

# Den *NIE* kaminovn

En Jøtul varmluftovn  
for fast eller flytende brensel



Skapt for moderne hjem, som i dag trenger mindre, men samtidig vakre og effektive ovner. Et tiltalende innslag i interiøret, med emaljeflater nettopp i den farve eller farvekombinasjon De ønsker. Porcelænemaljen er slagfast, og garanteres selv under sprengfyring.



*Fireplace stove 820 could be fired with both wood and kerosene. It also had a completely new, very modern-looking design. The 820 was designed by the architects Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas.*



Luften sirkulerer som vist på skissen. — Toppgitteret kan løftes opp i stående stilling, og De får da en ekstra kokeplate.

Den nye kaminovnen gir en særdeles behagelig varme, noe mindre strålevarme, men desto mere varmluft gjennomstrømning. - Dette medfører også at man kan møblere tettere opp til ovnen og oppnå mere plass i stuen.



Med Jøtul petroleumsbrenner innmontert.

Kaminovnen kan leveres med Jøtul petroleumsbrenner ferdig montert. Under særlige forhold kan brenneren i tillegg ut, og ovnen fyres med ved. For koks innsettes sten.

Det er første gang i Norge De kan få en ovn med alle disse muligheter! Kontakt våre forhandlere eller fabrikkens direkte.



**AKSJESELSKAPET JØTUL, BOKS 318, OSLO**

## Design

Heat efficiency and durability had long been cornerstones of Jøtul's production strategy, and they continued to be in the post-war era as well. But new factors also came into play. In conjunction with the transition to kerosene we have seen that user friendliness became a new and important element. In addition, design and shape assumed a greater role. Both were a response to new demands in the modern post-war home.

The most important change in model design was the introduction of sheet steel based stoves. In the second half of the 1950s Jøtul began to offer models in which the cast iron was clad with steel plates. At the same time they began to enamel the plates. The purpose of both was to give the models a more modern look. Enamelled plates made cleaning easier as well.

The first model with enamelled plates was the so-called "supplementary stove" which was developed in 1955, and which was intended for kitchen use. The so-called "fireplace stove", model 710, came a few years later, built on the same pattern. It was designed by those old foxes Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas, but unlike the supplementary stove was intended for the sitting room and family room. On the model 710 the plate cladding was functional for more than appearance, even though

*The Jøtul Combination Stove 710, designed by Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas and launched in 1958. The 710 became one of Jøtul's greatest sales successes in this period.*



this was the original reason for it. As a result of the cladding the radiant heat from the cast iron was suppressed. In addition, the stove was designed in such a way that the hot air went up towards the ceiling, so it could easily be used in modern, well-insulated flats without the heat becoming excessive. And because of the reduced radiant heat it was also more suitable for small and medium-sized rooms, since furniture could be placed much closer to the stove.

With the model 710 great emphasis was placed on simple, harmonious forms. The model could also be supplied in green or brown enamel – which was something entirely new. Soon the colour selection was expanded, so that the stove could be matched to "any interior at all". Model 710 was marketed as a piece of furniture, not as a necessary evil that took up space. It was also exceedingly popular. Later, the model 710 was modified and "recreated" several times.

A whole new generation of fireplace stoves was launched in the early 1960s. These showed that sheet steel and enamel had now taken over completely. The new models featured simple lines and bright colours, often white or burgundy. They were also the first fireplace stove models that were marketed with the so-called "panoramic window" – a glass that made it possible to see the play of flames. Eventually the trend was for larger and larger windows.

Starting in the late 1950s, Jøtul also began making free-standing fireplaces. The first in this category was fireplace No. 150. This was a model that was made entirely of cast iron. The advantage of the fireplace was that it could be connected to the chimney like a stove. At the same time it took up little space and thus fit even in small flats. In the early 1960s came the so-called "combi-fireplace", which was an adaptation of fireplace 150. What was new about the combi-fireplace was that it had a door in front of the opening which made it possible to use the product as an efficient wood stove. These models were extremely popular. Both fireplace 150 and the combi-fireplace sold in large quantities for many years, and the combi-fireplace did not go out of production until the 1980s.

One major reason why Jøtul was so successful with many of its products was that the market became involved in the development process. The engineers and designers did not sit alone working out new models and solutions, but always co-operated with the marketing organisation. It was the sales department that had direct contact with dealers and consumers, and therefore had the greatest knowledge of consumers' needs. The co-operation between the development and sales departments was formalised in the late 1950s, when an independent product development committee was established to allow the two departments to meet regularly and discuss new products.

Eventually the sales department assumed a great deal of influence on product development. In many cases it supplied the most important impetus for both improvements to models as well as new and more fundamental product innovations. As sales manager Gunnar Narvesen expressed it in 1965: "We are in fact in the fortunate situation at Jøtul that our company management long ago realised that production must be adapted to the market – and not vice versa."<sup>255</sup>



***The Jøtul fireplace stove 810 was launched in the early 1960s. The important new feature of this model was the large burnchamber, which provided a much larger view of the flames than previously. Fireplace stoves became extremely popular in the late 1960s.***



***A model that was not a success was Fireplace Stove 1001, also designed by Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas. The model was the result of Jøtul's ambition to combine all types of firing variants. With the combination of fireplace and kerosene stove, however, it was difficult to unite technical and design requirements, and the model ended up with a look that definitely did not appeal to consumers.***

Of course the co-operation was not always as idyllic as portrayed here. At times there could be strong disagreements between engineers and marketing people regarding the development of new products. This was especially true with regard to the more radical suggestions from the sales department.<sup>256</sup> And the people in the sales department did not always feel that their ideas reached the engineers and designers.<sup>257</sup> For example, it was with great reservations that the development department started work on the combi-fireplace in the early 1960s. Nor was there great enthusiasm from the engineers for the new sheet steel covered fireplace stoves in pastel colours that came out at the same time. But it was perhaps precisely this willingness to disagree that became a source of great creativity. At least the disagreements did not seem to dampen the ability to develop products with market appeal.

Occasionally, however, Jøtul could miss the mark. Some models never sold in large numbers, and a few hardly sold at all. One of the worst examples was fireplace stove 1001, which was launched in 1958. It was a combined kerosene stove and fireplace designed by Blakstad and Munthe-Kaas. The model was odd, to put it mildly. With a large fireplace construction on top and a small chamber for the kerosene burner below, most people thought it looked like a monkfish. This did not appeal to consumers, and the 1001 was categorically rejected. The fact that the 1001 saw the light of day at all was mainly because Jøtul wanted to cover all imaginable needs in the marketplace. There were no models that combined a fireplace and kerosene, and so one had to be developed. With the 1001, however, the company did not succeed in combining functionality and design, so the product died a quiet death. Even for Jøtul there were limits to what would sell. Blunders such as the 1001, however, were probably unavoidable for a company that had ambitions to be both a "total supplier" and the leader in the marketplace.

It was primarily the design that caused the failure of the 1001. To this extent the story underlines the importance that design began to have for consumers. Many of Jøtul's best-selling products in this period were noteworthy precisely because of their design. One special example was the combination stove, number 710. It was put forward as an example of how creative industrial design could be combined with the wishes of the marketplace and consumers.<sup>258</sup> The 710 also attracted attention abroad, especially in France, because of its design.<sup>259</sup> The same was true of Combi-Fireplace 4. So design was of great importance for a product's success. "There is reason to believe that Jøtul's solid market position was not merely due to high technical quality, but perhaps equally to the products' excellent design," wrote the magazine AB-Link in 1965.<sup>260</sup>

Jøtul was thus very active in product development. As mentioned, various parts of the company were linked together in this work, and a strong development environment was created. However, not all the new ideas sprang exclusively from people with a day-to-day involvement in these assignments. Impulses from outside, both conscious and unconscious, were very important in many instances. The most obvious examples of such outside influence were fireplace 150 and combi-fireplace 104. The first, despite the fact that it was publicly presented as Jøtul's own design, was in reality a model licensed from the Danish architect Bennet Windinge.<sup>261</sup> But fireplace 150 subsequently had an influence on some of Jøtul's own models. This was most true of combination fireplace number 4, which was developed in the early 1960s. In this case the design may seem to be based on Windinge's model. However, it was Jøtul that developed the closing mechanism which made this model so

popular. It was based on familiar lines, but something new was added. In this sense the design was the result of efforts both internal and external.

The development of fireplace stoves with flame displays also built on a combination of ideas from both inside and outside the company. German manufacturers, for instance, had made models like this for a while; presumably inspired by them, Jøtul had developed a couple of kerosene models with a window.<sup>262</sup> However, burner technology presented restrictions for this concept. The existing types of burners gave off only a weak blue flame, and the window thus had very little visual function. In the early 1960s, however, representatives from Jøtul came across a new combustion system at a factory in Belgium. This system had the ability to make the kerosene burn with a big, easy flame, and with such burners the company glimpsed the possibility of developing kerosene fireplace stoves with a large flame display. A few burners were brought home, and based on these a new type of fireplace stove was developed with a large panoramic window that had a more realistic fireplace feel to it.<sup>263</sup> At the same time Jøtul focused on giving these fireplace stoves a completely individual look, mainly by offering them in pastel colours. Nothing like this had ever been done before, but the idea was a good one. As we have seen, these fireplace stoves became enormously popular in the 1960s.

*Jøtul's first free-standing fireplace. The model was designed by the Danish architect Bennet Windinge, but was marketed in Norway as Jøtul Fireplace 150.*



*Ny*  
**JØTUL PEIS**  
*med bedre varmenyttelse*

Som det vil sees av illustrasjonen er vår nye peis helt av støpejern. Den skal stå fritt i rommet og monteres til røykpipen som en vanlig øvn. Peisen krever liten plass og passer derfor godt for mindre leiligheter. Den nye Jøtul peis er tegnet av den danske arkitekt Bennet Windinge, og har vakt stor oppmerksomhet på det danske marked.

*Dimensjoner for Jøtul peis nr. 150:*

Høyde . . . . .	82 cm
Bredde . . . . .	52 "
Dybde . . . . .	45 "
Oppvarmer ca. . . . .	60 m <sup>3</sup>



The openness to outside impulses and inspiration in product development was largely a result of the company's outward orientation in general. Great emphasis was placed on staying informed about developments in the market, what other manufacturers were producing, what sort of new technological solutions and products were available, etc. This information was actively utilised whenever it could contribute to something new. In product development especially, impulses from abroad were significant, which became readily apparent in the development of fireplace stoves with panoramic windows in the 1960s.

### An aggressive sales and dealer strategy

Good products were utterly crucial to the strong market position Jøtul assumed in the first years after the war. But this was not the only thing that secured the company's position. It was also closely tied to the way in which the products were marketed and sold. In this period Jøtul concentrated heavily on advertising and other marketing efforts. The company also took an active role in building up a strong, loyal dealer network. Of course these were not new factors at Jøtul – here too there were obvious connections back to the inter-war period. But the focus on these areas was now more comprehensive, while at the same time it was changing character.

*From misery to joy. Throughout the 1950s Jøtul continued to point out the differences between old traditional stoves and Jøtul's modern models. In this advertisement from the late 1950s, the message was exaggerated into parody.*

# NEI - heller en Jøtul!




**Arbejdning!** Det er her i skaffe sig en JØTUL-kamin. Sænk med Derris forbehold. Her vil læsere Dem om de ganske be- søgter ved hjælp af JØTUL-kamin. Eksempel: Kamin nr. 805 kan De få for kr. 178,50 kamin og røven på arbejdsdag i 9 timer, med kr. 62,18 pr. tim.

**For vakrere interier – bedre økonomi – mindre slit**

Monér en JØTUL-kamin så! Så kan De vil vinsten gi Derris hjem en ny atmosfære av varme og trivsel. JØTUL-kaminer kan De få i flere vakre farver, og alle kaminformene leveres også rustfret, slik at De helt utvilsomt avpasser!

Materialer er utvilsomt som passer best for norsk klima. En JØTUL-kamin gi Dem den ideelle kombinasjon av varme og stilleværne. JØTUL er Nordens største produsent av ovner og kaminer – en garanti for den som kjøper JØTUL.

I illustrasjonen ovenfor vil læser se De kamin nr. 805. Velk. pris: for bjørne fra kr. 555,30. — For rustfret fra kr. 588.—.



*At Jøtul no opportunity to do a little marketing was ignored. In conjunction with the award of the Nobel Peace Price to UNICEF in 1965, Jøtul sponsored an information folder. The text to the photo on the left: Is it the sun or the Jøtul stove that is warming so much? This sort of self-promotion would never happen today.*

The sale of stoves and fireplaces was seasonal. Most sales were made in the autumn months before the heating season. This prompted concentrated and intense advertising campaigns. In the late 1950s the autumn campaigns became steadily more extensive. A series of large advertisements in national newspapers and most major local papers was common. In addition, more attention was paid to "housewife" magazines and trade magazines for the construction industry, etc., as channels for advertising.

As we have seen, product development in the 1950s and 1960s was largely concerned with satisfying the increased interest in comfort, user-friendliness and design. This was also expressed in the advertising. It was no longer merely heat that was being sold; it was equally about atmosphere, cosiness and well-being, and last but not least, quality of life. More attractive, better and more user-friendly stoves were synonymous with a higher standard of living, more leisure time, an easier life. In such a context greater emphasis was placed on underscoring the differences between the new and the traditional. In the advertising the dirty, clumsy-looking and impractical cast-iron stove was compared with the stylish, practical and modern kerosene stove. The message was underscored with mottoes such as "Jøtul... fireplace stoves for modern homes" and "Jøtul – for modern heating".

The marketing also concentrated more strongly on building up a brand-name identity. The company and the product were linked together more closely in the marketing, and what was unique about Jøtul and Jøtul's products was emphasised. The brand name was always linked to positive values such as reliability, quality and modernity. And traditionally universal concepts such as "warmth" were recreated and given new meaning. According to the message, Jøtul's products produced not just



***Father and son Gahr bow in deference to the "people's king". The photo is from the opening of the 14th National Fair in Oslo in May 1958 and shows King Olav V and Princess Astrid as they pass by Jøtul's booth.***

warmth – they provided a particular "Jøtul warmth" that differed in a positive way from other types of warmth.

A good deal of public attention was focused on Jøtul in those years. The newspapers and the trade press ran a series of articles about the company, and almost all of them were marked by a largely positive tone; what was creative and modern was emphasised. Much of the publicity was probably due to the conditions in the heating market in general. It was a time marked by fundamental changes in the Norwegian heating system. New energy forms replaced old ones, and many new products with new combination solutions were appearing on the market. People were faced with many more alternatives than before, and in such a situation it was natural that there would be great interest both in new development in general and in the dominant suppliers in particular.

However, there was no doubt that Jøtul managed to carve out a place for itself in public perception. Much was attributable to the position of Johannes Gahr. Because of his key position as a trusted man in Norwegian industry over many years, people listened to him. He also made active use of the media in many circumstances, which proved beneficial in promoting the company itself. For example, there was usually a large press contingent at the many plant tours that were arranged at Enebakkveien during the 1950s. And the subsequent articles gave the impression of Jøtul as a modern, future-oriented company. It was no accident, either, that Jøtul was honoured in 1955 with a visit from the entire cabinet of Stortinget [the parliament] and its Industrial Committee.<sup>264</sup>

Jøtul's outward orientation also marked its dealer policy in the 1950s and 1960s. Here too, communication was a central tool. An active effort was made to build up personal relationships between the company and the dealers. For instance, by closely working with the dealers, personal relation-

ships and bonds of loyalty were created which eventually evolved into networks to which other suppliers had a very difficult time gaining access.

Important tools in the dealer policy were the dealer meetings that Jøtul began to arrange in the late 1950s. The goal was to gather together all the dealers once a year. This was quite a major undertaking. The dealers were divided up according to district, and as a rule there were about thirty participants at each meeting. With approximately 300 dealers in the entire country, about ten meetings had to be held in the course of the season.

The sales department chaired the meetings, but generally there were representatives from management in attendance as well. The meetings were important as forums of communication. First, Jøtul could glean valuable market information. Second, the company had an opportunity to present new products and to announce the season's sales campaigns, etc.<sup>265</sup> But the meetings also served an important social function. Great emphasis was placed on ensuring that dealers felt appreciated. Invitations were sent out in advance of each meeting containing information about the purpose and agenda of the meeting. These were accompanied by detailed travel plans worked out for each individual dealer, and Jøtul ordered all the tickets and arranged hotel accommodations. Social functions were also emphasised, with dinner at a restaurant, etc. It was no surprise that the meetings became so popular. Often the attendance was more than 90 per cent.<sup>266</sup>

Through personal relationships and regular contact it was possible to make better use of the dealers as a source of market information. Typical of such a meeting was the "salesman contest". When visiting the dealers the individual sales representative would fill out a card for each unit sold, with information on model number, whether it would be installed in a new residence or a remodelled one, and the customer's name. The cards were sent to Jøtul at the end of each month. At the end of the year a winner was chosen and received a prize.

The contest certainly proved to be an incentive for the dealers. But presumably what was most important for Jøtul was the information they provided, which allowed sales throughout the year to be charted precisely in relation to key factors such as seasonal variation, usage area and geographic sales distribution. In addition, the dealers provided valuable information about themselves, of course.

In conjunction with the transition to liquid fuel, Jøtul had a special reason for strengthening dealer relations. First, stoves and fireplaces for liquid fuel were technically more complex than those for solid fuel. Second, the risk of causing a fire was higher. Both factors imposed stricter requirements on product knowledge as well as on installation and use.

Because of the risk of fire, many people were sceptical about liquid fuel. Naturally the installers of kerosene burners had to be authorised by the fire department. In many locations it was also common practice for the fire department to approve all new installations.<sup>267</sup> Still, in the early period there were a few serious accidents which convinced many people not to take a chance on liquid fuel stoves.



***Fireplace 4 with a door that runs on rails underneath the stove. It was a sales success in Norway, Denmark, and the United States for about 20 years.***

To increase safety, Jøtul began in the late 1950s to hold courses for the installers of Jøtul products. The local fire department was also involved in this activity. Quite often fire-fighters would take on extra work as installers.<sup>268</sup> Around 1960 the "Jøtul School" was established in Oslo. Here the installers were taught about service, installation, safety precautions, etc. The course was obligatory for anyone who wanted to install Jøtul stoves and fireplaces, but Jøtul covered the travel costs and accommodations in Oslo. The training, of course, was intended to help prevent accidents. But it was also actively used in the company's advertising campaigns and by dealers as a tool for promoting consumer confidence in Jøtul.

The reason for spending such great resources on the dealers was naturally a desire to create efficient and secure sales channels. But behind this lay also a need for control. Through strong, loyal dealer relations the company gained greater opportunities for locking other possible manufacturers out of the market.

It is true that for a long time Jøtul held virtual primacy in Norway as a manufacturer of stoves and fireplaces for liquid fuel. Domestically, in other words, there were few who could threaten the company's market position. On the other hand, the risk of competition from abroad seemed to be rising towards the end of the 1950s. In this period it became clear that Norway would be joining the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The goal of this co-operation was to create toll-free trade for industrial goods within Europe. In such a situation, it was thought, there would be a considerable risk that large German stove manufacturers, for example, would try to gain a position in the Norwegian market.

The free trade association was on the whole a significant driving force behind dealer policy in these years. In 1958 Johannes Gahr pushed hard to increase the number of dealers. In addition, the relationship with individual dealers was to be strengthened. For instance, he advocated the establishment of the company's own branches around the country, so that constant contact could be maintained with the dealers. The reason for this was "the heightened competition that will result from the realisation of a Nordic or European free trade zone".<sup>269</sup>

In the following years Johannes Gahr spent much of his time realising these plans; for instance, he instigated the establishment of Jøtul's network of subsidiaries throughout Norway. In Bergen the company had long had its own Jøtul sales outlet, but this now took on a new function as a link between Jøtul headquarters and the dealers in the region. Moreover, from 1958 to 1960 branches were opened in Stavanger, Trondheim and Tromsø. Besides strengthening dealer contact, the branches made it possible to decentralise many tasks that had previously been handled by the head office in Oslo. Sections of the sales functions were transferred to the branches. The same was true of warehouses, installation and technical service, which also made it possible to shorten delivery and service times appreciably. For instance, in 1958 Jøtul dropped the main dealer it had used in Rogaland for 35 years – Eikmaskin. The new branch in Stavanger took over as dealer.

A national service system was thus established for dealers and customers with the objectives, first, to secure a stronger market position, and second, to prevent competitors from entering the market. The company was largely successful with this strategy. Throughout the 1960s Jøtul maintained its



***Jøtul's modern new administration building, Grenseveien 97 in Oslo. The building was finished in 1970.***



***A multi-faceted company. The photos are from various Jøtul divisions around the country. Photos 1, 2 and 7 show the manufacturing plants, while photos 3 and 6 show the district branches.***

*Johannes and Sverre Gahr flanking the best-selling built-in fireplace of its day – Fireplace No. 15. The two of them were very different, both as personalities and company leaders, and the generational change had crucial significance for the further development of the company.*



position in Norway, with a share of the market for liquid fuel stoves and fireplaces that was almost always around 65 per cent. Many factors contributed to securing this position, and product development and rationalisation of production were important factors. In addition, the creation of the dealer network was of great significance.

### **Change of generations**

In the summer of 1958 Johannes Gahr resigned as managing director. He was 63 years old. The reason he gave was that he wanted to concentrate more on certain aspects of the business which would require special attention in the coming years. Primarily he would be working on preparing the company for the challenges that were anticipated with possible membership in EFTA. The company expected increased competition from abroad, and Gahr was to lead the build-up and strengthening of the dealer network, so that Jøtul would be prepared for the situation.

His resignation was also related to the fact that the next generation was in the wings. Johannes Gahr's son, Sverre Gahr, was the appointed heir to the company. After studying engineering in Norway and the United States, he had joined the company in 1951. At first he had led the planning department, but in 1958 he took over as managing director.

Johannes Gahr continued to be active in Jøtul for a number of years. To a large extent he was the one who had the last word in important matters until far into the 1960s. He did not completely leave the company until the mid-1970s.

With the change in generations came a cultural change as well. Sverre Gahr had a completely different leadership style from his father. As we have seen, Johannes Gahr had quite an authoritarian leadership style. At the same time he was determined to create good contacts with his employees. Sverre Gahr was not authoritarian in the same way. On the other hand, he was a much more distant

leader, and he was not able to create the same type of relationship of trust with the employees. Many of the conventions interaction within the company that Johannes Gahr had established were not continued by Sverre Gahr. At a tradition-bound workplace like Jøtul, this contributed to a sense of uncertainty and discontent. In addition, Sverre Gahr had problems with creating a good co-operative working environment amongst the management.

The internal instability that emerged towards the end of the 1960s was very unfortunate in a time when the company was facing future challenges. During that period there were signs of beginning stagnation in the market for liquid fuel stoves and fireplaces. In addition, there was an increasing need to re-equip the production system, which was becoming old-fashioned and worn out. Finally, Jøtul began in this period to encounter considerable problems in recruiting workers. After 1970 these demands and challenges became more pressing. In the next chapter we shall see the extent to which the company managed to meet these challenges.