

THE ARTISAN SPIRIT OF SWITZERLAND

We take a closer look at the country's most renowned inventions and innovations - including the revolutionary creations of household appliance pioneers, v-zug

When Orson Welles famously quipped in the film *The Third Man*, "In Switzerland, they had brotherly love, five hundred years of democracy and peace—and what did that produce? The cuckoo clock," he clearly wasn't looking quite hard enough to discover the plethora of incredible Swiss innovations.

Whilst Switzerland is justifiably famed for precision watchmaking, milk chocolate and the Swiss army knife, you might not realise that many of the most groundbreaking inventions and designs you use on a day-to-day basis were born there. Velcro, zips, cellophane, Y-shaped vegetable peelers, muesli, antihistamines and even the Helvetica font are just some of the country's most widely-heralded creations. As the country where Le Corbusier became a founding father of modern architecture, Albert Einstein developed the theory of relativity and Tim Berners-Lee came up with the World Wide Web, invention is simply in Switzerland's DNA—in fact, it's where Friedrich Miescher discovered DNA itself.

With heritage like that, it's no surprise that Switzerland is currently ranked the world's leading nation for innovation by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (a title it's held for the past seven years), and boasts the most number of European patents filed per head annually.

It's exactly the kind of place that would produce a company like V-ZUG, who have been leaders in the world of cutting-edge household appliances for over a century. Ever since *Verzinkerei Zug* (as V-ZUG was then called) was founded in the Swiss region of Zug in 1913, the company has prided itself on its forward-thinking, pioneering spirit—a desire to make everyday life easier through the creation of high-quality, new and innovative products for the home.

Tech milestones pepper the brand's history, beginning with V-ZUG's production of the first hand-operated drum washing machine in 1920—an invention that meant the traditional labour-intensive method of washing by hand was consigned to the history books. They continued to revolutionise the world of household laundry with the sale of the first small washing machines designed for home use before launching the *Adora* in 1959, a combined washing machine and tumble dryer that meant drying rooms also became a thing of the past, followed by a dishwasher in the same range in 1962.

In the last 20 years, V-ZUG have dedicated themselves to delivering yet more trailblazing industry firsts—including introducing induction cooking and the *Combi-Steam* cooker (equipment that had previously only been used in professional kitchens) to Swiss homes, and creating the *SteamFinish* (the first dishwasher to use pure steam to clean crockery) and the *Steam Anti-Crease* (the first washing machine to use steam to reduce creasing, essentially eliminating the need for ironing).

They have set new benchmarks for energy-efficiency with their latest washing machine, which utilises heat pump technology; created the *Daily Short Programme*, the world's first dishwasher to thoroughly clean soiled plates in just 45 minutes; and launched the *Combi-Steam MSLQ*, which combines heat, steam and microwaving in one appliance, to steam-cook food faster and more healthily than ever before. Whether it's cooking, doing the laundry or cleaning the dishes, V-ZUG's innovations are designed to deliver the ultimate in convenience and performance, making good on their promise of "Swiss perfection for your home".

With ever-growing research, development and manufacturing facilities, you can be certain that V-ZUG won't be resting on its laurels in the future either—and you'd expect nothing less in a country that has continually proven to thrive on invention, precision and excellence. They're not just about the cuckoo clock after all, then. ■



