

Even in the age of Google Maps, the beauty of a fine globe remains alluring

Global power

“This all started,” says Peter Bellaby, a tall, slim Englishman, “as a little project to make a gift for my dad, and I completely lost control of all the finances and had to turn it into a business.”

That business is bespoke globe-making, and what began on a dining room table in 2008 has grown into a unique and artisanal adventure that employs a team of dedicated craftspeople and sells globes for tens of thousands of pounds at a time.

From a light and airy workshop off a side street in North London, Bellaby explains his philosophy: “Everything is finished by hand, and I’m happy to stick by the old way of doing it – it’s far nicer and far more interesting... the things we make

are finely crafted and we’re not churning out 150 a day.”

Indeed, Bellaby’s handcrafted products are a testament to a painstaking process and an obsession with quality. It took him 18 frustrating months to make his first globe through trial and error and even now a globe – depending on size – will usually take months to complete.

The larger globes have a limited run. The Churchill is a behemoth – the 127cm diameter sphere is decorated with Sennelier watercolour pigment and UV-resistant gloss and sits on a rolled base made from hand-turned oak and hardwood, fitted with revolutionary bearings that allow a fluid 360-degree rotation. Only 40 will ever be made and they take a year to complete. A discerning and select client list will pay about US\$60,000 for a Churchill and are encouraged to order unique and bespoke detailing. Currently, technicians from Aston Martin are fabricating a new stand for the 80cm globe.

His exclusivity is matched by his precision: “I don’t really tell anyone most of the fine details – we don’t even apply for patents because that would just give the methods away.” *bellerbyandco.com*



Above, from top: Each globe gets many watercolour washes painted by hand; applying paper ‘gores’, the triangular shapes that fit onto a sphere. **Below:** Mini desk globes

