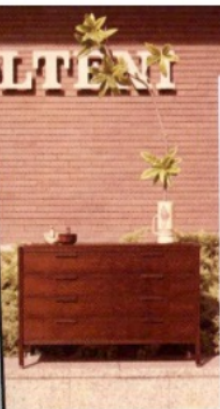


MOLTENI

MADE IN ITALY



### Molteni&C

Set up by Angelo and Giuseppina Molteni (left) in 1934 and now run by their son and granddaughter, Carlo and Giulia (right), the company has come a long way. From its 1947 workforce (below right) and a prototype for a 1964 design (above) to the iconic Glass Cube building (below) in the grounds of its HQ, much has changed, but its values remain the same



# di FAMIGLIA

Many of Italy's most successful companies originated as small family workshops in the post-war years. It was a boom time, with millions of dollars in American aid flooding the economy, helping to rebuild a bomb-ravaged landscape. Design was one of the main industries to flourish under this '*miracolo economico*': Italians needed furniture, much of which was destined for the era's new urban housing developments. The sense of pride that these companies felt in helping to regenerate the nation has persisted; today, it's expressed in the 'Made in Italy' concept to which many furniture brands adhere. Unlike most international corporations, whose factories are scattered across the globe, Italians prefer a circular business model, controlling everything from the supply and processing of raw materials to manufacture, research and development.

This is why you'll often see Italian brands with their own local architect-designed factories and even exhibition spaces (take Molteni&C, whose Glass Cube at its Brianza HQ was created by artist Ron Gilad, or the Fondazione Bisazza cultural centre, designed by architect Carlo Dal Bianco). The 'Made in Italy' concept is also intimately linked to a dynastic vision: preserving a brand's heritage, and the beliefs of its founders, is viewed as something best kept within

the family who know it by heart. Thus it has become second nature for succeeding generations to join the family firm.

'Family is at the core of Italian society, and after the war many worked from home in basement workshops,' explains Carola Bestetti, head of marketing and communication at Living Divani (established in 1969), and the daughter of founders Luigi Bestetti and Renata Pozzoli. 'Some of these small firms became renowned names, while others became an integral part of their supply chains.' The family aspect instils a spirit of cooperation, adds Bestetti. 'We don't have a strict hierarchical structure, preferring to view our employees as part of a team. My parents and I work in different areas, so everyone has a relationship with one of us.'

At Porro, the ties are just as strong. 'Almost all of my family live in the same village as our staff - we have lunch at each other's homes and know each other's children,' says Maria Porro, head of marketing and communication and daughter of third-generation scion Lorenzo Porro. 'During hard times, we face challenges together.'

Giulio Malberti, general manager UK for Rimadesio, agrees that a democratic ideal is vital to the success of family brands. He's the grandson of Francesco Malberti, who co-founded Rimadesio with ►



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