

The KosherLamp brand shabbos lamp: Let There Be Light on Shabbat

by Susan Rosenbluth

Sometimes little things mean a lot, like a lamp that can be turned off and on Shabbat and holidays. The halachically approved “The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp,” invented by Rabbi Shmuel Veffer of Toronto, is designed to allow light to shine or shut off when the inner shade is rotated. The spiritual leader of the Aish HaTorah Village Shul, Rabbi Veffer came up with the idea for The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp when his wife, Chana, an avid reader, asked if he could improvise a light so she could read in the bedroom on Shabbat.

Many Uses

A born inventor with degrees from the University of Waterloo in math and computer science, the rabbi set to work. Such an invention would be great, he thought, not only for a wife who likes to read, but also for children who need a bedtime story before dozing off, for Shabbos guests sleeping on the sofa in the den, and for Shomer Shabbos Jews who find themselves stuck in a hotel room for the Sabbath. His first stop was the local hardware store with his son.

“We came home with some hodgepodge parts, and by the end of the day, we had put together the first clunky working model,” he recalls. By the following Sabbath, his children and their friends wanted one.

Perfect Match

The next step was finding someone who could help produce the lamp. Fortunately, the perfect match was right at hand. One of the rabbi’s congregants, Moshe Orzech, is in the lighting importing business. With a handshake, a partnership was formed to produce and distribute The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp.

“When Rav Shmuel showed me the prototype, I was amazed at its brilliance. It’s one of those simple ideas that when you hear of it you say, “Why didn’t I think of that?” says Mr. Orzech.

Checking

While Mr.Orzech set off for China to arrange for the lamp's production, Rabbi Veffer hit the books. He checked through seforim and then asked the local rosh kollel and other prominent rabbis in Canada , the US , and Israel , about his invention. When he received the unanimous psak of "Kosher," he registered the concept with the patent office. In his sefer , Shemirath Shabbath Kehilchathah 13:41b, Rabbi Yehoshua Y.Neuwirth says: "A shade which is made to direct the light or to cover it up all together may be adjusted on Shabbat, even if it is made in such a way that forms part of the lamp."

Two Cylinders

Following that guide, Rabbi Veffer designed the simple, but ingenious The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp. It consists of a pair of cylinders, each with its own window, with a fluorescent bulb inside. The bulb is revealed when the knob controlling the inner cylinder is twisted and the two windows align with each other. When the windows are not aligned, the light is blocked inside the lamp. The second necessary component for the lamp was a system to vent the heat generated by the fairly cool fluorescent bulb without letting light escape when the lamp is in the "off" position.. The patent-pending Fadeshade technology permits the user to direct the light and, with a simple twist, adjust the cylinder to allow partial light.

"You can even 'turn it off' in accordance with the laws of Shabbat. When you want to sleep, the fadeshade technology allows heat to escape safely while blocking virtually all the light —without touching a light switch," says Rabbi Veffer.

Always On

Halachically, the lamp uses the same principle that allows a person to open and shut a cupboard with a permanent light on the Sabbath. When the inner shade of The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp is closed, the light remains on even though it is no longer visible.

At \$29.95, including the bulb, The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp may be the best idea in the Jewish community. It is available in some Judaica stores, or can be ordered by calling 1-866-661-5483.

It can also be ordered online at jewishvoiceandopinion.com. Mr.Orzech, who is now president of Kosherimage.com, the exclusive importers of The KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp, is offering a 30-day money back guarantee. "You'll be so happy with your KosherLamp™ brand shabbos lamp, that soon all your friends and relatives will want one, too," he says.

- S.L.R.