

BLÜTHNER

Tradition and technology: Blüthner Classic Model 1 (right) meets the transparent Crystal Edition iDyllic Rosegold (opposite)



Julius Blüthner Pianofortefabrik

Leipzig has been one of Europe's great musical centres since the time of Bach, who served as cantor at the city's Thomaskirche from 1723 until his death in 1750. During the 19th century, this heritage was further enriched by figures such as the Schumanns, Mendelssohn and Wagner. Leipzig is also home to the world's oldest music publisher, Breitkopf & Härtel, which celebrated its 200th anniversary in 2019.

Julius Blüthner (1824-1910) founded his first piano factory in Leipzig in 1853. The son of a cabinet maker, Julius spent 15 years learning the piano trade before striking out on his own. Helped by endorsements from leading musicians of the day, including Liszt, Moscheles and Reinecke, business quickly took off and within 20 years Blüthner owned three factories employing 800 workmen. When Julius died in 1910, Blüthner was Germany's leading piano manufacturer, producing over 3,000 instruments per year. The company's pianos of this era were celebrated for their

lyrical tone quality and praised by composers such as Brahms, Mahler, Debussy and Rachmaninov.

A unique design feature known as aliquot stringing imbues the uppermost register of Blüthner's grand pianos with particularly rich resonance. Patented in 1873, this system involves adding an extra string to each trichord in the treble, positioned so they vibrate sympathetically rather than being struck.

Unlike many other piano brands, Blüthner was relatively unaffected by the First World War and Great Depression. In 1936, the company was commissioned to create a lightweight instrument that could be used for performances on the *Hindenburg* airship. The resulting Bauhaus design was lost when the airship crashed in America the following year, but a short clip of it being played can be heard on YouTube: [y2u.be/rThe_rOYTJA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y2u.be/rThe_rOYTJA)

During the Second World War, the Blüthner factory was used for assembling ammunition boxes then destroyed by Allied bombing.

When Leipzig fell behind the Iron Curtain in 1945, Blüthner initially remained in family hands, becoming a supplier of pianos to the Soviet Union. The company was nationalised in 1972 but returned to the family after German reunification. It is now run by the fifth generation of Blüthners – Christian and Knut Blüthner-Haessler – who have expanded production, invested in technology and established showrooms around the world.

Blüthner also owns and operates the midrange brands Haessler and Rönisch plus their entry-level counterparts Irmeler and Hupfeld.

CURRENT INSTRUMENTS

Acoustic pianos

Blüthner Classic is the company's flagship range of acoustic instruments, comprising six grand pianos and five uprights. Their traditional design and craftsmanship guarantee the warm, mellow tone for which Blüthner is renowned. All Blüthner Classic