10 Corso Como relaunches under Tiziana Fausti

By Dominique Muret - September 14, 2021

Milan Design Week gave 10 Corso Como the chance to kick off the celebrations for its 30th anniversary, and above all to unveil its new look. The renowned Milanese concept store, founded in 1991 by Carla Sozzani and acquired last year by Italian fashion entrepreneur Tiziana Fausti, is relaunching with new staff, several new projects and the ambition of becoming once again “a high-end shopping destination while maintaining its avant-garde status in fashion and luxury.”

Fausti knows what she wants. She is highly determined and has the resources to bring back the legendary concept store, the very first of its kind, to its former glory. After four decades in the luxury sector, Fausti heads a small empire in the city of Bergamo, east of Milan, its €80 million revenue generated through the eponymous multibrand retailer, which sells women’s, men’s and children’s ready-to wear and accessories, a 100 m2 Dior shop-in-shop, other multibrand stores and a bar/restaurant.

“For the first time, 10 Corso Como is featuring street-side shop windows - ph DSL Studio”

“In the course of this year, we tackled phase one, in other words revamping [10 Corso Como’s] entire organisation, restructuring the business and relaunching it again, both store and restaurant. We overhauled the sales team, hiring 12 new people,” Fausti told FashionNetwork.com. She thinks the Covid-19 crisis actually “gave her the opportunity to proceed in more relaxed fashion, with more time to take decisions.” The initial results after the April re-opening “have been excellent.”

Organisation and negotiations

Yet it wasn’t all quite so simple. Initially, Fausti bought the company owned by Carla Sozzani that held the 10 Corso Como brand name, its archives (notably the designs by US artist Kris Ruhs, who devised the store’s original graphic concept) and licenses. Fausti then set up a new company called 10CC Global shop srl, which runs all business operations and employs the staff. At the same time, she renegotiated the premises’ lease, as the store...
business operations and employs the staff. At the same time, she renegotiated the premises lease, as the store doesn’t own the property at the Corso Como address in Milan. The property was bought in 2017 by the founders of Italian label Twin-Set, businessman Tiziano Sgarbi and designer Simona Barbieri, for nearly €30 million.

“We renegotiated the lease contract for an 18-year term from November 2020. We also rented additional space, the four floors of 250-300 m² each that are located above the entrance. The first floor is occupied by our offices, the second by the photo studio for our e-shop, our main project this autumn. We are still thinking about how to use the remaining two floors. We regard the whole building as our own now,” said Fausti, underlining she has taken personal control of 10 Corso Como’s entire business.

Fausti has invested over €10 million in the operation. Besides the concept store, restaurant, art gallery and bookshop, there is also a three-room hotel, which may be enlarged. To relaunch 10 Corso Como while preserving its identity, Fausti said she has initiated “a soft transfer of power,” putting the concept store’s famous founder Carla
its identity, Fausti said she has initiated “a soft transfer of power,” putting the concept store’s famous founder Carla Sozzani in charge of style and visual image, as a consultant.

Fausti is already putting her stamp on the store though, in the assortment, product quality (10 Corso Como products are perceptibly becoming more high-end), in the services offered, which she wants to be “top-notch,” and also through a subtle interior redesign. The feel is very much the same as before, though the store seems somehow fuller. Meanwhile, the restaurant’s many tables have taken over the building’s entire courtyard, owing to Covid regulations.

New approach

The first major change was the opening of two shop windows on Corso Como, for the first time in 30 years. They forge a tighter bond between the general public and this “temple of Milanese luxury,” an invitation to the non-initiated to step inside, at the risk of robbing the store of the aura of mystery and exclusivity that was its hallmark. Previously, one had to cross the threshold before accessing the store, hidden behind a green screen at the end of the courtyard.

The shop windows open on an area dedicated to temporary initiatives, like collaborations and special events. It recently hosted a Dutch design collective and will soon be rented out to a top Italian label. Another novelty is the launch of 10 Corso Como Home, a line of home decoration products including vases, candles, cushions, throws and table ware, all of them featuring the highly distinctive black and white motifs created by Kris Ruhs to decorate the store.

10 Corso Como has also reinterpreted in its signature colours two cult designer lamps, the Falkland model by Bruno Munari and the Cuboluce by Cini & Nils. This month, the store is also showcasing an eclectic range of popular designer objects and furniture. The store’s beauty section, located at the entrance alongside accessories, has also been boosted.

Belgian and Japanese designers

As always, the fashion range focuses chiefly on Japanese and Belgian designers, in a clever blend of leading names (like Balenciaga, Jil Sander, Stella McCartney, MM6, Acne and Stone Island), lesser-known labels (Double J and Alessandra Rich) and emerging designers (among them Wales Bonner, Aries and Federico Cina). 10 Corso Como’s own line has been bolstered by items closer to the new owner’s assertive personality, like the selection of shearling jackets.
10 Corso Como's relaunch strategy relies more than ever on collaborations. For its 30th anniversary, the store features an array of limited-edition projects developed with Japanese designers Chitose Abe of Sacai and Masayuki Ino of Doublet, as well as with popular labels like Moon Boot, Maison Kitsuné, Paraboot, George Cox, APC, Clarks, New Era and MM6 Maison Margiela.

“I'm trying to create a world that is different from the one usually found in luxury stores, with avant-garde items, product rotation, novelties, beauty lines and a cultural feel. There are very strong links between fragrances, fashion, cuisine, design and art,” concluded Fausti.

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