

MARKETING

New Altagamma chief's warning: Italy stands to lose 236,000 artisans in next 5 years

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Matteo Lunelli is 2020-22 president of Altagamma, Italy's trade body for local luxury brands and retailers. Image credit: Altagamma

By STAFF REPORTS

Matteo Lunelli has his work cut out. On Jan. 1, he becomes the new president of Altagamma, succeeding the formidable Andrea Illy, with a mandate to support and save Italian craftsmanship.

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As the leader of Italy's trade organization for luxury brands and retailers, Mr. Lunelli wants to grow Italy's creative and cultural industries and boost the country's prospects in the process.

Without active intervention, Italy stands to lose 236,000 artisans in the next five years, Mr. Lunelli pointed out last week as he aired his vision for the Milan-based trade body.



Matteo Lunelli spells out his vision for Altagamma last week in Milan. Image credit: Altagamma

Go east, young man

Outlining his plans for 2020-22, Mr. Lunelli said **Altagamma's** focus was going to be more international, sustainable and contemporary. The organization has already started spreading its wings with the recent launch of the Altagamma Club China ([see story](#)).

Mr. Lunelli wants Altagamma members to target the new luxury consumer market that is more Asian, young, digital and concerned about sustainability.



Matteo Lunelli knows time is running out to save Italian craftsmanship. Image credit: Altagamma

Among Altagamma's 110 members up from 76 under Mr. Illy's watch are brands such Acqua di Parma, Alfa Romeo, Alessi, Bottega Veneta, Brioni, Brunello Cucinelli, Buccellati, Bulgari, Cantine Ferrari, Emilio Pucci, Ermenegildo Zegna, Etro, Fendi, Gucci, Illy, Kiton, Lamborghini, Loro Piana, Moncler, Missoni, Poltrona Frau, Prada, Salvatore Ferragamo, Tod's, Valentino, Versace and Villa D'Este.

Most of these members rely on local craftsmen and women to produce fashion, apparel, accessories, leather goods, jewelry, cars and food for which Italy is known.

But Italy, like other markets, finds that the younger generation is not enamored by the sweat equity required in craftsmanship and working with hands hour after hour, day after day.

Other associations such as the United Kingdom's Walpole and France's Comit Colbert have training and early-talent spotting programs with members offering apprenticeships to people willing to work with their hands to produce luxury goods. Altagamma has similar efforts too.

Food for thought

Mr. Lunelli has gained some level of accomplishments so far.

The 45-year-old is currently vice president of the Altagamma Foundation, with six months' prep time to firm up his agenda as the entity's leader.

Like Mr. Illy, his predecessor, he comes from the food and beverages business. He is president/CEO of Cantine Ferrari, his 117-year-old, family-owned wine company that is Italy's leading producer of sparkling wines using the classic method.

Mr. Lunelli also serves as CEO of the Lunelli Group that comprises Cantine Ferrari, Surgiva Mineral Water, the Segnana distillery, the Lunelli Estates that produce still wines in Trentino, Tuscany and Umbria and Bisol, and Prosecco Superiore di Valdobbiadene.

A graduate of Bocconi University, Mr. Lunelli worked with investment bank Goldman Sachs and was president of the Young Industrialists of Trentino-Alto Adige from 2011 to 2013 and vice president of MART the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Trento and Rovereto from 2014 to 2019.

Over the years, he won many gongs, including the 2015 E&Y Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the family business category.



The great and good of Altagamma's leadership, seen here last week as Matteo Lunelli outlined his 2020-22 vision for the Italian luxury trade organization. Image credit: Altagamma

IN HIS NEW gig as head of Altagamma, Mr. Lunelli will gain support from stalwarts of Italian luxury as well as newly appointed directors.

Sabina Belli, currently CEO of Pomellato, will be vice president of jewelry at Altagamma, and Laudomia Pucci, vice president and image director of Emilio Pucci, is vice president of talents and human capital at the trade organization.

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