

THE VINSON VIEW

Inside man and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



01 Home truths

It seems it takes a foreigner to tell Italians how lucky they are

The Italians have been getting a lot of stick of late. Commentators, myself included, have been berating their lacklustre control over the virus that is Fuori Salone, which the Salone del Mobile can't or won't tackle. Cosmit, its parents, are pedestrian when it comes to all things digital, as is the Camera Moda, guardian of Milan Fashion Week, which is also under attack for being beyond useless digitally, not being smart enough with the schedule, not fostering young talents, and allowing Paris and London to overpower them with their creativity and effervescence.

I was saddened to see so little effort put into keeping the city on top form. New season deliveries, special windows and events seemed scarce and all the shops bar a few closed on a Sunday during a four-day men's fashion week. Madness surely. *Malattia* there certainly is, but the Italian way with fashion, furniture and design is still magical. Although price-sensitive production is shifting to Eastern Europe and Asia, there is still nothing like the passion, precision and patience that Italian technicians and artisans can offer when partnered with creativity. Italy may not have the design schools, but there is nothing wrong with importing talent, as Christopher Kane and now JW Anderson for Versus, Ron Gilad for Molteni or Flos,

Nendo with Bisazza, Tomas Maier at Bottega Veneta and Karl Lagerfeld at Fendi all testify.

Sometimes I think only foreigners can see what Italy has; the locals take it for granted. Where else do you have a fabulous coast, the islands of Capri and Sardinia, and mountains on your doorstep? Where else the jewels that are Venice, Rome and Florence, plus Sicily and Apulia, as well as the climate, food, art, history and terrific track record of design and fashion? Even the ritual of taking a coffee is an art form. All this is wrapped up in the three magic words 'Made in Italy'. Italians should be force-fed hothouse-grown Dutch tomatoes or peppers and made to queue for coffee just so they know how lucky they are.

Bravo Diego Della Valle and the Tod's team for restoring the Colosseum; Pietro Beccari and the Fendi family for restoring the Trevi Fountain and moving its HQ to the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana; Patrizio Bertelli and Miuccia Prada for opening the Prada Foundation in the Ca' Corner della Regina and booting out McDonald's from Milan's Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II; and Giorgio Armani for hosting new talent like Stella Jean and Andrea Pompilio in his Tadao Ando-designed Teatro. These gestures help Italians help themselves, increase the value of the Made in Italy brand for everyone and hopefully remind them what a hell of a lot of *bellezza*, *creatività* and *abilità* they have.



02

Stitch in time

A standout from a recent trip to Barneys New York was its range of 'Brégançon' saddle-stitched bags and small leather goods designed by Fedor Georges Savchenko for Maison Moreau, the French trunk maker established in the mid-1800s. www.moreau-paris.com



03

Crystal tip

A favourite from Maison & Objet Paris is the 'Saule' floor lamp in clear or flannel crystal from Saint-Louis. French designer Ionna Vautrin reconfigured the delicate crystal branches from a traditional chandelier into something completely new. www.saint-louis.com

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM MAISON & OBJET PARIS

'Silver Time' tea set, by Jean-Marie Massaud, for Christoffe

Drinking sets, by Josef Hoffmann and Adolf Loos, for Lobmeyr

'Mobility', by Ora-ïto, a mobile music sound system for your mobile and tablet

'JBF' goggle wall lamp (pictured), by Jean-Baptiste Fastrez, for Moustache

