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TYPOGRAPHY TYPE FOUNDRY

Cobono

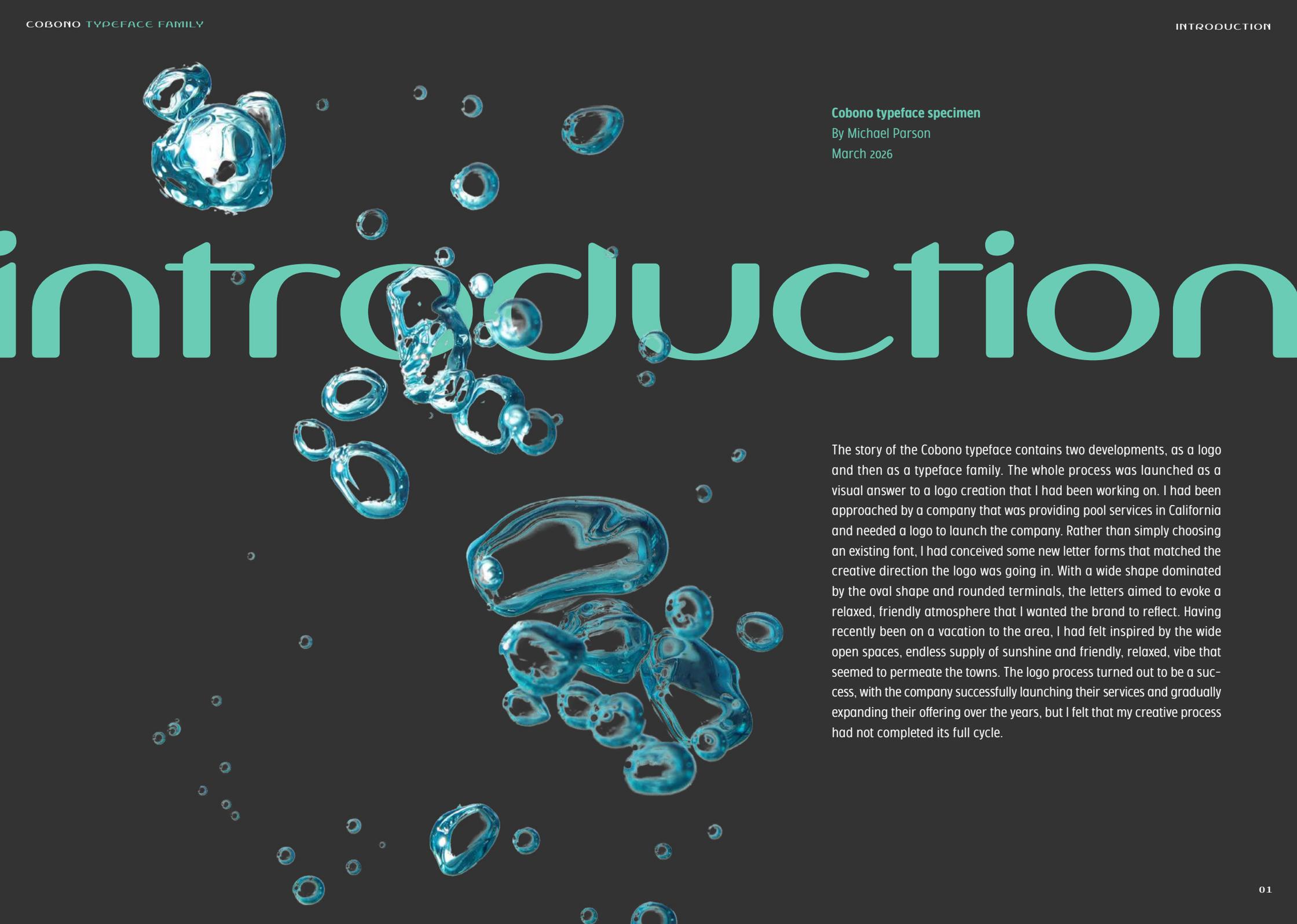
DISPLAY TYPEFACE FAMILY

DESIGNED BY MICHAEL PARSON

Cobono typeface specimen

By Michael Parson

March 2026



introduction

The story of the Cobono typeface contains two developments, as a logo and then as a typeface family. The whole process was launched as a visual answer to a logo creation that I had been working on. I had been approached by a company that was providing pool services in California and needed a logo to launch the company. Rather than simply choosing an existing font, I had conceived some new letter forms that matched the creative direction the logo was going in. With a wide shape dominated by the oval shape and rounded terminals, the letters aimed to evoke a relaxed, friendly atmosphere that I wanted the brand to reflect. Having recently been on a vacation to the area, I had felt inspired by the wide open spaces, endless supply of sunshine and friendly, relaxed, vibe that seemed to permeate the towns. The logo process turned out to be a success, with the company successfully launching their services and gradually expanding their offering over the years, but I felt that my creative process had not completed its full cycle.

So after a few months of rest, I decided to return my attention to my few letters forms with the view of expanding the work into a complete typeface. I had seen with the logo design that the style had an audience, but the challenge now became to expand the idea into a fully functional font.

I had already defined a clear direction, with the use of the wide oval form that created a very open, clear typeface. This idea was combined with the rounded strokes that further reinforced that soft appearance. To have a more refined style, the shapes employed a high contrast and a very tall x height, leading to lowercase letters that were nearly aligned to the capitals. While less recommended for legibility in smaller sizes, this aspect had formed an important idea of the logo idea by creating the appearance of very large, open letters. The final major question was the treatment of the diagonals, were, rather than employing a traditional diagonal stroke I opted for a curved stroke that varies in width along its length. This choice was mainly aesthetic, by creating an interesting shape, but they also added to the soft, rounded rhythm by avoiding any straight, angular shapes that would be perceived as too rigid. Armed with these guidelines, I therefore set about conceiving the complete character set, starting with the lowercase forms that had been my starting point, and then expanding into the capitals, numerals and other symbols. Whenever possible, the angles were pushed towards curves and the counter forms were left open to keep the shapes light and clear. These can be seen in my approach to capitals like the B, D or P that have a soft curve to replace their left top corners or the choice of the historical letter E that employs a curve. A final detail was the use of a cut angle on the lowercase strokes, this final touch was implemented as a further lightening effect that had the added value of adding an interesting diagonal tension to the letters. It also helped break up the horizontal lines, keeping the overall rhythm focused on the curves. After a few weeks of development, I had completed a full font and started to move into the testing and implementation phase of my type design.





32° SWIMWEAR

FUN FONTS

FUN FONTS

SEA FONTS

FUN FONTS

SEA FONTS

FUN FONTS

FUN FONTS

I had initially planned to only design a single weight typeface, since the intended use was branding projects. But following my first exports and tests, I started to explore using the font in other contexts, mainly longer passages of text. Despite its wide stance, the font functioned very well in all settings, but the lack of styles hindered a developed application. With a single weight, the layout options were limited, and so, I decided to expand the original idea into two axes, first by creating a bold weight that could serve to create more impact than the current weight, and some accompanying italics that could add further expression. While the Regular weight would remain the principal style, the three further extensions simply added more solutions for layouts and users.



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 A B
C D E F G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T U V W
X Y Z a b c d e f g h
i j k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

Whatever shows I could see or at
I would always find some way
be selling cassette tapes. I
remember going to a swap meet
buying for \$5.00 a tape on
one side, and two Circle J on the
other. Catty corner from the
hair salon called Attena. It was
salon that opened in Holly





new version

Initially released in 2011 with T26, Cobono had found its audience around the world as users seemed to appreciate the wide, relaxed nature of the family. But over the years, innovations in technology and also my own applications, meant that I had started to notice certain aspects that I felt could be refined. Already working on a few updates, I got an interesting request, in 2024, to expand the language coverage to include the Vietnamese script. This request gave me the perfect excuse to delve deeper into the design and prepare a new version of this historical typeface.

The first steps was revisiting the basic glyphs that make up the family. I had initially intended to maintain the original letters, but after working on the updates, certain changes seemed necessary to better balance the forms. Most of these changes were quite minimal and probably not really noticed by most casual users, but the lowercase f is the exception. In my original design, I had really focused on logos and headlines, so short words or phrases that did not require as much letter harmony. In my desire to maintain a low x height, I had chosen to lower the bar of the f to balance the shape. And while this sentiment remained true, while setting text with both an f and t, the mismatch of alignments seemed disturbing and disconnected. I therefore decided to completely overhaul the f, extending the stroke on both sides and aligning the bar with the x height. The more minor modifications were principally applied to the balance and proportions of certain original choices. These involved some corrections on the stroke terminals, some weight redistribution for better balance, and as an overall approach, a reduction in the length of the ascenders. During my years of applications, I had noticed a slight inconsistency with my approach of designing a compact top half typeface, yet employing long descenders. This new version has therefore reduced their length which will permit more compact line heights and layouts.

A second very visible change can be found with the numerals. In the initial release, I had only included the standard, lining figures that most users would be familiar with. And while this remains a solution for certain simple fonts, I felt a bit limiting to only have access to one set of figures. So in this new version, Cobono has expanded the offering to four styles of numerals that can be accessed through OpenType substitutions.

A final touch was the expansion of the punctuation and symbols. In the first release of the family, Cobono had only contained a limited set of symbols and punctuation, due to its application as a logo typeface. But in my desire to complete the fonts, it only seemed logical to equally include the other signs, like the infinity, omega or litre.

EXTREME HEAT
We have a greed
INFORMATION
fresh water
OPEN ALL HOURS
United States
TWISTING
Tél: +41 23 765 82 91
CRAZY VIBES
swimming pool

Having completed the various updates to the glyphs, I then set about getting to work on the technology aspects. As mentioned, the main drive was to expand the character set to expand the language support, but it was also the opportunity to adapt the design to the variable technology. This process means adapting the strokes and starting points of the vectors so that all the forms live along the same axes. While this process has now become essential for large families, I still wanted to add the option to the Cobono font, despite remaining at my initial two weights. My thinking was simply to use this update to ensure that the typeface was now built on a contemporary platform and would be ideally placed if ever any further developments were required. For the language extensions, I had the request for Vietnamese support, but the original fonts only supported basic latin. So this new version builds on the original encoding by expanding into extended latin, thereby covering even more languages like Polish, Turkish or the requested Vietnamese script. Thanks to the new additions, the family now covers over 250 latin based languages.

1987

fres

energy

born in A.D. 450, or thereabouts, of Kallisto, in Crete. He was an only child, a beautiful but unruly boy, the despair of his widowed mother. At the age of thirteen he encountered, one day, an elderly man of thoughtful mien, who addressed him in familiar language. On several later occasions he met with the same personage, in a grove of laurels and pines known as Albatros; but what passed between them, and whether it was some divine inspiration, or merely a man of flesh and blood, was never discovered, for he seems to have kept his mother in

COBONO REGULARC - 33 PT

He was born in A.D. 450, or thereabouts, in the city of Kallisto, in Crete. He was an only child, a beautiful but unruly boy, the despair of his widowed mother. At the age of thirteen he encountered, one day, an elderly man of thoughtful mien, who addressed him in familiar language. On several later occasions he discoursed with the same personage, in a grove of laurels and pines known as Albatros; but what passed between them, and whether it was some divine inspiration, or merely a man of

COBONO BOLD ITALIC - 33 PT

NEW TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGNS
the universal access
THE FORMS OF EXPRESSION
home are built yearly
CALCULATIONS (21+34=55)
wide stance for big ideas
€20'897'001'220



opentype

In the original release of the typeface, Cobono had featured only the basic additions that Opentype features could bring, so with this new version, I decided to implement a more comprehensive use of the technology. The first step was to expand the basic ligatures, that had initially only covered the historical forms. This new version now contains over ten combined forms that aim to resolve certain letter conflicts, like the collision between the tittle of the i and preceding f.

officials

LIGATURES

16.1567

DEFAULT LINING NUMERALS

16.1567

HANGING NUMERALS

16.1567

TABULAR LINING NUMERALS

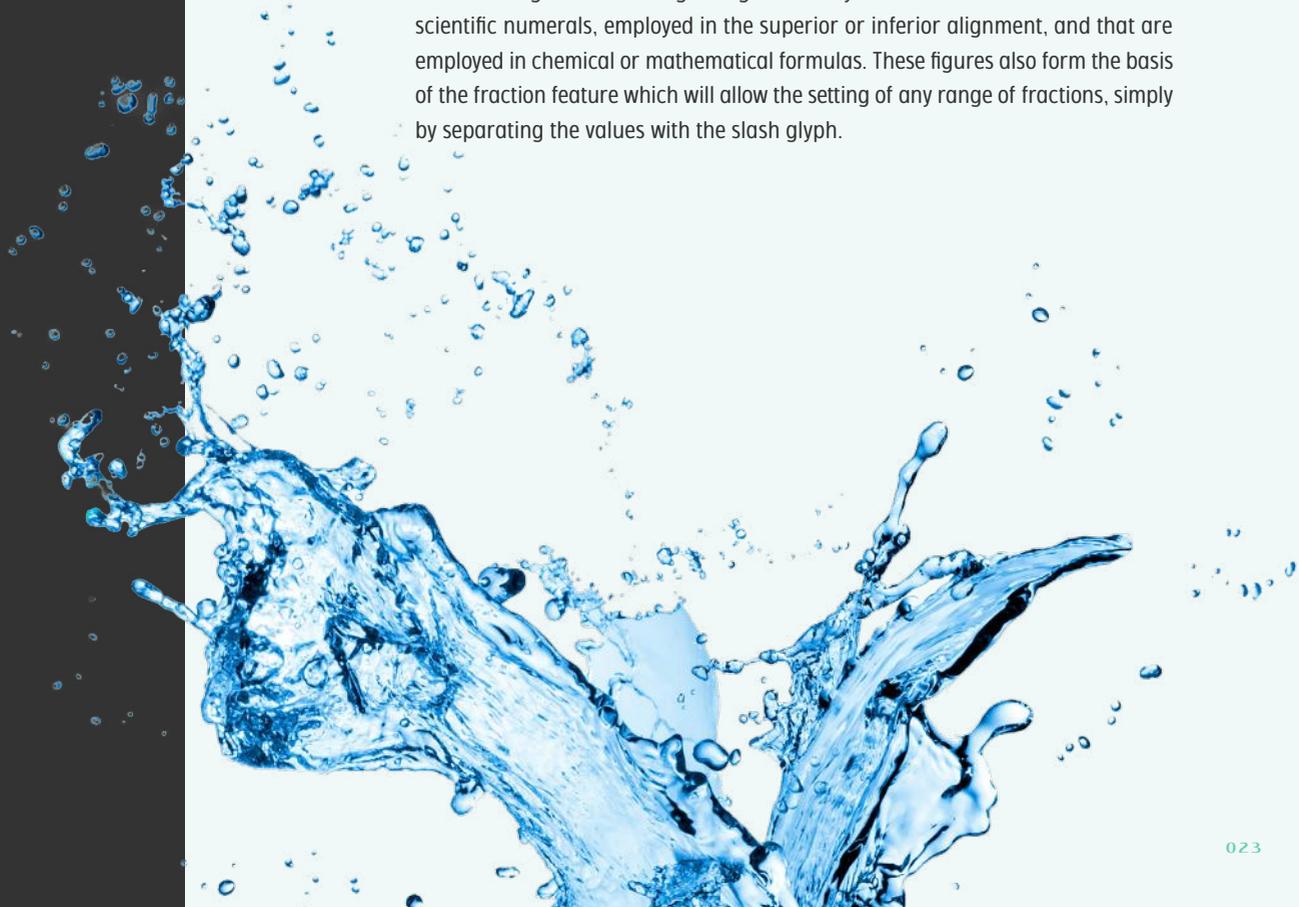
16/67

FRACTIONS

H₂O

SCIENTIFIC NUMERALS

As mentioned, one of the bigger innovations in this new version came with the numerals. Instead of a single solution, users can now select the numeral style that is best suited to the setting. The default style, that is the most familiar for users, is the Lining numerals that are aligned to the capital height. These forms are recommended for use in capital texts, navigation or any other use where the main question will be horizontal alignment. However, in texts that are principally composed in lowercase letters, the secondary Hanging, or Oldstyle numerals are recommended. These figures are mainly aligned to the x height and contain ascenders and descenders that are similar to the lowercase letters. Their reduced width and density avoids them dominating the text and therefore, being more integrated into the content. A further style is the Tabular lining numerals, these are equally aligned to the capital letters but in this occasion, share a common width. This feature is essential for setting numbers in columns, for example for timetables, and ensuring that all the digits align vertically. The final set of numerals are the scientific numerals, employed in the superior or inferior alignment, and that are employed in chemical or mathematical formulas. These figures also form the basis of the fraction feature which will allow the setting of any range of fractions, simply by separating the values with the slash glyph.



15 April 1963

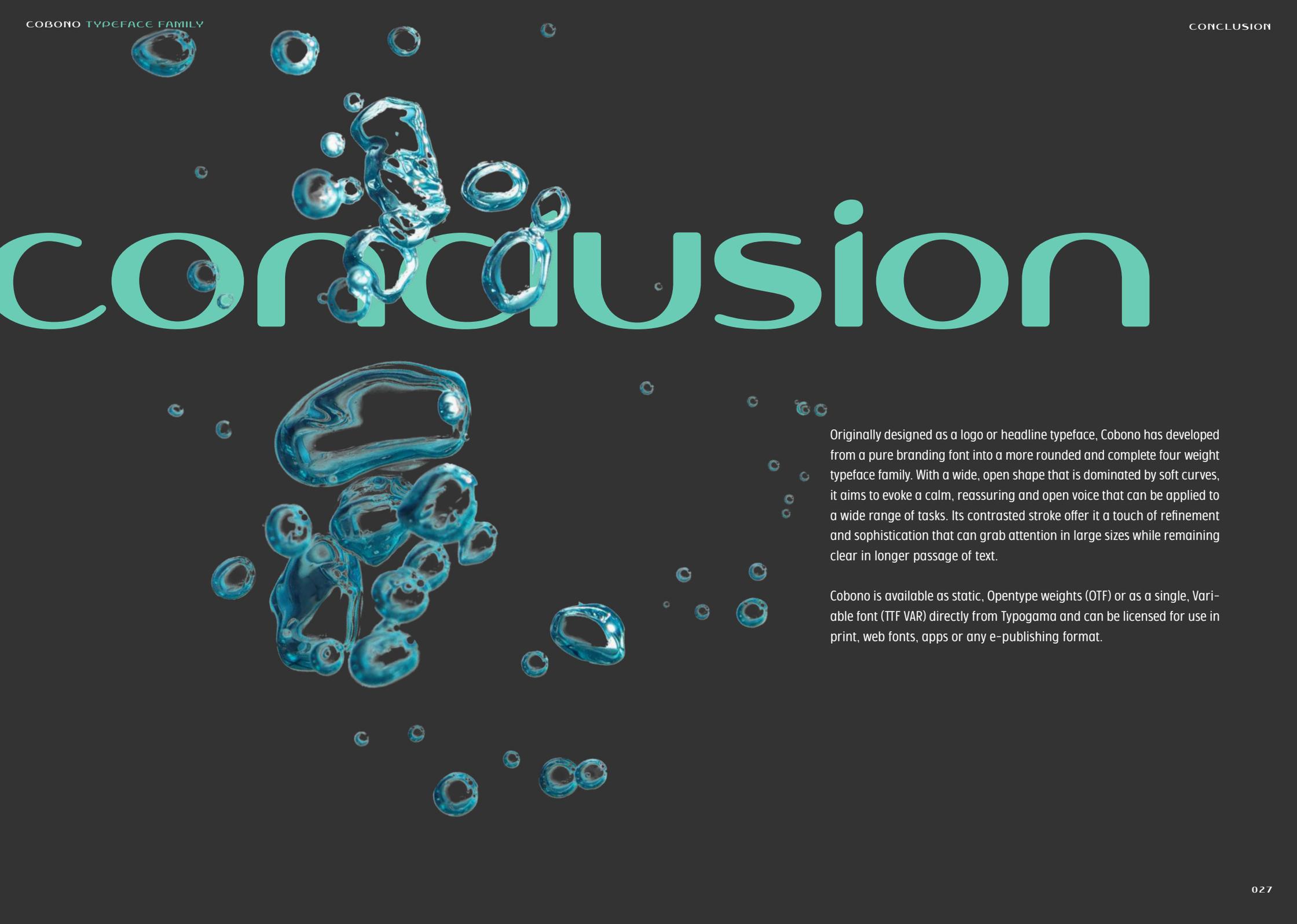
DEFAULT LINING NUMERALS

15 April 1963

HANGING NUMERALS

15 April 1963

TABULAR LINING NUMERALS



Conclusion

Originally designed as a logo or headline typeface, Cobono has developed from a pure branding font into a more rounded and complete four weight typeface family. With a wide, open shape that is dominated by soft curves, it aims to evoke a calm, reassuring and open voice that can be applied to a wide range of tasks. Its contrasted stroke offer it a touch of refinement and sophistication that can grab attention in large sizes while remaining clear in longer passage of text.

Cobono is available as static, OpenType weights (OTF) or as a single, Variable font (TTF VAR) directly from Typogama and can be licensed for use in print, web fonts, apps or any e-publishing format.



BEACH
BUMS 89

California
PALM DESERT
lovely beach
GRAVITY
87 Sunset Ave.
A MYSTERY TO ME
Cocktails & pool
CODE {902167}
surfing the coast
ZEBRA XING

Everything
you want
in a
yoga
mat



Text sample

The Swap Meets were, pretty much, how I stayed up on the scene. Whatever shows I couldn't go to, or afford, I would always find somebody who would be selling cassette tapes of these gigs. I remember going to a swap meet there, and buying for \$5.00 a tape of two Fear shows on one side, and two Circle Jerks shows on the other. Catty corner from the Country Club was a hair salon called Attena. It

COBONO REGULAR - 10 PT

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COBONO REGULAR - 12 PT

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COBONO BOLD ITALIC - 14 PT

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COBONO REGULAR - 16 PT

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COBONO REGULAR - 12 PT

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COBONO REGULAR - 16 PT

COBONO TRENCO AM
It was, originally, a hair salon
opened in Hollywood
by some guy with a German
accent, and a crazy mohawk.
He specialized in punk hair cuts
multi-colored Mohawks with
attached on the ends. Anywa
after a couple of years he mo
his shop to Reseda. This who
neighborhood has since been
again, and again in Paul Dea
The doc's film is a piece of Nic

Family overview

A B C D E F G H I J K
 L M N O P Q R S T U
 V W X Y Z a b c d e
 f g h i j k l m n o p q
 r s t u v w x y z 0 1
 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

COBONO REGULAR

A B C D E F G H I J K
 L M N O P Q R S T U
 V W X Y Z a b c d e f
 g h i j k l m n o p q r
 s t u v w x y z 0 1 2 3
 4 5 6 7 8 9

COBONO ITALIC

A B C D E F G H I J
 K L M N O P Q R S T
 U V W X Y Z a b c d
 e f g h i j k l m n o
 p q r s t u v w x y
 z 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

COBONO BOLD ITALIC

A B C D E F G H I J
 K L M N O P Q R S T
 U V W X Y Z a b c d
 e f g h i j k l m n o
 p q r s t u v w x y
 z 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

COBONO BOLD

CELEBRATION

Coffee shop & snacks

ROOM 45 - FLOOR 19

Young minded

ENTERTAIN US

Popcorn from \$1,40

(TELEVISIONS)

Fresh juice

TECHNO TUNES

animations

BIRTHDAY

Tourist welcome

typogama

Cobono typeface

by Michael Parson

4 weights

Display

www.typogama.com

Specimen Layout: Michael Parson

Text & visuals: Michael Parson

Font used: Cobono

Longer text & notes set in Matryo Book

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