and shake it to dislodge all loose items and other debris.
- For anything other than untreated leather -
- Have available a clean soft cleaning cloth, warm distilled water (ordinary tap water contains chemicals which settle on the surface of the bag when the water evaporates), a few drops of liquid soap (neutral pH), and a dry clean white towel. Note that reservoir tap water also contains chlorine which can act as a bleach.
- Wipe the leather with the now damp cleaning cloth.
- Dry the surface with the towel and buff the surface gently to restore some lustre.
- For untreated leather, such a suede, the above process should not be used.
- For buckles and metallic attachments never use anything abrasive to polish the surface, instead rub lightly with the damp cleaning cloth.
- If you have purchased a recommended proprietary product to waterproof and otherwise protect the leather surface, treat the leather surface as directed.

## Recommended bag cleaning service

Come & Shop and 'Bella Charis' recommend "My Bag Spa" who provide handbag cleaning and restoration services in Melbourne. My Bag Spa specializes in restoring bags from luxury brands such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Bella Charis.

Specific services include:

- cleaning and stain removal
- colour restoration
- shine restoration
- premium level treatment resulting in a silky smooth outcome

They can be contacted by phone on - (03)9654 1148 or (03) 9654 1189.

For further information click on [www.mybagspa.com.au/contact](http://www.mybagspa.com.au/contact)



## **Chapter 24 - Protecting your valuable real leather handbag - keep it clean & fresh, and make it last longer**

When you first receive your genuine leather handbag you will notice that if it is a Bella Charis bag one of the swing tags (the one marked bc) contains some tips about basic maintenance and care.

Periodically empty the contents of the bag to clear the lined storage areas of all debris. The reason for doing this is to prevent accumulated dirt and materials from making their way into the lining itself and so causing the lining to look soiled and tired.

Liquids leaking from cosmetic care equipment, soft drink bottles, and the like may or may not stain the lining - but they can transfer dissolved dirt etc into the fibres of the lining. Once the liquids dry out, the stained effect can be difficult to remove.

In the eyes of bag lovers the main purpose of adopting a regular cleaning regime is to maintain a clean and hygienic environment for your bag. It is believed that meticulous attention to cleanliness leads to a safer and more long lasting accessory item.

Remember that most genuine leather handbags are treated to prevent liquids from soaking into the leather surface. However great care should still be taken to prevent liquids, particularly organic liquids, from making contact with the treated leather. Organic based liquids such as those having an alcohol base can cause staining because they can dissolve your bag's protective coating thus leaving a stain that is extremely difficult to remove. Be careful to keep leaking biro's away from the leather surface.

If your handbag is made of untreated leather, such as is the case for a suede bag, be advised to have the surface sprayed with a protective coating.

Body oils can be a major problem for your handbag handles. The bag handles/straps can darken over time due to body perspiration and hand lotion soaking into the bag handles. One way of minimizing the effect of handles gradually darkening over the course of time is to carry the bag on your arm or shoulder.

While it is possible for an expert restorer to clean or even replace a bag handle or strap, it is best for you to take measures that as far as possible avoid the problem from arising in the first place.

## Chapter 25 - Protect your valuable leather handbag from mould

From time to time Darwin suffers attacks of mould because of continuous humid weather. This is not uncommon in the tropical areas of Australia.

Mould can strike in unpredictable ways and places. In the more temperate zones of Australia 'wet' areas such as bathrooms and laundries can also suffer from attacks of mould.

So how can you protect your genuine leather handbag from such attacks?

The solution is simple. Always store your bag in a cool dry place with good air circulation. Moulds don't gain a hold if the water vapour reading is low. Dry air means a low humidity reading, and so no mould.

Despite all your best efforts, particularly if you live in one of the areas of Australia with a more humid climate, your handbag just might happen to get some mould on it. If this occurs carefully scrub the leather with a soft cloth and then apply a cleanser and conditioner designed specifically for leather goods.

If there are white patches on the inside of the handbag, brush the surface clean with a soft brush and then wipe over with a soft cloth.

After treatment you can air your bag in low sunlight for a brief airing period. Then when you store your bag make sure it is in a clean dry place with good air circulation - certainly not in either a cellar or roof space/attic.

For more serious mould problems consult with [mybagspa.com.au](http://mybagspa.com.au) - they can be a great help in this regard.



## Chapter 26 - When to have your valuable leather handbag cleaned, restored & repaired

Your precious handbag may have been your wonderful companion for many years. You have treasured it and cared for it all that time. But it has now reached the stage where it is in need of a full scale clean and restoration.

While few in number, there are businesses that actually exist with the sole purpose of restoring handbags to their original glory.

Your handbag may be well worth such special attention:

- You have owned the bag for many years and both the leather and lining need a total makeover. In this case you will need to send your bag to a specialized bag restoration service such as [www.mybagspa.com.au](http://www.mybagspa.com.au). They are located in Melbourne and upon receipt of your bag will advise you as to what needs to be done to bring it back to life.
- The handles are heavily darkened. These can be replaced.
- Stitching has been damaged. This can be rectified.
- Metal hardware including zipware is damaged. This too can be replaced.
- Scuffing, scratches and tears. These problems can be addressed to a degree.
- Colour restoration. This is a common problem amongst aged bags, but wonders can be achieved.
- There are many other possible problems that handbag owners can ask about.

It is wise to ring My Bag Spa prior to sending your precious handbag for servicing. The experts will tell you what needs to be done and answer such questions as, "How long will it take to proceed and finish with the make-over?" and "What is the estimated cost to have my bag a refurbished?"



# SECTION G

## Social Media Entries



# Chapter 27 - Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest

Using your desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile see us on -

## Facebook

- [www.facebook.com/BellaCharisHandbags](http://www.facebook.com/BellaCharisHandbags)
- [www.facebook.com/ComeandShopWithUs](http://www.facebook.com/ComeandShopWithUs)

## Twitter

- <https://twitter.com/CandSJJan>

## Pinterest

- [www.pinterest.com/comeandshop/come-shop/](http://www.pinterest.com/comeandshop/come-shop/)
- [www.pinterest.com/comeandshop/bella-charis-handbags/](http://www.pinterest.com/comeandshop/bella-charis-handbags/)

**Tell your friends about our website and our social media pages.**

Many of our handbag updates are first announced on one of our social media sites.



