

# Tenerías Omega on Embracing Olivenleder® Tanning: A Sustainable Leather Revolution

Tenerías Omega, a prominent name in the leather industry, has recently made waves by adopting Olivenleder® tanning, an innovative sustainable method utilising olive leaf extract from wet-green. Today, we have the privilege of speaking with Tenerías Omega to delve into their journey, motivation, and the transformative impact of Olivenleder tanning on their tannery.



## What inspired you to implement wet-green® OBE tanning for Olivenleder® using olive leaf extract from wet-green?

At Tenerías Omega, our commitment to sustainability is at the forefront of our operations. We recognise that biodegradability is a critical factor in minimising the environmental impact of leather production. Non-biodegradable substances can harm ecosystems and strain waste management systems. To address this, we embarked on a journey towards sustainable, biodegradable tanning methods, leading us to OBE (Olivenblattextrakt) tanning. Our motivation extends beyond environmental responsibility; it's also about enhancing our product portfolio to meet evolving customer expectations for metal-free vegetable tanned leather. In an industry that's rapidly evolving, our customers seek not only quality but also environmentally conscious products. By incorporating olive leaf extract from wet-green into our tanning process, we've taken a

significant step towards reducing our ecological footprint and aligning with the Leather Working Group's environmental standards.

## What steps were involved in implementing Olivenleder tanning?

Implementing Olivenleder tanning required adapting all production stages, from beamhouse to retanning, to the wet-green philosophy. This involved meticulous control of the specific chemical processes of wet-green technology. Technical feasibility tests and conformity trials were conducted for months to ensure a consistent and sustainable alternative.

## What advantages has Olivenleder tanning brought to your tannery compared to traditional chrome tanning?

Olivenleder tanning has revolutionised our production processes, offering numerous advantages:



Credit: Carl Hansen &amp; Son.

structural integrity, and offers enhanced resistance to external factors, ensuring longevity.

### How has the implementation of wet-green OBE for Olivenleder affected your tannery's environmental impact?

Implementing Olivenleder has significantly improved our environmental footprint:

**1. Water Consumption:** We achieved a remarkable 30% reduction in water usage, aligning with our commitment to conserving this vital resource

**2. Non-Toxic Waste:** Olivenleder's non-toxic waste simplifies and streamlines waste management, with 100% of waste going to agricultural compost production

**3. Biobased Chemicals:** We embraced predominantly bio-based, metal-free chemicals with low biocide content, ensuring environmentally benign leather production

**4. Energy Consumption:** Olivenleder helped us reduce energy consumption by 20%, enhancing operational efficiency

**5. Lower Carbon Emissions:** The proximity of OBE production in Europe to our tannery reduces carbon emissions, minimising our carbon footprint.

Olivenleder significantly improves the life cycle assessment (LCA) of leather. Reduced reliance on synthetic chemicals, efficient waste management, and lower resource consumption contribute to a more sustainable choice in LCA, positioning leather as an eco-friendly option.

### How has the quality of the leather changed with the use of olive leaf extract?

Since 2019, we've developed over 25 Olivenleder articles across various segments, including: residential; hospitality and contract; leather goods and shoe uppers; automotive; aircraft; and saddlery. Renowned brands, designers, airlines and hotels are using Olivenleder leather for their sustainable productions.

### Were there any unexpected challenges during the implementation of Olivenleder tanning?

We faced challenges related to the different approach of wet-end processes and mechanical operations. Collaboration with wet-green and our customers was instrumental in overcoming these hurdles.

### What new business opportunities have opened up through Olivenleder tanning?

Olivenleder has unlocked fresh opportunities for us, especially in the aviation and leather goods sectors. The aviation industry values sustainable materials for interiors, making Olivenleder an ideal fit. As consumers prioritise environmentally conscious products, we see growing demand for sustainable leather goods.

### How has the collaboration with wet-green contributed to your transition to Olivenleder?

wet-green's support was invaluable. They audited our processes, offered technical guidance, provided marketing assets and enhanced our visibility in the industry.

### In conclusion, what message would you like to convey to other tanneries considering a shift to more environmentally friendly methods?

Embrace sustainability as a strategic business decision. The leather industry's future lies in harmonising practices with the planet. Continuous innovation and adaptation to sustainable methods are investments in a future where leather celebrates its heritage while championing innovation. Tenerias Omega is committed to paving the way for a more sustainable and prosperous tomorrow. The journey may be challenging, but the rewards, for our planet and our industry, are immeasurable. |



**1. Enhanced Leather Portfolio:** This tanning method has expanded our offerings, providing vibrant, long-lasting colours that empower designers with more creativity

**2. Unique Characteristics:** Olivenleder leather boasts a distinctive texture and a pleasant olive-fragrant smell. It combines unmatched softness with durability, making it suitable for various applications, from fashion to upholstery

**3. International Appeal:** Olivenleder tanning has attracted the interest of international brands, expanding our global presence

**4. Access to New Segments:** Its unique characteristics have opened doors to niche markets we previously had limited reach in

**5. Customer Appreciation:** Our customers appreciate the sustainability aspect of Olivenleder, aligning with today's eco-conscious market.

In terms of quality and durability, Olivenleder-tanned leather stands strong against traditionally tanned leather. It retains its shape,