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## Best Handbag Buyers in NYC Time

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## High fashion, or a high-priced knock-off? Balenciaga debuts \$2,145 version of IKEA's classic blue tote bag - which retails for just 99 CENTS

- The Balenciaga 'Arena Extra-Large Shopper Tote Bag' is suspiciously similar to IKEA's 'Frakta' in shape, size, and color
- The main differences between the bags are price \$2,145 for the designer option, and 99 cents for the IKEA version, and material - leather instead of plastic
- A spokesperson for IKEA said they are 'deeply flattered' by the similarities in Balenciaga's design
- Balenciaga has notoriously replicated other strange handbag styles in the past, including a Thai laundry bag, and a blanket bag

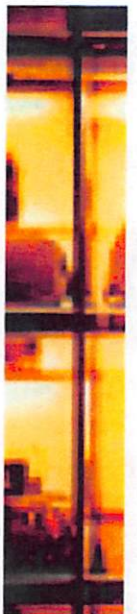
By KATIE FUSTICH FOR DAILYMAL.COM

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Swedish furniture retailer IKEA is known for exceptional design when it comes to things like sofas, lamps, and sheets. When it comes to handbags? Not so much.

Yet that hasn't stopped French luxury brand Balenciaga from releasing a bag that's suspiciously similar to IKEA's iconic 'Frakta' tote, known for its bright blue color, its durability, and its absolutely massive size.

Balenciaga and IKEA's bags are almost entirely alike in design - their size, shape, color, and multi-handle structure are near-identical. A few key differences to note are the absence of the IKEA logo on the handles of the Balenciaga style (an obvious choice), the material, and - of course - the price.



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**Ironical or incidental? Luxury brand Balenciaga seems to be referencing a very specific IKEA tote bag with their latest design - which retails for \$2,145**

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**A modern icon? In lieu of traditional shopping bags, IKEA has been selling its now-iconic**



## 'Frakta' tote bags for many years



'Schlepping laundry in an IKEA bag is now high fashion.' Fans can't decide whether to love or hate Balenciaga's latest design inspiration

Whereas the IKEA 'Frakta' bag is made from 100% polypropylene, a recyclable material, the Balenciaga tote is composed of 'wrinkled, glazed leather,' per the **Barney's** website.

Another key comparison is the price point. The classic IKRA tote will set buyers back all of 99 cents, whereas Balenciaga's 'Arena Extra-Large Shopper Tote Bag' is just a bit more expensive, at \$2,145.

Rather than take offense to the replication of their design, IKEA appears to be praising the French brand for their design skills. In a statement to **Today**, an IKEA spokesperson said,

'We are deeply flattered that the Balenciaga tote bag resembles the Ikea iconic sustainable blue bag [...] Nothing beats the versatility of a great big blue bag.'

Clearly, someone in Balenciaga's design department feels similarly.

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Sweet nothings: IKEA says they are 'deeply flattered' by the similarities to their classic 99-cent tote bag



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Inspiration in the strangest places: Earlier this year, Balenciaga released another odd bag - this one resembling a blanket bag one might find at a home good store



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Wait...where have we seen that before? In 2016, Balenciaga debuted another copy-cat bag, this one resembling a bag commonly used to carry laundry in Thailand

Despite the hilarity of this designer parallel, it is in some ways a blessing. As one **Twitter** user put it: 'Schlepping laundry in an Ikea bag is now high fashion.'

This isn't the first time Balenciaga has found design inspiration in an unlikely source.

Last year, they copied another over-sized tote style with their version of the Thai laundry bag. Earlier this year, they were mocked for another bag that bore a striking resemblance to a blanket bag one might find at Bed Bath & Beyond - not Bergdorf's.



Surprise! Fashion fans joked about the fact that they already owned a designer piece worth thousands of dollars

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Ahead of the curve: Thai fashionistas quickly noted the similarities between Balenciaga's colorful tote (which retails for thousands) and Thai laundry bags (which cost pennies)

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@bitter\_sweet\_g

I have similar models so if anyone is interested pls dm me it's the special collection "Kambal from India" by Balenciaga for only 2000€ thx

Balenciaga for sale! This Twitter user made a note of the 'similar models' one might already find in their closet - a sentiment that applies to their latest Ikea replica, as well

Of course, fashion fans took to Twitter to express their combination of amazement and bewilderment and Balenciaga's bold design choice. Many expressed a mock-sense of awe that they already owned a designer piece worth thousands.

Even retailer Net-a-Porter couldn't deny the similarities between Balenciaga's design and blanket bags, with their product description reading, 'Finding beauty in the every day, Balenciaga's oversized tote is inspired by classic blanket bags.'

If you do opt for one of these over-sized Balenciaga bags as part of your Spring look, we wish you luck finding your keys at the bottom of the tote.

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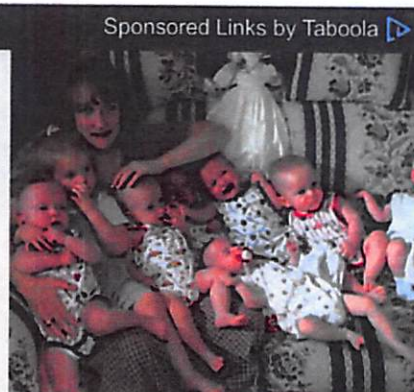
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