



The Italian Perfume Factory



Roberto Martone

The first to have proudly added the wording "made in Italy" to the packaging of a fragrance, today this firm is an important reference for the olfactory creations of international fashion brands

Magna Pars, a multipurpose complex housing offices and conferences of international appeal, throbs with activity in the heart of Milan's creative Tortona district, which is famous for events associated with fashion and the Salone del Mobile. The centre was opened in 1992 but until just a few years earlier it had been the premises of a perfume factory, that of ICR which stands for Industrie Cosmetiche Riunite (United Cosmetics Industries). When it was founded in 1975 to create and produce fragrances, via Tortona was an industrial area rubbing shoulders with the railway where stylists and designers never set foot, but the fashion







phenomenon known as made in Italy was just about to explode. This was quickly sensed by Roberto Martone, the very young heir of a pharmaceutical industrialist who had found himself unexpectedly catapulted into the family business. In fact, in 1945, his father Vincenzo had founded Marvin, a company specialized in the production of penicillin, sulpha drugs and over-the-counter remedies. In the course of time it had also made excursions into the cosmetics sector, still under the Marvin trademark, by launching products that were highly innovative at the time: these were hypoallergenic formulas scientifically tested at the University of Milan, among which one of the most significant products was Hydratissima, a quick absorbing day cream with a high concentration of active ingredients which met with considerable success. The firm's headquarters were located in the factory of via Tortona, but when Roberto took over the helm, times had changed. The pharmaceutical industry was going through an extremely critical period, and he saw the need to move out of this sector. Young Roberto started to travel around the world in search of new market opportunities: Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Hong Kong, only to discover that these markets were not interested in cosmetics, but perfumes. Made in Italy was just starting out on its long march



towards conquering the world, with the stylists' fashion collections but also with fragrances such as Vivara by Pucci or the first Valentino perfume. So, Roberto Martone flung himself into this business with his own firm ICR, incorporating Marvin at the same time, so as to back up his olfactory research with the manufacturing and distributive know-how built up by his father's company.

The company's debut was made with Renato Balestra, a prominent signature of Roman haute couture. 1977 was a year that marked two important landmarks: the first success of ICR and the first time the wording "made in Italy" was proudly printed on the packaging of a perfume (while all other manufacturers were doing everything in their power to manage at least a "bottled in France" label). The turnaround came with **Trussardi**, in 1981. The brand was rapidly expanding and diversifying its activities, from leather goods to prêt-à-porter, and even some design projects: Alitalia aircraft interiors and an elegant bicycle bore the unmistakable greyhound trademark. The Trussardi universe had to have its own fragrance. So Trussardi Donna was created, to be followed in the space of a year by Trussardi Uomo, which remained at the top of the sales charts for several years. Along with their successful



olfactory formulas, both fragrances were presented in a packaging that was quite unique at the time: a traditional whisky bottle that the stylist chose to personalize with a special texture. The result was an original flask - destined to be copied by many others - covered in printed reptile skin.

By this time ICR was a consolidated player in the alcoholic perfume sector and while its creations crossed national borders on the surge of the relentless success of Italian made fashion, other brands entrusted their projects to this company. Business took off and it was necessary to start thinking big. In 1987 all company activities were relocated outside Milan, close to Lodi, in a large modern plant (now ISO 9001-certified). The location of via Tortona was to be renovated and launched a few years later as Magna Pars. The brand portfolio was now a rich one and demanded particular attention. For this reason, in 2002 it was decided to create **ITF** - the acronym of Italian Fragrances - to differentiate manufacturing activities from those associated with the management of agreements with great stylists. As well as Trussardi, the firm also started working with **Exté**, **Gai Mattiolo** and **Gianfranco Ferré**.

Giorgia Martone
with Dean and Dan Caten



Today the Martone family extends to a third generation represented by Giorgia, Roberto's young daughter. She takes the merit for a contract signed with Dan Caten and the Dean twins, the creative spirits of **DSquared2**. The Canadian duo called her up while she was terminating her internship at the firm's New York branch and they immediately hit it off. The twins focused on the project with enthusiasm: from the flask prototype to the creation of an advertising campaign, while offering continual suggestions as to the olfactory creation. The result is a pair of fragrances called She Wood and He Wood. The design project called for two



years' research and optimization in order to set the flask in its graphic frame in wood (Red Alder, a typical Canadian alder of course). The two fragrances reflect America's passion for wide open spaces: interwoven structures of precious woody tones veined with amber, with floral hints in the version for her and traces of vetiver and violets for him. And now comes the new masculine fragrance Potion for Men.

In 2009 Martone started to collaborate with **Blumarine**, Anna Molinari's historical brand. The first fruit of this encounter was Bellissima: a beguiling symphony of imaginary flowers, enwrapped in a cloud of vanilla and woody tones. Absolutely feminine, it was joined just one year later by Jus N°1 Blugirl, an effervescent perfume dedicated to young women and presented in a fun flask of slightly vintage inspiration. Finally, the moment came recently for Trussardi's great return, to celebrate the centenary of this fashion Maison. The event was also marked by the launching of Trussardi Donna and Trussardi Uomo, two fragrances that are completely new but also capable of evoking the first two perfumes of the eighties, to which a passionate tribute is paid.