



Famous four

From time immemorial Italy has led the way in style. And Giorgio Armani, Prada, Fendi and Gucci are the four cornerstones of the Italian luxury fashion industry

With regard to fashion, preferences may be subjective, but there's no denying that Italy has always been at the forefront of artistic vision and innovation. The same can be said for its endless affair with fashion, with its luxury brands known all around the world.

GIORGIO ARMANI

Founded by Giorgio Armani in 1975, the brand grew rapidly through a series of merchandising agreements with established names, such as L'Oreal and

Luxottica. By 1993, Armani had cemented itself into the cultural zeitgeist of Italian fashion, following in the footsteps of many great designers. Today the brand is involved in many facets of Italian culture, with a role as patron of art and an exhibition dedicated to Armani in the Milan Galleria until September 2022.

Its flagship locations include megastores in Milan, Hong Kong, Munich, Tokyo and New York, and in 2005, the brand expanded into the hotel business with a luxury hotel in the Burj Khalifa, comprising

39 floors, in 2010. Armani also sponsors the Venice Film Festival and Scuderia Ferrari, sharing its success and fame with other Italian cultural staples, proving that it may not be the oldest of Italian fashion brands, but it makes up for lost years in zeal by the bucketload. armani.com

PRADA

Prada began in 1913 as a humble travel accessories store, crafting and selling the high-quality bags and luggage, that the family owned business is renowned for today.

In 1919 Prada was appointed Official Supplier to the Italian Royal Household and as such, it incorporated the House of Savoy's coat of arms and knotted rope design into its logo. By the 1980s, Prada was expanding into many areas of fashion, with a focus on the aesthetics of their stores, utilising the shade now known as 'Prada green' in their first boutique in Milan. Following this, boutiques opened in major cities around the world, including London, New York, Paris, Tokyo and Madrid. Today, Prada has many stores in each of these cities and has spread across the world, with stores in China, Malaysia and their largest boutique in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. ➤

Above: Beijing's flagship store in the Wangfujing Street shopping mall leads the way in China – one of Prada's top markets



With endorsements from celebrities such as Karlie Kloss and Will Peltz, and many ambassadors around the globe, Prada goes from strength to strength, in both the fashion industry and other endeavours. prada.com

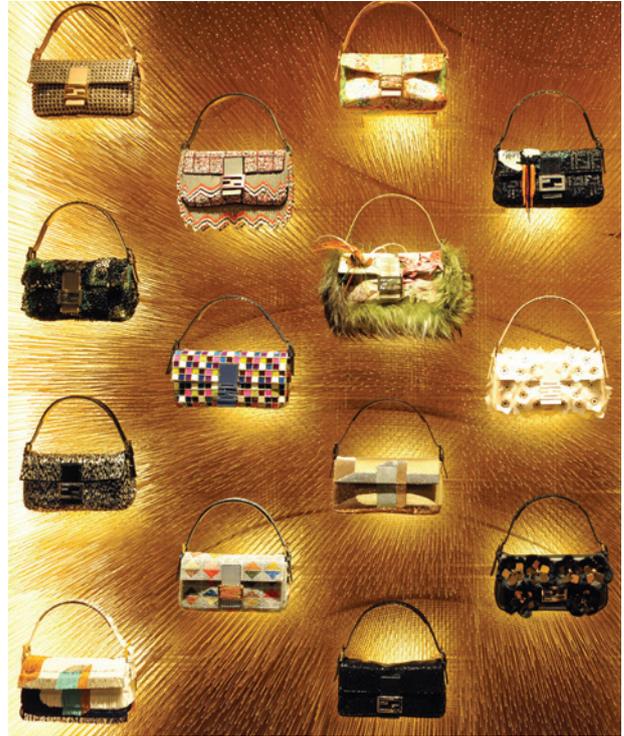
FENDI

Fendi is a brand that was born in Rome in 1925. It began as a handbag store and further branched out into a fur workshop. Since its inception, Fendi has first and foremost been a family business, with the five daughters of the original Fendis taking over the brand from their parents and each owning 20% of the company. Granddaughter Silvia Venturini Fendi currently acts as the creative director for many of the Fendi lines,

particularly men's fashion. In 1965, Fendi launched a collaboration with Karl Lagerfeld, as he took over the creative direction of the entire brand, and this was a partnership that would last 54 years, proving to be iconic for both Fendi as a brand and Lagerfeld as a designer. Today, Fendi has stores all over the world, but Rome remains their primary head of operations at the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana.

In 2016, Fendi opened a hotel in this building, as well as their largest boutique, and they continue to value the family business model,

Above: A classic Prada handbag
Right: A luxury Fendi boutique
Below: Giorgio Armani ahead of Milan's Fashion Week



despite being a brand recognised right across the world. fendi.com

GUCCI

With one of the richest and longest histories in Italy, Gucci is perhaps one of the most well-known fashion brands around the world. Traced as far back as 1410, the Gucci family lived and worked in the city of Florence into the 1800s, when Guccio Gucci left Italy for Paris

and eventually settled in ENgland's capital city London in 1897.

With extensive experience of upper-class society and their tastes in fashionable luggage, Gucci was able to open a store in 1921 in his hometown of Florence, selling luxury imported leather luggage. As his business grew, he began to manufacture his own leather goods, and by 1937, he transitioned into selling handbags.

Today, Gucci boasts boutiques around the world, with an incredible flagship boutique opened in 2018 in Florence, the Gucci Garden. Not only is there a restaurant attached, with three-star Michelin chef Massimo Bottura overseeing the food, but it houses unique collections and a galleria with vintage and historic Gucci pieces.

With Alessandro Michele at the helm as creative director, Gucci flourishes as a remarkable Italian-born fashion label with a beautifully rich history.

gucci.com

