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Simone Guidarelli Home
(photo Cosimo Buccolieri)

Fashion + design

Have decades of Home Collections
- furniture signed by the maisons -
brought design and fashion closer together
or more apart than ever?

Not everyone is familiar with Le Corbusier, the 20th century Swiss architect who conceived homes as “machines à habiter” and defined cities through functionalist principles. Yet it’s because of him – possibly the most influential architect ever – that most people perceive fashion and interiors as two worlds apart. “Style, in architecture, is the equivalent of a feather on a lady’s hat: a nice touch, but useless”, he famously said. And generations of furniture designers followed his suit. Yet, historically speaking, fashion was not as frivolous as Corbu thought. “Habitus (dress) and habitare (home living) stem from the same root in Latin”, says **Alba Cappellieri**, Head of Fashion Accessories and Jewelry at Milan’s Polytechnic University and President of the Milan Fashion Institute, “Both words relate to the body and should not be conceived as inconsistent style concepts but as meaningful presences in our existence”.

AND IT USED TO BE EXACTLY LIKE THIS

Think Art Nouveau, Futurism, Bauhaus: all designers involved conceived their interiors with a “total look” in which all details – home accessories to surfaces to clothing – were part of overall programs. Yet such programs were not merely aesthetic propositions but physical applications of (political and ethical) values, guiding principles towards one precise direction. They used to call them manifestos.

“And here lies the fundamental difference between fashion and design back then and now. Collective manifestos have been replaced by individual commercial propositions related to lifestyle”, says Cappellieri.



- 1 – Diesel Living with Lodes
- 2 – Missoni Home
- 3 – Diesel Living with Scavolini
- 4 – Fendi Casa
- 5 – Diesel Living with Moroso
- 6 – Armani Casa

THE CHANGE OCCURRED WITH A SMART INTUITION

It was Italian ceramics entrepreneur, Francesco Zironi of Piemme who had it. Since ladies were the final decision makers when it came to home interiors, what would happen if a well-known fashion designer conceived the décors for his tiles? Zironi recruited nothing less than Valentino who designed for him highly styled collections, perfect to create an atmosphere. It was a time in which furniture was experimental, radical and extremely political: in 1972, the exhibition *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* at the MoMA in New York had shown Italian design to the world as a direct attack to post-war domestic liturgy with the man as the leading figure and the woman as his faithful carer. The Valentino operation indicated a totally different direction: it put the accent on beauty rather than function. It was the first statement of home interiors as an individual's choice, as pure lifestyle rather than adherence to a shared manifesto.



THE SUCCESS OF HOME COLLECTIONS STEMS FROM THAT PIONEERING INTUITION

The Piemme/Valentino experiment tapped into an emerging social and cultural trend (individualism vs a collective, idealistic approach) that was starting have an appeal in an increasingly consumeristic society. The idea behind the equation fashion + furniture is simple: if you appreciate the garments of the likes of Versace or Giorgio Armani (just to name the pioneers who released home collections respectively in 1993 and in 2000) you will also appreciate their spaces and interiors. "Home collections do not sell a mere lifestyle but a concept of luxury", says **Gian Paolo Venier**, interior architect and designer, co-founder of Otto Studio with Paola Navone (the studio has authored many iconic hotels and home collections). According to Venier, the reason why home collections have become so successful is related to a strategy that the maisons have always pursued and that gained them a competitive advantage in comparison to the furniture brands counterparts.

THE FASHION HOUSES' STRATEGY IS ABOUT PERCEPTION AND BRANDING

"Fashion starts from a strong seasonal concept on the catwalk" continues Venier. "Despite this, it lives thanks to the more mainstream solutions. It's an approach

that secures a turnover and allows brands to keep building on dreams and on highlighting their values for communication purposes", explains Venier. "Fashion invests in research but horizontally: it picks up signals here and there and goes with them, imagines, dares and creates universes. Nothing is ever too deep - and everything changes seasonally - but it is always extremely communicative and people-related".

WHERE ARE FURNITURE BRANDS, IN ALL THIS?

Furniture companies do exactly the opposite. "Most of them exist thanks to a few iconic best-sellers, in most cases designed by maestros from the past", says Venier. "They do research vertically: it's a serious but slow approach resulting in nothing dramatically new (visually speaking) but, rather, in technological, production or material advancements that only a few can appreciate. The result is a self-referential attitude and very little branding. The exact opposite of what fashion does".

A RECENT PHENOMENON ARE HOME COLLECTIONS BY FASHION BRANDS SIGNED BY FURNITURE DESIGNERS

Celebrity ones, whose name is quite well known in their fields. Does this indicate a less individualistic approach, more focused on the star product as it occurs in the furniture industry? "I don't think so", says Alba Cappellieri. "It's basically a co-branding operation. If we want to bring the best of the fashion and the design world together something else should happen".



WHAT, EXACTLY?

"The problem we face today is the overpower of markets and marketing ideas" continues Cappellieri. "Italian fashion became world-famous in the 80s because it used to integrate the genius and supreme craftsmanship of external creators into production, and steered fashion into the prêt-à-porter". It was a model that had already been working very well for Italian design furniture since the 50s: when the coupling of enlightened industrialists, creative architects and skilled, experimental artisans brought to the world when interiors that would not follow trends but supported emerging social behaviours. "Yet the globalisation of brands has moved fashion brands into a one-dimensional approach in which fashion designers sell all sorts (from clothes, to food, to hospitality concepts to furniture) without nurturing creativity and fostering innovation through the previous external collaborations. Furniture brands, on the other hand, noticing the success of fashion labels, mimicked them in their season approach (by far their most ephemeral quality)". So now they also



propose sofas that can be dressed and undressed, churn out lots of products each winter and summer, go for the "total look". "Both fashion and design should look back at their old selves and re-discover what they lost", says Cappellieri. "And design culture - of which fashion is after all one element - could be instrumental to get there and to create a more meaningful future for our concept of living".

IT IS NOT NOSTALGIA BUT THE OPPOSITE

"In a time in which durability is essential and seasonality should probably be replaced by timelessness - in all product sectors, in the name of a most sustainable consumption - we should look to re-merge the concept of habitus and habitare", concludes Cappellieri.

IN THE BELLY OF THE DESIGNER

Artist, creative mind, illustrator...
a designer is all and none of these.
There's more to this emblematic figure,
who acts like a film director, coordinating
a complex production process which leads
to the creation of artefacts and services
with the power to improve people's lives.



A table, a chair, a light-bulb, a toothbrush, a vase, but also a newspaper, a web page, a car... Each and everyone of the mass-produced objects that are part of our everyday lives has been sketched by a designer. But what's really behind the job title? Are designers creative professionals? Or are they artists in their own right?

Creativity can't really be defined as a profession, it's an inborn quality that one more or less possesses, but which can be cultivated. We can all be creative in our jobs. A designer is not an artist, either. Artists, or self-proclaimed artists, are motivated by the exclusive desire of expressing themselves, regardless of the fact that anyone listens or watches. Does a designer draw, then? Not really, designers' design! Or rather "devise" services or objects, according to the intended purpose they will need to serve, and which will subsequently be put into production. A design object must respect a least two criteria: for starters it must have a function, serving a precise purpose, then it needs to be launched on the market, in other words it needs to be sold.

Bruno Munari, Italian artist and designer, used to say: "the dream of an artist is to end up in a museum, while the dream of a designer is to end up in a supermarket". A design product must therefore enter the lives of people and address specific issues, whether they be expressed or latent. It has a duty to serve some purpose. Among the many functions of design, there's also that of "selling well".

Compared to other communication or self-expression means, or crafts at large in the sense of the creation of works of art, design addresses some theoretical questions in order to solve practical problems, or as Le Corbusier put it: "successful form is always the result of a well formulated problem".

Design can be defined as a complex process having multiple objectives: where it wants to get to, the issues it intends to solve, the needs and aspirations it wants to address, and the answers it is providing to people. What the designer really does here is to orchestrate the entire process.



THE INTERPRETER

A metaphor that can be used here to define the term "designer" is that of an interpreter: designers are translators, finding themselves acting as go-betweens for companies and their market, for the higher management and the production and marketing departments, for the object and the user, for form and function, for aesthetics and productivity, for dream and reality.

In order to enable two people of different nationalities to have a meaningful conversation, the interpreter needs to know the grammar and the vocabulary of their respective languages, but also their culture, creating the conditions for the best possible interaction. Equally, the designer needs to possess specific technical competencies in addition to a solid cultural background and some outstanding vision.

Beyond the rational process, designers have something more: talent, inspiration, which they draw from the immaterial worlds of beauty or poetry. The designer's final act of putting it all together will determine the quality, and success, of the new artefact or service, and as a consequence the potential improvement of our own lives.

One could also compare the designer to a film director, coordinating many different skills and a multiplicity of actors (clients, engineers, marketing experts, materials specialists...). Design is therefore not a pure act of creativity or genius, quite on the contrary it is the outcome of the collaboration with the different stakeholders in a bid to create products and services that perform perfectly under a technical point of view and at the same time are beautiful to look at, all of this while fully satisfying expectations and improving people's lives.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF THE DESIGNER

Our modern societies are transitioning from a linear economic model, with forever growing consumption implies the unlimited use of resources and vast energy waste, to a more sustainable, circular model. In this momentous, defining time of humanity, designers have the great responsibility of conveying new values for the well-being of all: sustainability, responsible design that takes into account a product's entire lifecycle, from production to end-of life management, usability of products for all, technology as a means and not an end in itself. It's high time that, like all of us, those who physically produce products, services or ideas, start taking care of the world around us.



Photo credit Mauro Porcini

Welcome to The Human Side of Innovation

Our world is constantly, frantically changing: over a few years social media, globalisation, new technologies, and even a pandemics, have changed the face of everything we knew. Yet this global upheaval has opened the floodgates for a new "Innovation Age", in which the most creative and brilliant minds come up with new ideas, projects and extraordinary objects, with the human being taking center stage. A new society, more prosperous, and happy. But what is the meaning of success in this new era? The answer can be found in "The Human Side of Innovation. The Power of People in Love with people", by Mauro Porcini, Chief Design Officer at PepsiCo, whose mantra is innovation and who has radically changed the way some of the most prominent global multinationals are working.

THE COLOUR OF SUCCESS

An interview with Ruben Castano, head of Customer Experience at one of the world's leading companies in mobile communications. He uses his strong designer background and mindset to inspire his team, shaping tomorrow's trends in the industry with bewildering and emotion-laden innovations.



Pantone helped Motorola convey emotions and brand values through colour.

Gone are the days when you could have a product any colour you want, as long as it's black. Today, it seems to be quite the contrary. True, designers have had an eye for aesthetics, including colour, since a long time, but bestowing a colour upon a product has essentially remained a very personal and subjective exercise. Yet today there is a way to know, with a great amount of precision, which colours are best perceived by consumers, and how to create specific emotional reactions through the use of precisely graded liveries for your latest product. To achieve this, Motorola recently teamed up with the ultimate colour specialist, Pantone.



“Emotions are a premium feature”

Ruben Castano, Head of Customer Experience at Motorola Mobility.



The collaboration with Pantone led to the amazing colours of the new Motorola Edge Neo 30.



Motorola teamed up with Swiss fragrance specialist Firmenich to create a scent embodying the brand's values.

Is Motorola's recent collaboration with Pantone around one of its latest mobile phones a sign of an emerging trend in the design world, with a particular focus on colour?

We identified the need for a compact design that still had premium features. It's not only the display, the camera and chip set, it's also the design, and in this case the colour choices: it's the functional aspect and the emotional one, combined. We set out to develop a product with a minimal, elegant design, with colour treated as a premium feature. We decided this was the perfect occasion to kick off our partnership with Pantone. The reason is that it's a very consumer-driven product, just like colour, which is a very personal choice. Every year, for the past 20 years, Pantone has defined the "colour of the year". This year it happens to be "Very Peri". It's a colour that talks about optimism, creativity, and embodies many of the values that consumers are expressing today. We also added 3 more colours that complement the colour of the year, helping us address different consumer segments.

Do you think the wide recognition of Pantone as a brand contributed to the appeal of the product?

Of course, but the most important thing for us was that there are shared values between Motorola and Pantone. Pantone, as a company, was originally born creating standards for colours, so they are very detail-oriented, just like us, but most importantly they can understand the emotional reaction that colour generates in consumers. When we, as a design and engineering organisation within Motorola, create a product, having quantifiable data is extremely important to make decisions on product

design, but then we always lacked information about the emotional side. We had a lot of functional information, but little on how to control emotional reactions from consumers. Pantone now brings that to the table.

Motorola has always been recognised for the design of its products. Is design still one of your key drivers for the future?

It is, in particular the combination of design and emotions is key. We are making sure we're listening to consumers, that we hear their voice and understand the market. We try to engage consumers at an emotional level as well. With Pantone, we are addressing some of the senses, in particular vision, with colour. It's not only the colour, but also the texture, the touch. So it's not just taking a device and dipping it into a bucket of paint, we are starting to address the tactility aspect. How does it feel in your hand? How does it avoid fingerprints? How can we make it silky smooth? Last week we announced that we were working on a proprietary fragrance we developed with a Swiss company called Firmenich, a global leading company specialised in fragrance development. We started working with their chemists to develop a fragrance that would embody those elements of innovation, technology and design that Motorola stands for. Now, for everyone of our new products, when consumers open the box, they will be able to experience the unique fragrance that embodies the Motorola brand values. Also, the Motorola fragrance will be part of the experience in our stores around the world as customers walk in. Now we're thinking about what we can do with sound, or with taste. It's an open canvass and we want to continue exploring the human senses.



“Today, consumers don’t want brands to tell them what’s good for them, they want a relationship with brands that stand for the things they believe in”



A midrange product, yet offering premium features. It was designed to fit nicely in one’s hand, giving positive tactile emotions in addition to a stylish look and finish.



How important is the unboxing experience in the customer journey?

It’s very important. Unboxing is the real moment of truth. You really hold the brand in your hands, and experience what we truly stand for. We’re also introducing new eco-friendly packaging, made out of 100% recycled materials, compostable, 100% plastic-free. That’s also important. Consumers, nowadays, don’t want brands to tell them what’s good for them, they want to have a relationship with brands that share common values and stand for things they believe in as well. Our efforts around eco-conscious design have to manifest themselves, not only in what we do at the factory and how we ship products around the world, but also in things like the box itself. End-of-life is very important, too. Consumers want to know what the brand does for them when they want to dispose of or upgrade their device and move on to the next product.

What’s your personal definition of a designer?

A designer is a person who has an extreme amount of empathy for other human beings. I tie it back to understanding how humans live their life and interact with their world. Designer just have that unique ability of looking at things with a critical eye, at first, then a creative eye, to try and understand how the interaction can be improved. So it’s empathy, with an eye on how to improve things.

How does passion come into the equation?

You live your passions every day. You don’t just get up and work for eight hours, and then you become a different person after you close your laptop. I’m always looking at things through that eye of empathy, thinking of how to improve things, whatever I’m doing. I love to cook, my mum had a restaurant all her life. I grew up cooking with her. On Sundays, I have the opportunity to re-live what being a designer means to me: you start from an idea, and within a few hours you put something on a plate that goes through that process of design, of thinking of the end result, expecting some emotional reaction. Being able to curate all that is very exciting for me. You have to live your passions in many different ways throughout your day, throughout your life, and for me, cooking is definitely one of them.

The collaboration with Pantone led to the amazing colours of the new Motorola Edge Neo 30.



Profile

Ruben Castano leads Motorola Customer Experience for the company’s Mobile Business Group. Currently based in Chicago, throughout his career he has led successful design teams in Europe, Asia and the Americas, allowing him to gain experience in key global markets and a broad consumer view towards design and brand development. He joined Motorola in 2005, after making his mark in Europe as a rising talent of Whirlpool’s Design Studio. He holds a bachelor’s degree in Design and Strategy from the Istituto Europeo di Design in Milan, and has been recognised throughout his career with multiple design awards.



An inspiring tandem interview with Francesca Lanzavecchia and Hunn Wai, founders of L+W design studio based in Italy and Singapore. Taking design one step further into the digital dimension, they also evolved their craft from simply creating a product to becoming social researchers, tech-whizzes and storytellers.

Design with a beating heart

Falling in love with their clients is part of the deal, and when one gets to know them it's very hard not to love them back. The attention and care Francesca Lanzavecchia and Hunn Wai put into deeply understanding the brand, the context, the industry and the technologies surrounding any new project they undertake, are the secret of their success. Coming from two diverse but equally immensely rich cultural backgrounds, Italy and Singapore, Lanzavecchia and Wai make a point of infusing their clients' DNA into their creations while strongly expressing their own viewpoint. If they master technology, be it cutting-edge or ancestral, it's always eminently meaningful, as the human being takes center stage in their quest.



“We use beauty to bring the public closer to a project and make them understand its deeper meanings”

Q: What is your general approach to design in taking on a new project?

LANZAVECCHIA: Our design practice always follows the same principles since we founded our studio in 2010. Research is the central element to our practice: we always dig very deep in a context, and not only in technology and design terms. We try and extrapolate our viewpoint on a certain topic or scenario and “freeze” it, through the design process, into an object, an installation or a product. That's grounded both in the knowledge we have and also in the fact that we're very curious. We like to feed our design practice with a lot of notions from both the technology and the human sciences domains.

WAI: On a more philosophical level, we like to see design as an instrument to change perspectives and perceptions of how the world can be. That's where design comes from, to make the world a better place. For us it's about how we interact with industry, asking ourselves about manufacturing processes, markets and audiences in demographic terms. That's always been the basic equation to our approach, with a strong focus on the execution and the expression of design.

Q: You seem to have quite a strong focus on techniques and craftsmanship, such as in the recent work around knitted fabric you did for one of your clients in Japan...

L: In all our projects, there are different degrees of philosophy and storytelling, and also in the expression of our viewpoint. We always try to extrapolate the client's own perspective, of course, and include their DNA. Also, we focus on technologies, may they be a thousand years old like glass blowing or avant-garde, such as NFTs. For this particular project we worked with a leading Japanese company manufacturing 3D knitting machines. They have been working with the fashion industry for years, and now want to enter the world of design. They have a lot to offer, and their values strongly resonate with the current trends of the design scene, such as a great attention to sustainability and the environment, zero-waste, custom-made, personalised patterns. It was a good opportunity to showcase what this kind of technology could do.

We tend to fall in love with our clients, and try and build meaningful projects for them. We use beauty to bring the public closer to a project and make them understand its deeper meanings.



The “Nebula” sofa created for Trussardi, with its generous, soft, rounded shapes. A noticeable presence at Milan's recent Salone del mobile.

You come from two very different cultural backgrounds. How did that impact your work?

L: In fact we actually engineered this “clash of cultures” back in 2010. We had just finished our studies, and discussing about the future outlook of the design scene, we realised we needed to keep an eye on Asia and one on Europe. That’s how it all started, and we kept working on the concept, never stopping to question and confront ourselves. Then, when Covid came, with all the smart working and teleconferencing, we were ready: we had been there for 10 years, since that was the only way we had to constantly interact, communicate and compare cultures. Bringing the best of the new world into the old one, and vice versa.

Would you define your approach more tech-oriented, or more classic?

W: Design is a direct response to the context, so our approach isn’t really one or the other, it’s more a question of keeping our eyes open for what’s going on in the world. The more people use the objects we design, the more our design, and our viewpoint, have an impact.

L: This is also why our studio is located in two continents. Hunn needed to be rooted in Singapore’s tech-culture and I really needed to see the world evolving on a daily basis. What’s really important for us is to constantly compare notes. It’s a way for us to keep questioning and hybridising the world.

With your NFT projects, you decidedly moved beyond design, into the world of art. What made you take that step?

W : During Covid we weren’t able to travel, and in a sense we felt cut off from the rest of the world. We also had to drop several projects, and started looking for new opportunities which possibly wouldn’t have so much of a physical dimension to them. We were intrigued by the level of interest NFTs seemed to receive from investors. Most of our work was already in a digital form, often in 3D, given the double location of our studio and the need to exchange files. We thought about making that the final product. We started to think about how to transfer the value of our industrial design work into an intangible product. That involves a lot of stripping away of physical elements we can normally play with in the real world to bring value, like materiality, feel and proportion. We



“Living Vase”, an NFT specially created for vogue. The vase is made up of a multitude of lotus flowers, blooming and dispersing into the universe on dawn-to dusk infinite cycle.

“Bringing the best of the new world into the old one, and vice versa”



realised that social media played a role in communicating value. A lot of things get bought because they’re popular on the web, because they become viral. One must also learn the logistics of social media. For instance, our “living vase” NFT has a loop of exactly the same length as an Instagram story, so it won’t get cut or interrupted.

L: Vogue Singapore asked us to design something special and unique for their “new beginning” issue, so we started thinking about how we could create a collectible artefact that only existed in the digital world. To celebrate the return to life, we imagined something made by nature that would live forever in cycles on the blockchain. By not having the constraints of the physical world, we had limitless possibilities. Products nowadays are becoming increasingly phygital, as their digital dimension is getting ever more relevant. It’s not only NFTs, we’re already living in a virtual world, just think of this conf-call interview. As industrial designers, it’s important for us to catch that wave, and the Vogue project was a great opportunity in that sense.

W: Also, there’s a lot to be explored in terms of value exchange and remuneration when considering this subject. The Metaverse can completely disrupt the way we look at the matter, and make the whole process more fluid, and even reverse it, whereby you can receive support upfront from people who believe in your work. The NFT project was an important first step for us to explore these mechanisms and participate in this economy that is yet to be invented for the most part.

You are still producing some very physical work, like Trussardi Casa’s Nebula Sofa recently seen at Milan’s Salone del Mobile. What are your plans for the future?

L: Digital design is for sure going to be part of them. Also, we will continue to grow and strengthen our relationship with brands we are currently working with. There’s an aspect of design that seldom gets discussed, and it’s about relationships and “being connected”. We draw our inspiration from that relationship. At the end of the day, we’re very much on the human side of things, like for the Nebula Sofa you mentioned: soft, rounded shapes, generous proportions, it’s meant for quiet moments as well as for the whole family jumping on it at the same time. So we’d like to continue exploring new technologies, but always keeping a heart beating in everything we do.

W: The spoken word is still a very powerful way to communicate and inspire, so producing content, in particular for digital media, is very important to us. There’s a lot of value tied to digital content, which tends to be consumed a lot. As designers we are moving forward and beyond the traditional boundaries of our trade. If we want to make an impact, we need to be where all the hype is.



3D knitting enters the world of design, with these single-piece partitions as stylish elements of home or office furniture. Incredibly versatile and with infinite personalisation possibilities.

Lanzavecchia+Wai

Italian-born Francesca Lanzavecchia, 39, and Singapore’s Hunn Wai, 42, founded their design collaborative Lanzavecchia+Wai in 2010, after they met at Eindhoven’s Design Academy while studying for their Master degree in Conceptual Design in Context under Dutch designer Gijs Bakker, basing their creative collaboration on their cultural differences and their shared sense of curiosity and urge to investigate the world around them. They won several international awards, among which “Young Design Talent” from Elle Decor in 2014 to the “Red Dot Award” in 2016. They collaborated with major design platforms such as the Fuori Salone, the Triennale, the Salone del Mobile and Tokyo Design Week, among many others.

lanzavecchia-wai.com

JAMES IRVINE



A portrait of Milan's design scene favourite Brit

Among the most prominent designers of Italy's post-industrial age, Briton James Irvine left a precious legacy to the world of industrial design in the shape of the impressive archives made up of his famous "black books", in which he used to consign even the most minute details of every single project he had worked on. A most complete collection representing a significant chunk of contemporary design's history. Also, an engaging storyteller who loved socialising with colleagues, Irvine adopted the now iconic Bar Basso, close to his studio in Milan, which became a trendy watering hole for celeb designers and architects. Today, it still is "the place to go to" during the Milano Design week.



^ "James Irvine", edited by Francesca Picchi with Marialaura Irvine, Phaidon
< James Irvine at the historical studio in the Navigli area

“He casually opened the door in boxer shorts, thinking I was someone else. I hardly said hello because I caught sight of the cardboard model of a chair, down the hall. It was the first prototype of the Piceno chair”

– Giulio Cappellini



Piceno chair designed for Cappellini, 1991

Collaborations and cross contamination

Since his beginnings in Milan at the Olivetti Design Studio under the supervision of Michele de Lucchi, Irvine bonded with most of contemporary design's household names of the time, from Ettore Sottsass, who formerly lead the Olivetti team, to De Lucchi, Cappellini, Meda and many others. Most of them also contributed vibrant, emotional accounts of their personal and professional encounter with James and their “walking a stretch of the road together”, in the beautiful monograph book “James Irvine” recently published by Phaidon as a celebration to his life and work. If he took inspiration from their work, in turn, as they all willingly admit, he inspired them back with his incredible personality and his down-to-earth, tongue-in-cheek genius.



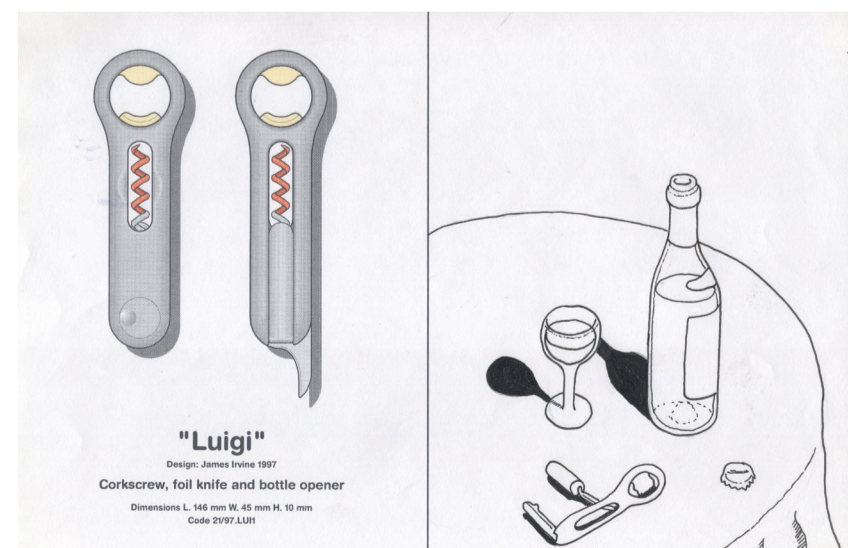
Juno chair, designed for Arper 2012 and updated by Marialaura Irvine in 2022

Them little black books

If on one hand James Irvine was that loveable, sociable character who had a highly developed sense of irony and seemed to be as distant as possible from any kind of dusty formality, on the other hand he was exceptionally meticulous in his work, going to extreme lengths to keep track of every single interaction with his clients, from emails, to meetings, to sketches, in the “journey” that every project he took on represented. Everything was recorded in “black books”, before turning into the beautiful swans of fully fledged, finished designs. It was so much of a habit that it became the Studio's very own work method, still in use today at Studio Irvine. “It's the only way you can efficiently manage 25 or 30 projects at a time, each of them stretching over a period of two or three years”, explains Marialaura Irvine, his wife, life-companion, and also fellow designer and architect, today at the helm of Studio Irvine. Also, he loved details, and his sketches were incredibly accurate, as he would even take the trouble to include shadows and all. He loved precise sketches, but that did not necessarily mean “ornate”.

“A project has to have a good strong idea behind it. It doesn't need to be embellished so much – it just needs to be right”

Irvine was always prepared to question himself, too. Towards the end of the 1990's, he was to design a bottle-opener for Alfi. He extensively quizzed Luigi, a waiter at one of his favourite restaurants in the heart of Brera, over what the ideal shape would be. After two years he proudly presented Luigi with a gift specimen of his brand new bottle-opener, only to see the man slating the result of his efforts, bluntly dismissing the tool as “too heavy”. “I felt all the arrogance of an over-confident designer who believes he can make something better... I realised that the best corkscrew is the lightest..” he later confessed.



Luigi corkscrew designed for Alfi, 1997



Black Books at the studio (photo: Santi Caleca)



Chair n°14 designed for Muji / Thonet, 2009



Üstra bus designed for Mercedes-Benz, 2000 (photo: Santi Caleca)



S500 Sofa System design for Thonet in 2006 and updated by Marialaura Irvine in 2021 (photo: Giacomo Giannini)

An eclectic worker, he was curious just about everything. He also collaborated with many internationally known brands and companies, and designed an incredible variety of products, from injection-moulded chairs, to stainless steel equipment for the kitchen and all sorts of beautiful objects and implements. Some of his creations are held on permanent display at Milan's Triennale, among which what could be considered as the precursor of a tablet computer, a prototype he designed for Olivetti, and the Piceno chair that struck Cappellini upon his first visit at Irvine's. The consecration of Studio Irvine as an internationally established industrial design studio came in 2000 with an order from the City of Eindhoven, in the Netherlands, for a fleet of Mercedes Benz buses for the city's public transport firm. It was a success, and the buses are still on the streets of Eindhoven today! At the time, on top of managing his own design studio, Irvine was also design director at Ettore Sottsass Associati. It was an incredibly busy period for him, but again his poetic side would emerge, with him showing up at aperitivo time, drink in hand. He'd review the day's work, and rush back and forth, meeting clients and fellow designers, and travelling endlessly, but he'd still find the time to invite friends for dinner, and then do some more sketching late at night.

Birth of the Bar Basso saga

Irvine was a true Brit, but he had fully embraced Milanese culture. He loved to hang out in traditional places run by old-style owners who tried to establish a bond with their customers. Bar Basso was probably the epitome of what Irvine intended as the perfect Milanese establishment. It was close to his studio, and he loved to spend time there with anyone who came to visit him, and at the time, one didn't go to Milan without paying a visit to James Irvine. Legend has it that it all began with one memorable party organised on the occasion of Jasper Morrison's departure, but the fact is that in the design world, Bar Basso had come to be so inextricably associated to Irvine that it took on his aura. Incidentally, Bar Basso's game-changing contribution to the bartending world was the invention of the universally acclaimed “Negroni sbagliato”, in which gin, part of the original Negroni recipe, is advantageously replaced by Prosecco. To date, Bar Basso, located in via Plinio, remains a landmark and a place to visit during Milano Design Week. Over the years, the Studio has steadily consolidated its stance on the international design scene as it continues to attract new orders and clients. Irvine's legacy of attention to detail and ingenuity, his “method” and passion still inspire the team at the Studio now led by Marialaura Irvine, and keep bearing fruit. Today, Studio Irvine looks at the future with confidence and anticipation. Something the master himself would have found worth drinking to with a memorable Negroni sbagliato!

Bio

London-born James Irvine (1958-2013) arrived in Milan in 1984, aged 26, after earning a Master's degree at the Royal College of Art. He started off in grand style, joining legendary Ettore Sottsass at Olivetti's design studio in Corso Venezia. The collaboration with Sottsass in the blessed post-Memphis era was to last for years, even after Irvine opened his own design studio, “Studio Irvine” in 1988. Over the years Irvine collaborated with the most prominent names in contemporary design and many of the world-famous companies and brands were his clients. During his professional life, Irvine designed all sorts of object, from furniture to kitchen utensils, to buses, showing an incredible eclecticism as well as an all-British sense of understated stylishness and sense of humour.

studio-irvine.com

Tables.

A 5.000 year long story.

The table stands at the very heart of our houses, probably because it represents a meeting and starting point. In terms of symbolism, especially when it's round, the table defines every new beginning.

The history of the table is an ancient one, not only for the activities carried on at it, but also as a meeting spot. Independently from its functional role, the table has evolved over time to become an essential object from a social and aesthetic standpoint. Concepts such as power, status and social interaction revolve around the physical presence of the table, which design and scope have extended well beyond its original purpose.

The word table derives from the Latin tabula, but the first examples of tables were already used by the Egyptians as early as the second Millennium b.C., though with a purely practical purpose: they were used to keep objects raised from the ground.

The Greeks introduced what's considered the table's most ancient shape, the rectangle. It had three legs and became popular in the whole of the Mediterranean area. The Romans then gave it a round shape, with a central stand split into three legs. They dubbed it the mensa Delphica. The most common materials employed in its construction were wood, bronze and marble. They were usually quite elaborate, especially the legs that were inspired by the Romans' dedication to their numerous divinities and shaped into animal paws, or human and mythological figures.

The Romans also increased the size of tables, which became increasingly ornate, and were used during feasts and banquets, turning into a status of opulence and power.

During the Middle-Ages, up until the fourteenth Century, tables were considered as a mere commodity: the most common design consisted in massive oak or elm boards placed on top of a series of trestles. They were covered by tablecloths or even carpets, and after the meals they would be dismantled to be stored away.

Things started to change towards the second half of the 1300's, when the table became the place where guests would meet and socialise. Long tables started to be built, with the longest ones being complemented by benches and chairs. Once again tables became a status symbol. Normally, the master and his guests would sit at a table on a canopied dais, with the rest of the family sitting at tables placed perpendicularly to the master's.



LC6, Cassina, 1929
Design Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand

Cassina's LC6 design "Table tube d'avion" represents one of the first study models introduced by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand at the Paris Salon D'Automne in 1929. Its core concept is the distinction between the frame and the tabletop: the autonomy of the two parts is stressed by 4 intermediate stands used to set the desired height of the top and act as a separation between the sturdy base and the slender lines of the tabletop.



Cavalletto, B&B Italia, 1948
Design Luigi Caccia Dominioni

Designed by Luigi Caccia Dominioni for his own home in 1941, it was inspired by the trestles he used to work on when a student at Milan's Politecnico. The table contains all the key elements defining an Italian designer and architect: sophisticated curves, rigorous straight lines, minimalism that adds to the beauty of the object. It went back in production in 2018.



Cavalletto, Cassina, 1950
Design Franco Albini

A minimalist, light looking table that enhances the rigorous work of Franco Albini and the manufacturer's superior woodworking skills. The table's structure is based on contrasting tensions, revealing an apparent transience suggested by the skilful reduction of volumes and masses.



Trapèze, Vitra, 1950/54
design Jean Prouvé

Jean Prouvé originally designed the Trapèze table for the Cité Universitaire in Antony, near Paris. The trapeze-shaped legs inspired its shape and give the table its distinctive character. It has a HPL (High Pressure Laminate) top and the legs and crossbar are in press-formed sheet steel.



Saarenen Tulip, Knoll International, 1957
Design Eero Saarinen

Finnish-American designer Eero Saarinen vowed to address the "ugly, confusing, unrefined world" he observed underneath chairs and tables - the so-called "slum of legs." A five-year design investigation led him to the revolutionary Pedestal Collection. Featuring a heavy moulded cast aluminium base, the tables are available in white laminate, coated marble in a wide range of colours and veneer.



Superellipse Collection, 1964-68
design Piet Hein, Bruno Mathsson, Fritz Hansen

Designed by philosopher Piet Hein and mathematician Bruno Mathsson, the Superellipse table is characterised by its particular shape, halfway between an oval and a rectangle. It was inspired by designer Piet Hein's solution to a traffic problem in Sergel Torg, Stockholm



Platner, Knoll International, 1966
Designed Warren Platner

In 1966, the Platner Collection captured the "decorative, gentle, graceful" shapes that were beginning to infiltrate the modern vocabulary. The iconic pieces are created by welding hundreds of curved steel rods to circular frames, simultaneously serving as structure and ornament. Polished Nickel or metallic bronze base. Clear or bronze glass and marble top.



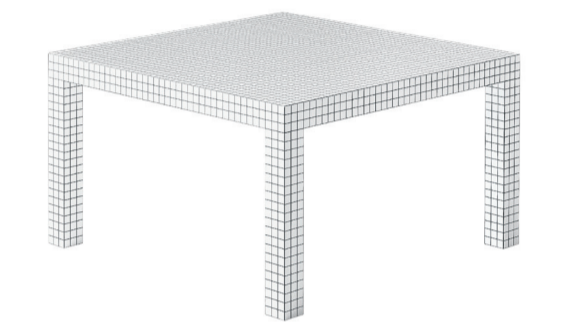
Doge, Simon/Cassina, 1968
Design Carlo Scarpa

Doge is a cornerstone of Italian design and the manifest of the Ultrarational movement of the late 60's. Ultrarationalism's intent was to overcome the limits of rationalism through the restoration of traditional values such as aesthetics. The aluminium or satin steel base is the essential part of the table, while the elegant, refined nature of the top element is enhanced by the transparency of glass.



Working table Leonardo, Zanotta, 1969
Design Achille Castiglioni

Leonardo is a table "of the memory", being the archetype of worktables on trestles. Its design reflects the philosophy of its designer according to whom "design has always existed and the best objects are those not signed by the architects". This product resembles the elements of Zanotta's production philosophy: essentiality, simplicity, best quality of the materials, excellence of workmanship, care for detail.



Quaderna, Zanotta, 1969-1972
Design by Studiopiù

The chequered pattern was a creation of the Superstudio group in 1969 as part of a study on "histograms", consisting in a series of objects built using an orthogonal mesh pattern that could be scaled and adapted to different contexts, from design to urban architecture, giving rise to the "movimento continuo", or "continuous motion" movement. The table, like all the other objects in the "Misura M" series, is made of honeycomb wood plated in white print laminate with an isotropic chequered motif. The mesh is digitally printed.



Eros Collection, today Agapecasa, 1971
Design Angelo Mangiarotti

This marble tables system represents a milestone in the research on interlocking furniture: for the "Eros" series the solution consists of a gravity joint between the tops and the legs, which have a truncated cone section and lodge into the four grommets at the corners of the tops. This bell & spigot type joint, says Mangiarotti, evokes the "male-female" symbolic union.



Dining table 714, Cassina, 1973
Design Theodore Waddel

The table originates from a 1956 research by Waddel with the objective to design extremely light and dynamic tables, based on the architecture of stretch tents. For Cassina, in 1972, he came up with a configuration that allowed for the creation of furniture pieces using support cables. The layout consists in six legs, of which three are suspended - supporting the glass top - with the remaining three standing on the ground but detached from the top.



Frate, Driade, 1974
Design Enzo Mari

Designed in 1973 and produced from 1974 by Driade. With Frate, and the entire collection connected to it, Enzo Mari enhances the barren essentiality of the metal profile legs with a transparent, crystal tabletop. The secret of this table's success is the bold pairing of such different materials and the perfect balance between them.



Mandarin, Memphis Milano, 1981
Design Ettore Sottsass

A metal table with wooden legs, plated with decorative laminate and a glass top, designed by Ettore Sottsass, the iconic Italian architect designer and photographer. In 1980 he co-founded the Memphis Group, with the intent to go beyond the accepted aesthetics of the industrial design of the time.



Neoz, Driade, '90s
Design Philippe Starck

The Neoz collection is characterised by the urge to re-interpret timeless archetypes. The table designed by Philippe Starck has an ebonised-finish solid mahogany structure, die-cast aluminum leg-tips and nylon casters. The tabletop also exists in an iridescent white marble version.



Split, Poltronova, 1990
Designed Ron Harad

The Split extendable table designed by Ron Arad in 1990 for Poltronova was one of the first items not self-produced by the English designer. Out of production for many years, it was reinserted in the catalogue in 2012, in the context of the program of reissued pieces of Centro Studi Poltronova. The top made with slats of various types of wood makes it possible to alter the size. It features elegant arched legs in brushed steel, giving the table an original sculptural dimension.



Event Horizon, 1992
Design Marc Newson

In the Event Horizon table, aluminum was worked as if it were a soft, pliable material, stretching and deforming seamlessly. Made by an Aston Martin restoration company near London, these coach-builders were highly skilled in welding, rubberising and forming and worked almost exclusively in aluminum. The table is made of spun aluminum, with four trumpet legs supporting a shaped top that, being open at both ends, reveals a hollow interior. The interior is coated with red "Ferrari" enamel.



Sansone table, Gaetano Pesce, 1980
Design Gaetano Pesce

The Sansone table by Gaetano Pesce, one of the most prominent proponents of the so-called "radical" design, takes after the biblical tale of Samson and Dalila to describe the situation of the world at the end of the 20th Century. The legs remind of the temple's columns Samson knocked down in his extreme act of revenge. The message behind it is an open instigation to escape the established conventions regulating design.



Tobi-Hihi, B&B Italia, 2012
Design Edward Barber & JayOsgerby

Available in two versions, round or rectangular-with-rounded-ends, Tobi-Hishi is a table that has a distinctive sculptural feel to it. The name itself alludes to the ornamental stones decorating Japanese gardens, which also serve as an inspiration for its structural elements. The elegant balance between robustness and lightness also marks the new special edition made with strips of white Carrara marble and requiring highly sophisticated craftsmanship in its entirely manual construction.



Element, Desaltom, 2013
Design Tokujin Yoshioka

An iconic table, Element is the emblem of purity and poetry, the hallmark of visionary designer Tokujin Yoshioka. The central stand, poised between the two horizontal elements, defies gravity, suspended as it is between earth and sky, between past and present. The black cement finish makes this perfect dynamic balance between lightness and sturdiness even more concrete.

It wasn't until the 15th Century that the table came in one single piece, with legs connected by sturdy bars at floor level. These fixed-dimensions objects were made of oak or elm wood, thus quite heavy to move around. In the 16th Century, a contraption was invented to increase their size, the very table-extensions we are still using today. The Renaissance and its revival of classicism brought significant changes in style: inspired by the Roman and Greek tables, Renaissance tables gained sculpted, richly ornate legs with naturalistic motifs, while tops were embellished by paintings and ebony, ivory, marble and hard stones inlays.

But the fanciest tables certainly belong to Baroque, with the most elaborate colour effects. The craze for rich, opulent tables was at its peak, and was promoted by monarchies of the time wanting to imitate Louis XIV's Versailles. Up until the mid 17th Century they'd have silver-lined tables, with ebony and precious marble marquetry, made by the best craftsmen, often Italians. In the 18th Century, these precious materials were progressively supplanted by lacquering, in the wake of the growing commercial and cultural relations between the Western World and the Far East. During that period, alongside traditional dining tables, some specialised tables started to appear, specifically designed for coffee and tea, cards, or writing and reading. The trend persisted right up to the early 20th Century.

From a design point of view, for the second half of the 19th Century the mood would be to privilege simpler forms, a trend that was also dictated by the advent of mass production. Industrialisation would facilitate new building concepts by which the different parts of a table would come pre-formed and then assembled once sent to retailers.

The success of Art Nouveau, towards the end of the 1800's, would bring back a taste for classical forms and, most of all, significantly reduce the size and importance of the table. A trend rooted in the aspiration for greater order and space within the home.

In the course of the 20th Century the design of tables tended to follow the profound social and economical changes that marked the period. New technological solutions were devised and new materials adopted, such as plastic, metal, glass fibre and even corrugated cardboard. Traditional forms gave way to bolder solutions, characterised by the use of multiple colours. While maintaining its central function as a piece of furniture on which meals are served and consumed, the modern table also became the place where meetings and games took place, as happens today. In our contemporary societies, tables have even expanded this social role and have come to incarnate the essence of conviviality and art de vivre.

Bringing style to the table

“Conviviality”, intended in the French sense of the word “convivialité”, the enjoyment of the company of others over a shared meal, is a concept in constant evolution. What does it mean nowadays, and how will it change in the near future? How did this evolution have an impact on our domestic utensils in terms of product design? Alessi, Italy’s kitchenware iconic brand, has been interpreting the concepts of design and conviviality for the past 100 years, and has shared its take on the subject with DM.



Conica “long handle” espresso coffee maker by Aldo Rossi, and model “9090 perforated handle” by Richard Sapper.

The evocative power of the kitchen is unique to this space and to no other room in the house. This domestic area represents the very essence of “convivialité”, which from time immemorial focuses on the table, where foods and rituals take on a symbolic meaning, and are intimately connected to ancestral traditions passed down through generations. Food, as the key element of the table, combines nutritional values with a higher dimension, less mundane, which symbolism, under the social perspective, has evolved over time. The design objects of modern, domestic convivialité physically explicit this evolutionary process.

Italian iconic brand Alessi has just celebrated its 100th anniversary. During its long history it has created unique objects that embody, in a unique and distinctive manner, the intimate bond between design and conviviality.

“Alessi’s mission has always been to bring art and poetry into everyday life, in which social interaction is strongly linked to food and its sharing”, says Carlo Gasparini, the company’s design manager and fourth generation Alessi.



Above and below, David Chipperfield’s 2019 Moka is a tribute to Italy’s most popular espresso coffee maker ever and to its inventor, Alfonso Bialetti, Alberto Alessi’s grandfather.

How did this concept of sharing evolve over time?

One of the macro-trends which Alessi addressed in terms of product design, is the transition from a typically European idea of the kitchen as the formal place to prepare and eat food, to one of a space for creativity and sharing. In the past, the kitchen was essentially the realm of the housewife who prepared food for the whole family, who ate it sitting at the table according to conventions. Today it is the place for sharing experiences, in addition to actually eating. The new ritual may start with a glass of wine, and continue with an aperitivo while preparing the meal.

How did this process impact domestic objects in terms of product design?

Social changes in the consumption and enjoyment of food brought about the natural evolution of the objects serving this specific purpose.



Carlo Gasparini, design manager, represents the fourth generation of the Alessi family. With an academic background in architecture, he is responsible for product development as well as acting as an intermediary between the creative professionals and the technical department.

Can you make some examples?

The *mise en place*, i.e. the table setting, has changed: the plates destined to the single courses have been replaced by an archipelago of vessels and trays from which one can pick different foods, originating from various culinary cultures. Today, the table has become the territory of cultural exchange and socialising, favoured by the informal enjoyment of food: smaller plates and contained portions of different foods, often the result of cultural cross contamination, to be sampled and talked over. We have gone from an individual pattern of consumption to one of sharing, a trend that will grow stronger in the coming future. Hence an increased demand for flexible and creative objects that can support the fusion of flavours and recipes.

If you were to name two Alessi products to represent the current food sharing trend, what would they be?

Certainly the moka, both because it is a pop product par excellence, also in terms of commercial success, and because it represents the embodiment of the ritual of sharing, intended as an archetype of conviviality that lives on in our modern days. The moka coffee maker is having a great comeback: after years of fast coffee with the absolute domination of coffee pods, today we have gone back to slow coffee and its rituals, starting with the enjoyment of the bewitching fragrance preceding coffee itself. To be honest, it needs to be said that Alessi has strong ties, even blood ties, with the object as my great grandfather, Alfonso Bialetti, was the inventor of the first “caffettiera espresso” at the beginning of the 20th Century.



Todo the giant grater, designed in 2004 by Richard Sapper, is an example of an object to be put on display on the table or in the kitchen, but which performs at the same time in a precise and innovative way, transforming one of the most boring culinary actions into a playful act.



The emblem of food sharing, the Moscardino multipurpose utensil was designed for eating a meal quickly, for a standing lunch, for an informal aperitif or for serving small bites and finger food in a new and original way.

Is this good or bad?

It's certainly good inasmuch these objects will allow people to have more time to interact with each other, boosting their social lives.

Do such objects already exist?

The smart cooker comes to mind, and the voice assistant, too: the former can take care of practical tasks in your place, freeing up some time for you to devote to more rewarding activities, while the latter can gather people around a recipe they can do together. Actually, the future is yet to be created.

What about the second product?

It's the Moscardino multipurpose utensil, the true emblem of food sharing, designed in 2000 by Giulio Iacchetti and Matteo Ragni specifically for the aperitivo and combining, in a single instrument, the functions of a fork and a spoon. It perfectly addresses the changing habits in eating and entertaining.

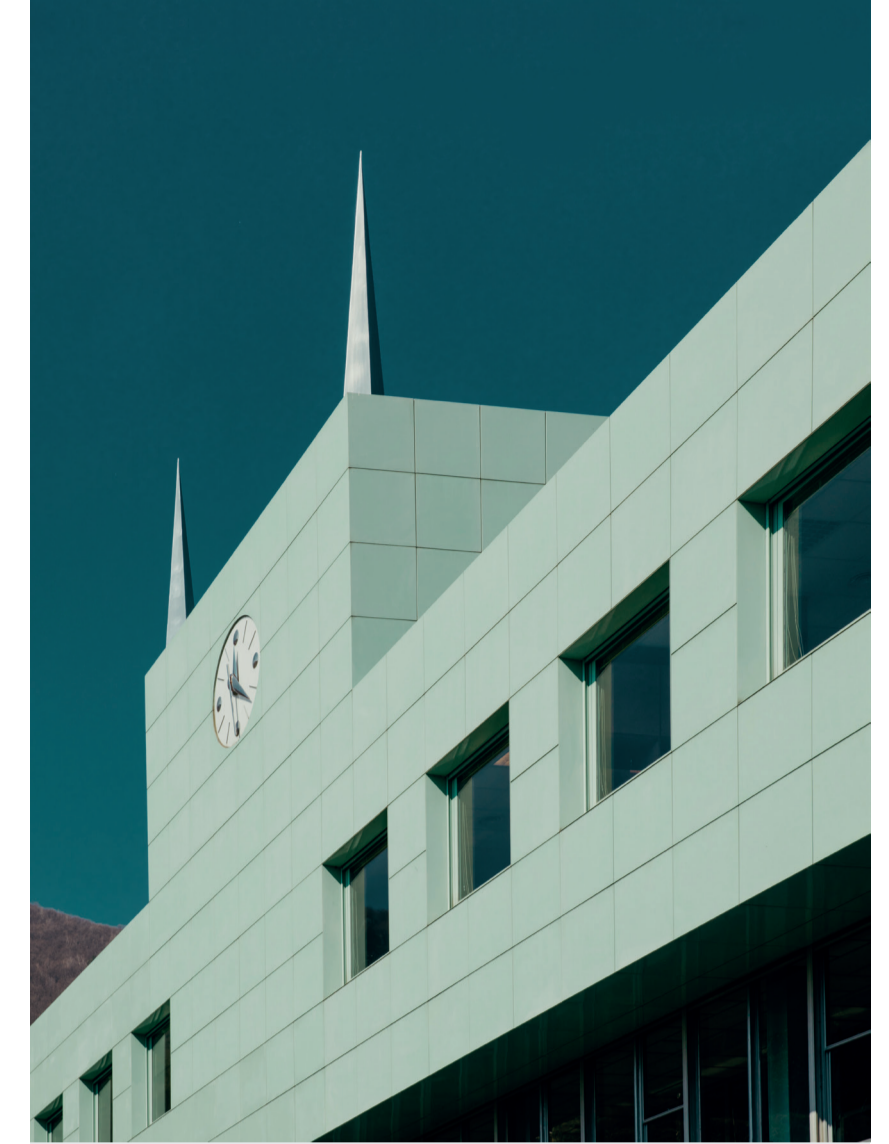
How do you think the design of table utensils will evolve in the next future?

It will undoubtedly go towards a growing convergence between the design world and the IOT, a combination we are already working on at Alessi. A significant change of paradigm is underway: up until today, it was us who knew the objects, but now it is the objects that start knowing us, thanks to sensors and smart capacities. "Intelligent objects" learn to know the users, which will enable them to better manage their social interactions within the home. In the near future AI will bring about new types of conviviality and sharing.

The Ottagonale collection, designed by Carlo Alessi in 1935, is among the historic products recently re-edited and represents one of the most fitting archetypes of past conviviality, and an Alessi all-time classic.



The Tending box is the new collection of cocktail accessories designed by Giulio Iacchetti under the expert advice of mixologist Oscar Quagliari. The home mixology trend started during the pandemics, and represents a perfect example of contemporary conviviality.



ALESSI

THE DREAM FACTORY

Established in 1921, Alessi has always been recognised for the high quality of its products. In the 1970's, with the arrival of Alberto Alessi, the founder's grandson, the company starts collaborating with the most interesting designers on the International scene, gradually becoming a leading figure among the "factories of Italian design" for its capacity to produce functional objects that are poetic at the same time. Its mission is to translate these creative expressions into real objects, capable of satisfying the dreams and the aspirations of society. Among the many collaborations worth citing, those with Achille Castiglioni, Alessandro Mendini, Marcel Wanders, Michele De Lucchi, Philippe Starck, Jasper Morrison, and Michael Graves. In 2021 Alessi celebrated its 100th anniversary, and the beginning of a new century of experimenting in the field of design.

www.alessi.com

Kitchens: ever more on the living side

It's one of the latest trends emerging at the recent EuroCucina fair, the popular Milano Design Week collateral event: the kitchen is ever less a simple place apt to satisfy basic needs and ever more a hybrid, multifunctional space that blends seamlessly into the living zone.

Last June, at the 2022 edition of EuroCucina, the reference international kitchen fair concurrent with the Milano Design Week, the hype was all for a kitchen characterised by fluid spaces and ever more multifunctional, to the point of becoming a hybrid space thanks to the disappearance of traditional partitions separating it from the rest of the house. The kitchen has progressively acquired the status of the home's "centre of gravity". A room ever less exclusively dedicated to satisfying basic

needs and increasingly taking on the role of "the place" for conviviality and socialising, and where most of the family's daily activities tend to take place. From home-office to homework, from conference calls to relaxing and sharing. Extending over an area of 16,000 square metres, EuroCucina hosted more than 80 exhibitors from all over the world, who presented the latest trends that will hit the kitchen industry in the coming months. Design Magazine has reviewed the most interesting ones.



Ernestomeda

The new Sign kitchen meets the other domestic spaces and becomes an extension of the living room. The traditional upper cabinetry leaves space to glass display-cabinets and à-giorno boiserie to create an element of harmony and continuity with the living room area.

www.ernestomeda.com



Molteni&C/Dada

Dada's Tivali 2.0 integrated kitchen extends over a linear space of 2.40m to 3m and can be entirely concealed into a single piece of furniture with two large folding doors. Its amphitheatre shape and the arching worktop make for a great scenic effect.

www.dada-kitchens.com



DOIMO CUCINE

In the D23+ Aspen kitchen, columns become the central element of the layout, redefining the space and the functional zones. The kitchen becomes the focal point of conviviality, and the retractable doors conceal the appliances and the operational areas. The pantry takes on a new, central role. Serving bowls, vases and glassware are now beautifully on display, creating a sense of harmony with the rest of the house.

www.doimocucine.com



SCAVOLINI - JEOMETRICA

This project by Luca Nichetto constitutes a complete furniture system involving, in addition to the kitchen itself, the living room and the bathroom, ensuring consistency in styles throughout the house. Aluminium-frame doors (in white, anthracite-grey or titanium), curved steel-tube handles and an accessorised laminate back-panel characterise the project.

www.scavolini.com



ROSSANA

ISØLA redefines the disrupting concept of the first models of kitchen islands designed by Carlo Colombo at the end of the 1960's. A single-block model with an architectural structure reveals an open kitchen, ready to interact with the surrounding space. ISØLA is a kitchen by all means, but also a living room thanks to the new free-standing wall that provides a physical, stylish partition between the work area and the living zone.

www.rossana.com



L'Ottocento

Floral Botanica boiserie lines the space with a versatile, accessorised-panels system. It can be personalised according to one's needs and the intended use of the space: kitchen or living room. Contributing to the modularity of the furnishing, it combines with the new Archetipo dark oak island, featuring drawers and resting on two stands hiding all the cabling.

www.lottocento.it

THE KITCHEN OPENS UP ON THE LIVING ROOM

The most widespread trend is that of an open-plan kitchen, a space that blends seamlessly into the living area. Layouts now include new modules that connect the kitchen to the living spaces: on top of the still much popular multifunctional islands, ever more sophisticated, large and accessorised, new elements are starting to appear, such as glass display-cabinets, bookshelves and other functional partitions integrated into the kitchen space. On one hand they formally mark the separation

from the rest of the open-plan area yet on the other hand they also constitute a seamless integration of the functional cooking zone into the living-room in terms of continuity of styles. The kitchen is now one of the specialised areas within the living open-space, together with the dining spot, the library corner, the sitting area and the TV lounge.

ON WITH BOISERIES, ACCESSORIES AND TECH SOLUTIONS

Next to the pantry and the work zones with all their related appliances, there now are new specialised spaces and solutions that, on top of cooking and dining, are dedicated to chatting, partying, working or relaxing. The most technologically-advanced solutions offer automated, even mobile spaces. In addition to countertops that can move horizontally, modifying your work surface, revealing the hidden sink or extending the snack counter, one can find worktops that will instead move up and down

at the push of a button, to provide a barstool counter or a perfectly adjusted work surface. The dining area is now accessorised with shelves and metal trays, independent from the kitchen walls, to hold bottles and food ready to serve. Another emerging trend is that of modular, panelled boiserie that can be fitted with a variety of functional elements to hold bottles, glasses, herbs or kitchen utensils.



CESAR

THE 50'S redefines the containment bookcase systems of the 1950's in a modern key and with new functionalities. The system can be equipped for the kitchen, the living room or a mix of both. It can feature ovens, wine cellars and other small appliances, and storage bays for kitchen utensils and accessories.

www.cesar.it



TM Italia

The de-structuring of space and function is the concept behind the new Avignon kitchen. The true innovation is the invisible integration of additional functions that go beyond the classic features of a kitchen. They are located in the extension countertop of the central island, which becomes the house's social, work and entertainment hub. The retractable Home Office block can store a laptop, mouse, keyboard and stationery, and also features sockets and USB ports. The unit is fully automated and is controlled through a dedicated app to deploy and retract it.

www.tmitalia.it



SNAIDERO

The Way minimalist kitchen ensures maximum versatility in terms of home office space thanks to specific solutions such as the Spazio sliding top transforming the worktop in a desk in a single move, and the e-Wall system featuring a free standing cabinet transforming into a complete smart working station.

www.snaidero.com

Smart columns are the ultimate solution for lack of space. They have retractable doors opening on spacious shelves where pots and pans can be easily stored. They can also provide a foldable top for extra work space. Once dinner is ready, everything can be neatly folded back. Retractable and walk-in kitchens are all the rage even in larger homes: thanks to cleverly engineered systems, smart doors conceal entire suites of large domestic appliances, including impressively-sized wine cellars, greenhouses, larders and laundry units.

HOME OFFICE

Kitchen design now also encompasses the new concept of home office and offers contained but functional work stations providing a quiet, peaceful cocoon, but also multitasking counters that can easily and instantly turn into an operational base, desk and console.

**FTK
TECH
TRENDS**



At FTK -Technology For the Kitchen, a side exhibition of EuroCucina dedicated to built-in domestic appliances and their evolution through prototypes and "concept cars" - nearly all brands have presented **smarter, more versatile, multifunctional and sustainable products.**

Sustainability is in fact a common theme to all exhibitors, and all are engaged in contributing to the planet's safeguards by investing in new production processes that, for instance, will build appliances with 50% **recycled plastics**, or by making them ever more energy efficient and more sustainable through **smart lighting and specialised technology.**



In the cooling business, almost all of the products now have **multiple compartments, each specialised in the preservation of specific food items** in order to keep them fresher for longer and avoid food waste.

The cellar compartment has a temperature between 8°C and 12°C for cheese and cured meats, while the chiller drawer keeps a 0°C temperature, ideal for meat or fish. The crisper drawers, where fruit and vegetables are stored, can adjust humidity levels.

Refrigerators and freezers can be **remotely managed through dedicated apps** on one's smartphone. Functions, temperatures and other settings can be easily adjusted remotely.



Courtesy Salone del Mobile.Milano
(1 - 3 photo: Luca Fiammenghi)
(2 - 4 photo: Diego Ravier)



Veneta Cucine

Lounge is a contemporary and sophisticated kitchen system featuring fine woodwork, glossy or matt lacquers with liquid metal finishes, Fenix laminates, steel and also glossy and matt lacquered glasses, wood grosgrain or matt lacquered canetè with a metal finish.

www.venetacucine.com



Arrex

The AL 32 has a minimal, rigorous design, enhanced by the smooth, matt glass doors of the cabinetry nicely framing the sink zone. The frame of the central island, featuring a table with a transparent glass support, is in recycled aluminium for the grey anthracite finish, and in multilayered HPL for the concrete finish.

www.arrex.it



Scic

The new edition of the Labirinto kitchen is characterised by a simple, precise design and a special attention to the choice of materials. The use of stainless steel combined with Canaletto walnut wood for the open shelves gives it a distinctive look. The key element of the entire kitchen is the smoky quartz top by Antolini, with its natural, metallic iridescence going from brown to grey and enhanced by some clever backlighting.

www.scic.it

KITCHEN FORM AND FUNCTION

The evolutionary process of the kitchen has progressively done away with the most distinctive elements of tradition to the advantage of more linear and sculptural single-blocks layouts. These have become the modern home's altars upon which the culinary rituals are performed and the resulting food eaten. The trend is that of pure, essential lines that can soften occasionally, but always for the sake of functionality.

MATERIALS AND COLOURS

Experimenting with materials emerges as the main theme of this year's Eurocucina. Technological innovation provides ever harder materials for worktops, more resistant to abrasion and chemical agents, but also to bumps, UV rays and thermal shock. The new finishes, like glass, often come texturised, reproducing the looks of natural materials such as marble and wood, which, together with quartz, are the new stars of the kitchen. New designs offer a combination of them to make the reference to nature even stronger.

INSIGHTS FROM FUORISALONE

Rationalism or Excess

There seems to be a dichotomy in principles in the furniture industry, between a strong penchant for rationalism and outright excess. On one hand the objects - furniture, chairs, fixtures - conceived to solve space issues and make our daily lives easier, and on the other hand the ostentation, the excess, the "too much": too coloured, too soft, too rounded. Anything goes to get noticed!

Sustainability

Once again the unrivalled star of both Milano Design Week and Fuorisalone, sustainability is the key point for furniture and accessories makers alike. The concepts behinds sustainability and the circular economy have been re-interpreted by designers and marketers, resulting in the most creative projects and virtuous up-cycling ideas, promoting the recycling of raw materials and making for greener urban landscapes. Where the use of recycled materials is impossible, comes the engagement to drastically cut CO2 emissions by participating in the Carbon Neutral Project or compensating through the planting of new trees.

Technology innovation

On with technological innovation for the virtuous recycling of the many materials deriving from wood or fibre scraps, and on with the widespread use of 3D printers that are becoming better and better at making the best use of the most diverse materials, like, for instance, concrete.

The diktat of quality

Any research on new materials must go hand in hand with the quality of processes to ensure a longer lifespan for products, resulting in less waste in the future.



ARAN

Imagined by chef Davide Oldani and created in collaboration with designer Attila Veress, the CUCINAnD'O kitchen offers a retractable doors system on the entire length of the kitchen wall. The minimalist look of the central island underlines the attention to responsible consumption of which Oldani himself is a fervent proponent. The basic idea of his anti-waste cuisine is that, in order to avoid wasting food, it is important not to produce any surplus in the first place.

www.arancucine.it



STOSA CUCINE

Metropolis is the first kitchen of the Stosa range to be entirely made of Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC) certified cabinetry. The FSC guarantees the wood employed in certified products come from forests that are subject to very strict environmental, economic and social standards.

www.stosamilano.it

Also, there is an extensive use of concrete, in some cases an imitation of, and of stainless steel, often in a "total look" version.

Nature inspired the stone, marble and wood finishes, enhanced by glossy polishes that seem to have supplanted the matt coatings. As an alternative, especially for cabinet doors and worktops, porcelain stoneware with a marble effect are all the hype. Nature also inspires the choice of colours: neutral palettes combined with textured finishes constitute the new trend. There's a wide variety of greys and greens, from sage to jungle-green, to warmer and velvety shades, evoking the spices used in the kitchen. White remains a great classic, but more on the ivory side, as well as matt black.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability continues to be one of the top trending topics. In order to satisfy an ever more environmentally conscious and demanding clientele, brands offer products and materials obtained through sustainable processes and with a low carbon footprint as well as an increased lifespan.



IF Design Award, celebrating design excellence

Since 1954, the event has gained increasing international recognition and has come to be considered as one of the most prestigious awards for products and services that stand out for innovation in all disciplines of design.



The IF Design Award was founded in 1954 by the iF International Forum Design, the oldest independent design organisation, itself born the previous year in Hannover. Among its basic principles that of identifying and promoting quality design, popularising it while encouraging social changes through design and by supporting young talents wanting to make a career in design. It's one of the most recognised and coveted international design awards. The iF logo recognises quality design in all the major disciplines: product design, packaging, communication and services, architecture and interior design, professional concepts. The latest additions being User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI). Altogether, 9 categories for a total of 81 subcategories that cover all the principal areas of design.

THE HISTORY

The association was founded and inspired by German entrepreneur Philip Rosenthal, who played a key role in the German Industry Federation (BDI), where he engaged in uniting the business world to that of culture. The objective of the new institution, initially called "Die Gute

Industrieform" (the good industrial form) before becoming "Industrie Forum" (or iF in short), was to attract the attention on carefully designed industrial products. The intent was to convey the innovative strength of design and what it could achieve: for consumers, for the brands and for the companies. IF's inaugural speech was held by Bauhaus icon Wilhelm Wagenfeld, a not a casual choice since the original movement leading to the birth of the foundation was largely inspired by the German school and its concept of "good form", a combination of ethical and aesthetic qualities.

'BEHIND THE SCENES'

In its more than 60 years of history, in excess of 51 thousand products and services received an iF award. They are all featured at www.ifdesign.com as a way to promote the culture of design. Every year, thousands of submissions, coming from all over the world, are selected and presented to a jury of at least 50 international, independent experts. Only the absolute best receive a Golden iF Design Award, considered as the "Design Oscar". Since 1954 through to 2022, hundreds of designers and architects have been part of the jury. The process is divided in two phases: the first phase consists in an online pre-selection, while in the second phase judges actually meet in a 3 days session behind closed doors. Here they proceed to a further selection, based on a new 5-criteria evaluation process introduced in 2021. These criteria, developed together with a team of international design experts, are: idea, aesthetics, functionality, differentiation, and impact. They were. Every judge can assign two points for each criteria. The judge's assessments for every submission are then consolidated into an iF scorecard: a detailed, exhaustive feedback in the form a graphic chart is then passed on to every participant.



IF 2022 EDITION

In this year's edition, the largest ever, the 132 international judges coming from more than 20 different countries examined almost 11.000 entries from 57 countries, assigning awards to 1.973 of them. Among these, 73 received the iF Gold Award 2022. Italy's Patrizio Cionfoli, design&interaction director at Studio Volpi, was a member of this year's jury, and released a brief, exclusive interview to Design Magazine (see box on page XX). The awards ceremony took place on May 16 in Berlin, home to the iF Awards since a few years, at the Friedrichstadt-Palast, the world's largest events' venue.

IF AWARDS STRONGPOINTS

What are the benefits deriving from winning an IF Design Award? There are several, starting with the worldwide visibility one can enjoy thanks to the wide notoriety the competition has in Europe, in America and above all in Asia. Then there is the opportunity of getting precious feedback from internationally acclaimed design experts, which can constitute some hard, objective evidence as to the validity of one's design. Last but not least, the PR opportunities coming from the strong following of the award among the design community and its wide media coverage.



Photo credit: Roman Thomas

The 2022 iF Award's international jury, made up of 132 members coming from more than 20 different countries, at work during the 3-day closed door sessions.



THE SIX GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE IF DESIGN AWARD

1

Identifying, supporting and promoting good design

2

Raising awareness of design among the general public

3

Helping companies integrate design into their long-term strategies

4

Safeguarding the role of professional designers and boosting awareness for this job

5

Driving social change through design

6

Supporting talented young designers and creating a platform for them



THREE QUESTIONS TO PATRIZIO CIONFOLI

Design & interaction director at Studio Volpi, Jury's chairperson for the Kitchen category at IF Award 2022

1 / What does being a judge at the IF Design Award mean to you?

To be part of a jury means taking on a role of great responsibility and respect for all the companies that took part in the event, and as a consequence for all the people that participated in the development of innovative products; it means assessing the result of a new project's journey that deserves attention, knowledge, dedication and respect.

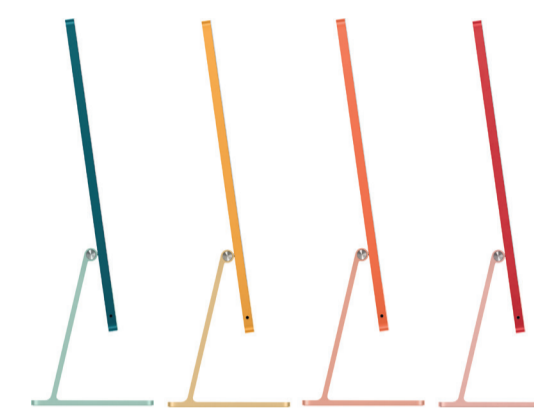
2 / What's the biggest strength of this award?

Its strength lies in the contagious energy it dispenses along the entire process, from the early stages with the preparation of sketches, of renderings and descriptions; then the anxious waiting, and eventually the awards ceremony. It promotes dialogue and cross contamination between companies, colleagues, entrepreneurs. Actually winning an award and being among "the great" increases the awareness of one's capacity to do better and better. The iF logo affixed on a product brings great value and international prestige. The strength is all in the system.

3 / Three reasons for which it's worth taking part?

- 1 - Being judged by the most authoritative professionals in their respective categories
- 2 - Being on one of the world's most important design stages
- 3 - Winning

The iF Gold Award, aka Design Oscar, is the top recognition of the iF Design Award organisation. It is given to the best projects for their quality and creativity in the various disciplines of design. In the 2022 edition, the 132 international judges, coming from more than 20 countries, have awarded the Oscar to 73 outstanding projects. Homa's Design Magazine has reviewed five of them for you:



24-inch iMac
Desktop computer
Apple

Discipline: PRODUCT / Category: COMPUTER

IF GOLD STATEMENT

With the new 24-inch iMac, Apple has again proven it can develop a seamlessly integrated product with a laser-sharp focus on simplicity and reduction. The engineering and build are best-in-class and the material use is authentic, celebrating new details and projecting a subtle branding. The beautiful stand variations breathe new life into an established product category.



Magic Leap 2
AR headset
MagicLeap

Discipline: PRODUCT / Category: GAMING HARDWARE - VR/AR

IF GOLD STATEMENT

Magic Leap has brilliantly integrated the technological demands of AR into an iconic piece of eyewear. Judicious material and finishing choices have resulted in a product with outstanding ergonomics and superb quality. This headset is not just for gamers; it also has potential applications in healthcare, manufacturing, construction, engineering, and education.



Cuppamoka
Portable coffee maker
Wacaco

Discipline: PRODUCT / Category: KITCHEN

IF GOLD STATEMENT

Cuppamoka is a high-quality and sustainable maker of pour-over coffee on the go. Thanks to deft ergonomics and an innovative filtering solution, this is a long-lasting, space-saving and highly functional product. The use of durable and environmentally friendly materials was the icing on the cake for the iF jurors.



Ray-Ban Stories
Smart eyewear
Luxottica Group

Discipline: PRODUCT / Category: LEISURE

IF GOLD STATEMENT

Ray-Ban Stories is the first generation of a new product series in partnership with Meta. These smart glasses are designed to keep their wearer connected at all times - both to the world around them and to their followers online. The technology is unobtrusive embedded in the frame, allowing authentic capture and sharing of special moments and experiences.



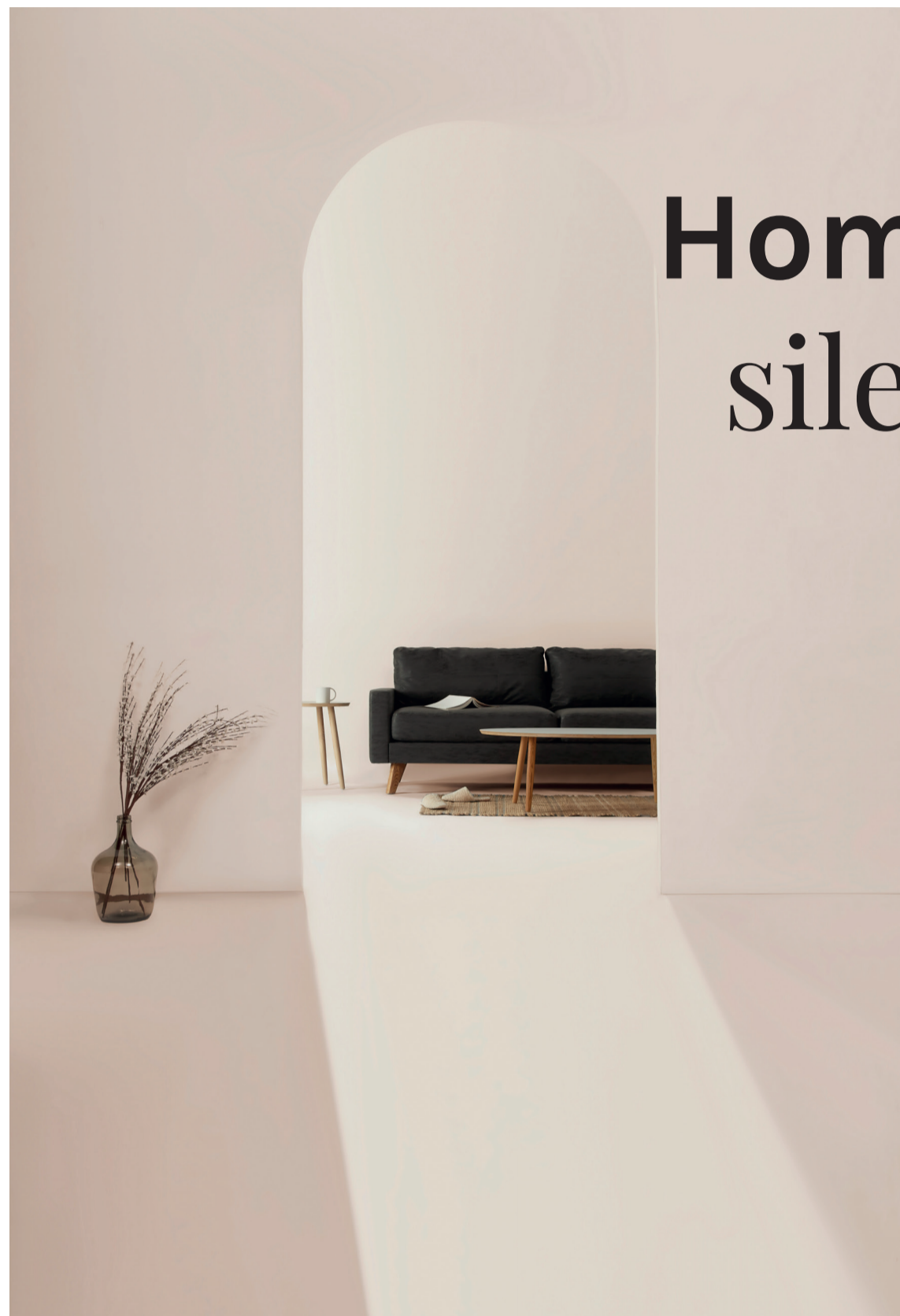
PAPER RAZOR™
Disposable razor
Kai Industries Co., Ltd.

Discipline: PRODUCT / Category: BEAUTY CARE

IF GOLD STATEMENT

Paper Razor is a clever ecological alternative to disposable plastic razors. Combining Japanese origami with water-resistant cardboard, it uses 98% less plastic than conventional disposable razors. It is sold as a flat pack, which saves on transportation costs, and comes in a gender-neutral color palette. Paper Razor combines great usability with a strong message about sustainability. Well done!

Noise can be harmful for people. The growing attention towards health issues is encouraging consumers to look for a better quality of domestic life, and choose high-performing appliances, more efficient and less noisy.



Home sweet silent home

SILENCE CONTRIBUTES TO WELLBEING

Excessive noise emissions negatively impact the health of individuals, as confirmed by the World Health Organisation, which identifies noise pollution as the second cause for health problems just after atmospheric pollution by particulate matter. Also, the European Environment Agency considers that ambient noise puts the health of millions of people at risk. Long term exposure to noise pollution sources can lead to a number of issues: from nervousness to sleep disorders, to metabolic and cardiovascular troubles, to cognitive disturbances in children. Noise pollution principally concerns non-domestic environments: the constant noise of traffic, industrial activity and so forth. All the more reason homes are increasingly regarded as safe havens of peace and quiet. Better insulation in constructions, mainly for energy-efficiency purposes, has also provided protection from external disturbances, but as a result, the noise produced by domestic appliances becomes more noticeable, and bothersome: washing-machines, dishwashers, and especially refrigerators, can become a real nuisance.

DOMESTIC REFRIGERATORS: THE MORE EFFICIENT ALSO HAPPEN TO BE THE MORE SILENT

In our homes, the refrigerator is the only appliance that works 24/7. Thanks to latest generation technology, the more modern units produce a little more than


a slight hum. Some models are so silent they can hardly be heard at all, with noise levels between 30 and 40 dB which are reached only when the compressor is activated. This happens when the refrigerator needs to restore the optimal temperature inside the cavity for the correct preservation of food. Another component that can generate noise is the ventilation system, a useful feature that guarantees the even distribution of cool inside the fridge. Compared to the past, and along with the progress made on the energy-efficiency front, noise-levels of refrigerators have significantly decreased. Global trends in industrial design, and most of all EU regulations on energy-efficiency, are driving makers to produce appliances that comply with the new standards. The new European energy label rates the performance of an appliance in terms of both energy-efficiency and noise emissions. The system is widely recognised by consumers, allowing them to better compare products when purchasing a new appliance. It also encourages

makers to improve their products and make them more competitive. Better sound performance is principally due to the use of advanced components such as latest generation compressors and ventilation systems, as well as inverter technology and high-grade insulating materials, like polyurethane rigid foam, in addition to specific solutions to absorb vibrations. In general, solutions that contribute to a higher energy-efficiency performance tend to

reduce the frequency of refrigeration cycles: because of the reduced thermal dispersion and a more consistent and even temperature within the appliance, the compressor kicks in less frequently, hence the significant reduction of sound emissions.

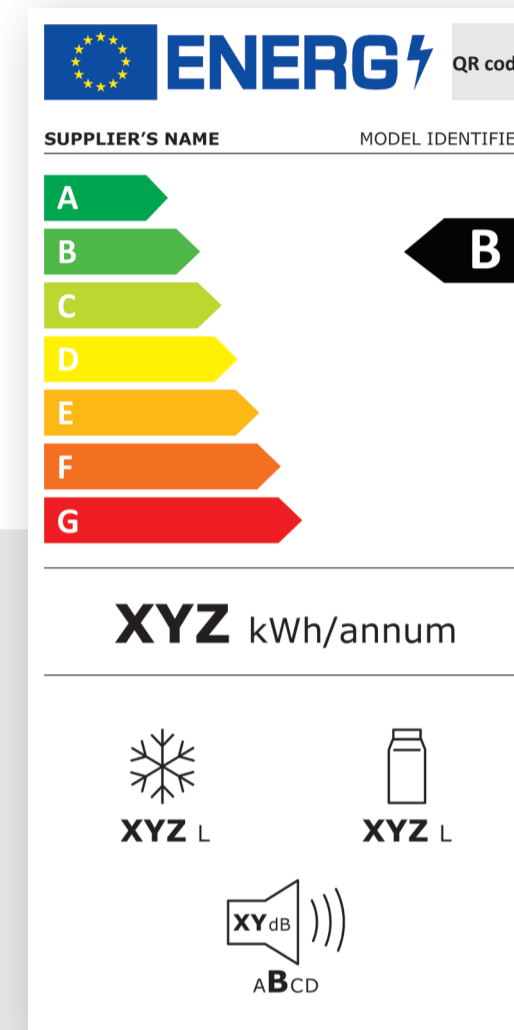
THE EFFECTS OF NOISE ON HUMAN HEALTH

Looking at the results of various experimental and epidemiological studies about the effects of night-time noise on human health, some interesting insight about acoustic thresholds emerged:

-  **UP TO 30 DB(A)** (- no observed effect level - Noel). Although circumstances and individual sensitivity may vary, no significant effect was observed at biological level;
-  **30 TO 40 DB(A)** (lowest observed adverse effect level, Loael). Some modest effects were observed, such as body movements, awakening, sleep disturbances depending on the sensitivity of individuals, the nature of the noise and the number of events;
-  **40 55 DB(A)**: Adverse effects on health are observed in the exposed population. The most vulnerable categories (children and elderly) are the most severely affected;
-  **ABOVE 55 DB(A)**: Increasingly dangerous for public health, as frequent negative effects are observed, with evidence of an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases.

Given the proven negative effects on human health, WHO guidelines recommend a maximum 40dB limit during sleep hours. Whenever such limit cannot be respected, experts recommend not to exceed the 55dB limit in any case.

Source: WHO Europe - Night noise guidelines for Europe 2009



NEW EUROPEAN ENERGY LABEL: EFFICIENCY CLASSES FOR NOISE LEVELS, TOO

UE legislation regarding energy labelling and ecodesign, considered as cutting edge on the world scene, contributes to improving the energy efficiency of products on the EU market, fostering the weeding out of poorly performing models. In addition to energy-efficiency and performance of the product, the new energy label gives clear information about the noise emission levels of an appliance, expressed in decibels, dB(A), and rated on an A to D noise-emission scale:

AIRBORNE NOISE EMISSION CLASSES:

Class A	below 30 dB(A)
Class B	30 to 36 dB(A)
Class C	36 to 42 dB(A)
Class D	above 42 dB(A)

Source: Official Journal of the European Union: COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) 2019/2016 of March 11, 2019.

At 27, Rui Mota has possibly seen more Michelin stars and worked with more world acclaimed chefs than any other cook in his native country, Portugal. A learned professional holding higher education degrees in food design, chemistry and psychology, he decided to apply his impressive academic and field experience to teaching Portugal's next generation of chefs the secrets of food design and molecular cuisine in the country's top cooking schools.

Schooling Portugal's next generation of super chefs

Was it your stay at Heston Blumenthal's that sparked off your interest in molecular cuisine?

When I arrived at Blumenthal's Fat Duck I discovered a whole new approach to food, an extreme application of chemistry to gastronomy. In that sense the Fat Duck was the dream place to work at, but it was hard work, too: 17 hours a day, always running, always pushing for perfection, but in the end it made me the chef that I am today. I can say that my journey as a chef is based on my experience in the many different countries where I worked alongside those famous chefs. In addition, my academic background in food chemistry, food engineering and microbiology helps me to precisely develop and test recipes, respecting the nature of ingredients, and their processing methodologies.



What about the visual element of your creations?

If I hadn't become a chef, I would have been a designer. I think it's really important to include design as a subject in cooking schools. Things are starting to move in that direction now, but at the time I only had the opportunity to study design during my master's degree. The title of

"I've designed some of the strangest things, like floating food or luminescent ingredients that would glow in the dark"

the Master's thesis was "Food Design and Psychophysiology of the Human Senses". Food Design is important throughout the whole creation process of a new dish, concept or food event.

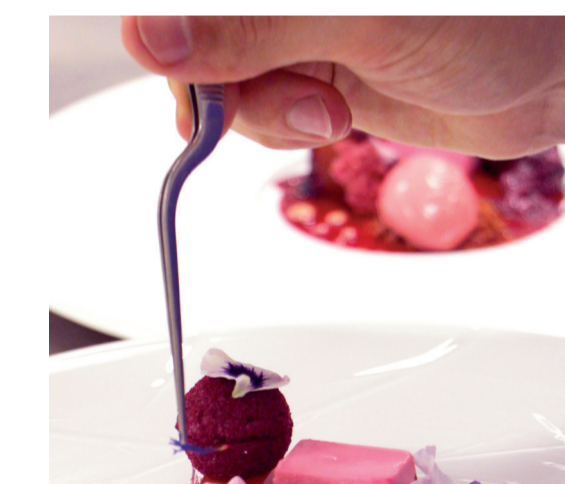
What's the importance of the quality of ingredients?

One very important concept is that of sustainability, which is not only about the environmental impact of food production and sourcing but also about the overall economics of the food system. When I was working at L'Air du Temps, in Belgium, they had 6 hectares of fields around the restaurant where they grew their own vegetables, herbs and produce to the

highest possible quality standards. Food design nowadays must take these aspects into consideration, and put sustainability into the equation.

Do health considerations also play a role in food design?

Today, there's more awareness about the health aspects of food, but since the trend started with health-conscious home chefs, recipes and processes tend to be quite simple and unattractive. People say vegan food is boring, but I want to change that perception. My intent is to make healthy eating part of the experience at top establishments by teaching the next generation of chefs how to do it in a creative way.



Rui Mota earned a bachelor's degree in Lisbon's High Institute of Tourism & Hospitality, majoring in Food Management & Food Production. During his studies he went on internships at Heston Blumenthal's legendary Fat Duck restaurant in the UK, and at Jordi Cruz's ABaC in Barcelona, both donning 3 Michelin stars. He then earned a master's degree in Gastronomical Science, more specifically in the chemistry and physics related to cooking. During that master's he did two more internships: the first one in Belgium at L'Air du Temps, a two-Michelin-stars restaurant in the Namur area with a strong focus on sustainability. Finally he went to El Celler de Can Roca in Girona, Spain, one of the best restaurants in the world. Today, he dedicates himself to teaching - he is currently involved with 4 top cooking schools - while consulting for leading international brands.

- 1 - Product Design at Chef Collection by Vista Alegre Atlantis (Plate design process: from idea to implementation)
- 2 - Floating amuse bouche, optical illusion starting Mota's Master Thesis sensorial menu
- 3 - Gin&Tonic inverse spherifications
- 4 - Edible garden vase, with gribiche foam and baby vegetables
- 5 - Engaging all senses with a ton-sur-ton multi-textured dessert at the Four Seasons Lisbon

What about technology?

In cooking, technology means precision. I would say that there is no precision without technology. It can help in the more repetitive, or dangerous tasks so we can concentrate on creativity and on the more complex aspects of our job. I use technology a lot, from precision scales to sous-vide circulators, to siphons and now even 3D food printers.

What's the importance of the "fun" element?

I've designed some of the strangest things, like floating food or luminescent ingredients that would glow in the dark. Someone even had me create a yellow steak with a fake fried egg on top. I get to create food that no one has ever seen nor tasted before, it's exciting. Observing the reactions of the clients once they discover it and try it, that sense of "wow", is something that's highly comforting and rewarding. Part of my work is to help restaurants and bars introduce new and innovative recipes in their menus, things that would be unique to them. For a well-known brand, I even created pop-corn that, when eaten, will make you blow smoke out of your nostrils!

What do you think of new food trends such as gluten-free, low-carb and the likes?

One of the classes I teach is entirely dedicated to these food trends. We also focus on new, emerging ingredients such as seaweeds, superfoods and even insects. Customers are getting more and more demanding regarding this subject, and it's important for a restaurant to build trust and offer choice to guests who have specific needs. Knowledge of molecular cuisine is fundamental here. It's all about the chemistry and the physics of the process of cooking. My personal feeling about such trends is that they will continue to grow and will need more and more attention on the part of chefs.

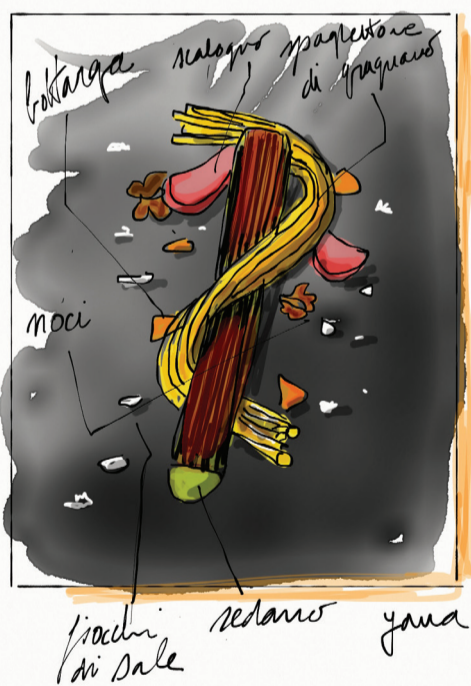
What have you got planned for your own future?

Before I'm 30 I'd like to do a PhD in Food Design and Psychology. How we can play with senses, how we can influence them through food. That's my first goal. Later I'd like to open a restaurant where I could apply all these concepts, offering a different, exquisite experience to diners, here in Portugal.



Breaking the paradigms of pasta plating

To most Italians, and pasta-loving foreigners, any changes in the way this monument of Italy's cuisine is served often amounts to outright sacrilege, given a few concessions to fancy toppings and decorations. Nestled in a shallow plate in a more or less geometric, or dishevelled fashion, cheese shavings on top, if applicable, and further seasonings: that's more or less the standard conception of pasta plating, a paradigm that went unchallenged for well over a century.



To chefs like Silvio Battistoni, owner of the "Colonne" gourmet restaurant in Sacro Monte, just outside Varese on the Swiss-Italian border, plating is as important an element as the recipe itself in the design of a haute-cuisine dish. The sketches by local artist Yama refer to his pear and red-prawn ravioli in pomegranate, tomato and herbs infusion served in bone china, and his lacquered celery, walnuts and tuna roe spaghetti presented on a stylish black slab of local slate.

But Italian cuisine has evolved, especially haute-cuisine, and so have recipes for pasta, which are ever more innovative, and open to the influences of other cultures. While that has been generally accepted by Italians, in fact they're quite proud of this gourmet evolution while not renouncing tradition, plating has remained quite boringly the same. Fine dining establishments found this situation a bit tight, and started experimenting with new ways of presenting Italy's national staple. This often equates with smaller quantities of pasta going into each single portion, which in turn means a better carb balance when inserting pasta dishes in modern multiple-course gourmet menus, as opposed to the traditional three courses pattern. Freeing plating from the pasta clutter also allowed to better honour the glorious supporting-ingredients.

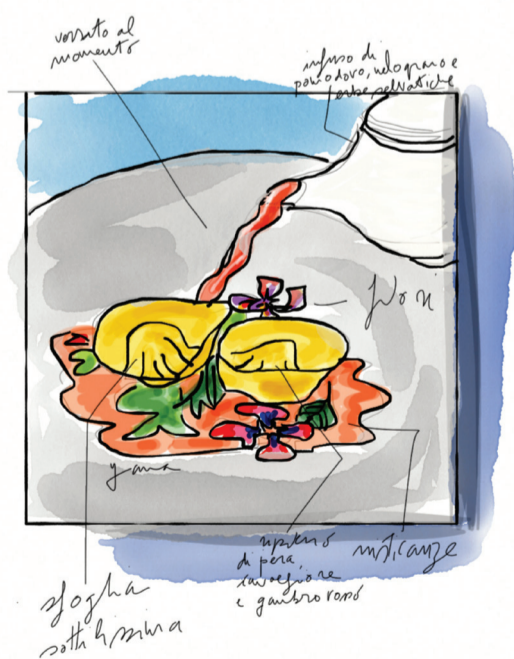


Table setting around the world: China

If food reflects a society's lifestyle at any given point in time, the same goes for the way we set our table, be it for our everyday meals or for the more formal, festive occasions.

China has a millenary culinary tradition, and food is an important part of Chinese culture. Like in many other civilisations, Chinese cuisine has evolved, and so have table manners and table setting, or so we think. Then there's the incredible diversity of cultures, traditions and even languages that coexist in this immense country, which makes any attempt at generalising a pitiful cliché. Yet if we were to pick a single transversal trait to Chinese society at large, it would have to be the widespread passion for food and the way it is enjoyed.

The way the table is set depends directly from table manners, and the kind of food that is served. Round tables are generally preferred as they facilitate conviviality. In the traditional Chinese basic setting, a plate sits in front of each diner. A soup bowl may be placed on top of it. Around this central piece, clockwise and starting from the left, the napkin, a rice bowl, a tea cup, a small sauce dish, a spoon, a chopstick rest and, of course, the chopsticks themselves. From here, there are infinite possibilities as to the quality, the refinement and the value of the crockery and the accessories involved.

More daring settings may incorporate some additional fusion elements, like forks and knives, and glasses for water and wine, which are generally laid out following the same globalised rules applying to "Western style" table setting.

Food is served in communal dishes placed at the centre of the table, often on a lazy Susan (not a cliché) to facilitate serving. Dishes are not passed around, but guests reach for the communal dishes and place food on their individual plates. If no serving utensils are provided, guests can use the back end of their chopsticks to serve themselves.



Glossary

The Homa Essential Design Glossary: a quick reference guide to some of the concepts inspiring Homa's design philosophy. They define the principles behind its continued success as the world's first cooling appliances OEM provider.

Aesthetics

/i:s'θetiks/

The notion of beauty applied to objects. Elusive, hard to quantify and often subjective, it is nevertheless a fundamental quality of design.

Audacious

/ɔ:deɪʃəs/

Boldly defiant of convention, disrupting and highly inventive. An intrinsic characteristic of many successful designs, and often a sign of a visionary mind.

Clean

/kli:n/

Unadorned and gracefully spare. Generally said of a streamlined, essential design.

Details

/di:teɪl/

The insignificant everything. Minute parts of a whole, perceived by the heart before the eye, yet a matter of the greatest attention.

Distinctive

/dɪstɪŋktɪv/

Notable. It is said of objects or features with the particular quality of standing out in terms of style and attractiveness.

Dreams

/dri:m/

The all-important seeds of our future. If we can dream it, we can design it, and if we can design it, we can build it.

Functional

/fʌŋkʃənəl/

The raison d'être of every design endeavour, and the principal quality of a well designed object, in which function always precedes form.

Global specific

/glɔʊbəl/ /spɪsɪfɪk/

The ability of being relevant to local cultures and markets, on a global scale.

Human

/hju:mən/

The principal focus of design, and also its most immaterial dimension.

Modern living

/mɒdərn/ /lɪvɪŋ/

Life in today's world. A constantly evolving concept, keeping up with advances in technology, science and engineering, but also attentive to cultural trends and societal changes.

Seasons inspired

/'si:z(ə)n/ /ɪn'spaɪəd/

Drawing on the natural cycle of seasons in the choice and design of features and functions, using the latest and most appropriate technology.

Homa

ORIGINAL MARKETING ACADEMY

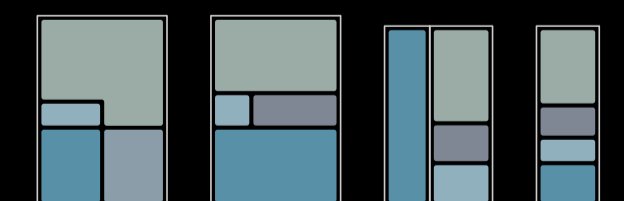
FOOD PRESERVATION AT ITS BEST



4-DOOR FULL METAL LOOK

Time to be audacious

Homa's 4-doors is a perfect food preservation system, inspired by nature, with different compartments re-creating the most appropriate conditions for a variety of foods, from the extra larger crisper to the smart chiller zone for fresh meat or fish, to a flexible convertible drawer.



THE NEW MULTICLIMATE SYSTEM ALSO FEATURES IN A NUMBER OF SELECTED PRODUCTS OF THE HOMA RANGE.

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