

Multinational fashion companies passing through Brunello

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Working on quality rather than quantity is how the embroidery centre founded by **Lorenzo and Maria Carla Albiati** is overcoming the crisis which has hit the textile sector. As a result of their constant commitment, around 50 samples leave the heart of Brunello every week, and go to the Style Offices of the top Italian fashion and interior design brands. Most of these samples become the productions of the **Albiati Embroidery Centre**, and then integral parts of top quality designer clothing.

Let's start from here, from the labels. How did you come to work for them?

"We founded the company in 1982, and until the early 1990s, we worked as contractors for other textile and ready-to-wear fashion companies. Then, with the arrival of foreign competitors, particularly Asian ones, specialising became a priority. It was at that time that we started to work on quality rather than quantity and to offer our services to multinational fashion houses, furniture and wedding fashion brands."

From contract work to making your own products. Is this also a way to beat the crisis?

"We should remember there were once about 2000 embroidery machines in Varese Province. Today, if there are 400, that's a lot. We've invested in research, material and machine design, but it hasn't been easy.

In any case, our choices have rewarded us. We currently follow about 500 customers, of which 40, constantly (they smile, *ed.*). From an Italian embroidery centre, people expect precision, fast deliveries, collaboration, traceability of the suppliers, competitive prices and good quality."

Which materials do you embroider?

"In practice, we work all fabrics: cotton, silk, linen, cork, chenille, artificial fibres, such as polyester, nylon, PVC, elastomer, Lurex. We embroider everything. Our strong point is the fact that we combine these materials to create different and special blends and nuances."

How much do you reinvest in the company?

"In the next five years we plan to invest almost 10% of our turnover. Ours is an extremely creative business; in practice, we're a continuation of our clients' style centres. This implies not only skills and qualified human resources, but also machinery that can guarantee production under any circumstances."

Which other sectors do you supply, in addition to those of fashion and wedding fashion?

"Among our customers, we have important Italian interior design studios, who follow architects and interior designers. However, here, too, a large part of the market has moved to other countries, such as Turkey, and we've carved ourselves a 'high-end' niche."

What is necessary to bring competitiveness back to your sector?

"Since 2008, the world of employment has changed, as have its borders. Today, our savoir faire should be protected, for example, with a system that allows distinguishing a garment made entirely in Italy, from one that only the 'Made in Italy' label has been sewn on."

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