



The first fountain pen collection made from volcanic lava with a 23K palladium flexible nib

Visconti will introduce the Homo Sapiens collection of pens at the Philadelphia Pen Show, Jan. 22nd— but you don't have to wait until then to order

After 25 years in the fine writing pen business, I am seldom surprised when I see a new pen collection. But this new Visconti *Homo Sapiens* collection is definitely not a variation on a similar theme.

What makes it different?

First, it is made of 50 percent volcanic lava mixed with some Visconti secret sauce. As a result, the pen is practically shatter-proof. You can leave it on your car dashboard. Visconti claims it will withstand 300° F (150° C) temperature. If you're worried about germs, I guess you could boil it, however I'm sure it would void the warranty.

Why a palladium nib?

There are a couple of reasons. Back in the old days when Louis XIV put a flair into his writing, he did it with a flexible nib. But those nibs were subject to corrosion. Then came the fountain pen which eventually had to compete with the ballpoint, whose popularity increased because it could write

with enough pressure on carbon copies and later on NCR paper.

Who knows the exact reason (I'm sure some of you do) but gold became the nib of choice because it had some flexibility. Twenty-four karat gold was too soft for creating the 18th century Spencerian flair; other metals were added to make gold stiffer, creating an even harder problem for putting flair in your writing.

Palladium solves both the corrosion problem and the lack of flair. Palladium is two to three times more flexible than pure gold so it gives you flair if you want it. (Check out my signature (at right) from a Visconti Fine nib—I wasn't even trying hard for a calligraphic look.) And palladium solves the corrosion problem because at 23 karats, it is virtually pure.

It's hygroscopic?

The *Homo Sapiens* pens are cool to the touch because the lava from Mt. Etna, the largest active volcano in Europe, absorbs sweat.

It's reasonably priced

My biggest surprise was the price. For all of its value, I was expecting a higher price.

Fountain Pen—\$595

Rollerball—\$395

Ballpoint—\$325

Pencil (0.7)—\$345

Available in XF, F, M, B, BB, and stub.

If you are looking for a special, everyday pen that wants to last forever, call me now for special pricing. I'll put you at the head of the line before their introduction in Philadelphia.

Bert Oser

(301) 468-6939

(800) 782-7680

Bertram's Inkwell • White Flint
11301 Rockville Pike • Kensington, MD 20895