

HOME FURNISHINGS

## Armani Casa celebrates anniversary year in retrospective campaign

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Giorgio Armani at Armani/Casa in Milan. Image credit: Armani

By ELLEN KELLEHER

Italian fashion brand Armani is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its home decor line in an emotional campaign tinged with nostalgia and casting light on the influence of its founder.

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Established in 2000, Armani Casa combines the ethos of the 86-year-old Giorgio Armani's fashion impulses with the aesthetics of art deco, Eastern and modernist furniture, textiles and home design. Its success as an arm of the Armani empire has taken on more resonance as more people turn to redesigning their houses as personal sanctuaries amid the intensity of the pandemic.

"The pandemic has accelerated desire for a more beautiful home and Armani is a powerful luxury brand," said Chris Ramey, CEO of Home Trust International, Palm Beach, Florida. "Armani Casa's success illustrates the elasticity of a luxury brand across many categories."

### Classic lines

The first scenes in the video open in Italy with Mr. Armani, dressed in his trademark black sweater, sketching a chair and later showing his rudimentary drawings to an audience of business people.

*The video features examples of elegant art-deco and modernist design.*

"Four legs. A seat. A silhouette of a molded back," says the female narrator. "It started with a shadow of a chair cast onto the cobbled streets of Milan."

As an icon for abstract design, Mr. Armani turned the company's gaze towards space. A "legacy of design for the body, inspiring design for the home," adds the narrator. "From fashion to furniture. Armani Casa was born."

Every object in the current collection results from a "complex, painstaking process" from research to design and final production.

The shots in the video reflect that and the viewer is treated to views of an elegant pool surrounded by Armani deckchairs to shots of offices, homes and yachts, which have been curated by Armani Casa.

Indeed, the intricacy of Armani Casa designs, most of which are still Italian made, is unusual. Limited to 100, the company's Aida writing desk, for instance, boasts sides and drawer fronts in bronzed leather and covered by glass.

The Logo lamp, meanwhile, which features prominently in the video, is the "undiscussed icon" of Armani/Casa.



*The Logo lamp was one of the first furniture pieces designed by Giorgio Armani. Image credit: Armani*

First designed in 1982 for a company office in Milan, it is the first piece of furnishing developed by Mr. Armani himself.

"The squared wooden structure of the lamp features a thin layer of metal as a base, like the prismatic joint of the stem," wrote Armani's copywriters. "The switch is located on the base, in the shape of Giorgio Armani's signature in brass."

The design process in all of Armani Casa's products is as important as the final furniture and textiles created.

"The making of is as refined as the end result because design is as much about ethos as it is about aesthetics," says the narrator.

Looking to the present, the challenges of the pandemic are touched on by the narrator as cozy shots of modernist living spaces in beiges and grays artfully picked are unveiled in the footage.

"We are re-entering a world on the cusp of transformation, treasuring more than ever, the small constants," says the narrator. "The alluring permanence of the places we call home, where we settle and restore."

The video ends with the narrator wrapping up her respects to the home and the footage pivoting to a black screen with Giorgio Armani's signature below it.

#### Giorgio still in driver's seat

Mr. Armani has distinguished himself as humanitarian in the COVID-19 crisis, which has had a ruinous impact in Italy.

In his most recent campaign, his business is focused on putting a zen-like spin on current lockdown measures, but working behind-the-scenes, Mr. Armani provided generous donations to Milan hospitals and also reconverted all his factories in Italy to make overalls for doctors and nurses during the crisis ([see story](#)).

He has said that the crisis is an opportunity to return to the value of authenticity and his most recent video marking the twentieth year of Armani/Casa reflects this.

Mr. Armani's efforts to seek publicity for Armani/Casa as the pandemic lingers are being matched with similar pursuits by rivals. Ralph Lauren, for instance, is also looking to expand its home furnishings business, which is based more on licensing and less on original design than Armani's.

Ralph Lauren's heyday in home was about 2004. Though the company does not report home revenues, it does report on licensing and that year markets its peak of \$268.8 million, when licensing accounted for 10 percent of corporate sales ([see story](#)).

"Most companies that execute luxury as a business model have thrived and Armani Casa and Ralph Lauren rise above the competition," Mr. Ramey said.

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