

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/declaneytan/2016/07/25/the-new-wave-of-italian-heritage-brands-is-here/#2a22cf7cc3a8>

The New Wave of Italian Heritage Brands is Here



Declan Eytan, CONTRIBUTOR

Based in Milan. Soft spot for Made in Italy and emerging markets. [FULL BIO](#) ▾

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

They're dedicated to conserving the old, while always keeping their mind on innovation. Emerging contemporary fashion brands coming out of Italy, are currently popping up left and right. But then there's another group, which prioritizes expanding upon the tradition of craftsmanship, without ever desiring to be "on-trend". Their power lies in creating a well-made product which can hold its own throughout multiple generations, whilst never coming off as outdated. While Italy's niche heritage brands are generally associated with an over 40 audience, an emerging crop of local brands – which founders are often in their twenties or thirties – is offering largely handmade goods, catered for a younger demographic.



DoppiaA Spring/Summer 2017 preview. (Photo: Gianpaolo Barbieri)

Amongst the 2.0. Italian heritage brands is DoppiaA (which means “double A” in Italian, hinting at the first names of the brand’s founders). The brand appeared on the scene earlier this year at the Pitti Immagine Uomo menswear fair, in the form of a presentation which marked its debut. To summarize DoppiaA; it’s for the low-key dandy. Not overly-embellished, yet present. A sense of family unit and cross-generational style form a key element in the brand’s campaigns and overall marketing. “Production takes place all over the country: from double-breasted jackets manufactured in Naples, to our sportswear made in Veneto, and leather items produced in Empoli,” Alain Fracassi tells me when we meet in the DoppiaA showroom, located on Milan’s high-brow Via Della Spiga street. Fracassi is the creative brain behind the brand, and the Italian lover of vintage style represents one half of the founding team. His father stands behind a Brescia-based family business established in 1969, which operates in the retail of sartorial wear. DoppiaA’s remaining “A” leads us to Fracassi’s long-time friend Albert Carreras, son of acclaimed Spanish tenor José Carreras. Carreras acts as the business brain behind the recently founded brand. “He sometimes needs to remind me that I can’t come up with all these extravagant designs – which I love – but also need to think of slightly more basic pieces which every man can wear,” Fracassi comments. “I have huge archives of vintage jackets, sportswear, and shirts – that’s how I stay inspired,” the Italian half of the DoppiaA duo explains. So far so good, as the brand – for which the spring/summer 2016 collection meant its debut – has already been picked up by Milan’s big-name stockists including Excelsior, Antonia and Corso Como 10.



Lanieri's Milan atelier. (Photo: Lanieri)

While Alain Fracassi and Albert Carreras have decided to penetrate the market with a full ready-to-wear line since day one, other new-age heritage brands aim at creating an icon within a specific product category: meet Iovado. The start-up centered around one leather loafer was founded by two brothers and a close friend of theirs. “Producing in Italy is important to us since we are Italian and believe we should transmit that in our shoes. Our craftsmen are based in Verona, and handle everything from cutting leather, to stitching, and putting together each compartment. The craftsmen we work with are typically in their forties. It’s difficult to find an artisan who’s in his twenties nowadays. Perhaps that the profession is not considered to be cool anymore,” Albert Pizzinini – one of the Pizzinini brothers – says. Their business is fully integrated into today’s digital era, and customers may customize Iovado’s signature leather model through an online configurator, which also allows one to brand the shoes with their initials. “Our focus right now is on China – there’s still growth in the country’s middle class. We’ll invest predominantly in Chinese digital platforms to push our product, since local e-commerce spending currently lies around \$650 billion there,” Hans Paul Pizzinini says regarding the strategies for the shoes that come with a €180 price tag (roughly \$165). Realizing a pair of Iovado shoes may take craftsmen up to ten days, and the company’s key target demographic is generation Y’s segment of 25 to 35-year-olds. Though your average Made in Italy heritage brand is often synonymous with a predominantly male audience, over at Iovado, the girls are beating the boys on a 60% female versus 40% male consumer base.



Manufacturing process of Iovado. (Photo: Iovado)