

Classic forms, new materials



by Marta Bernasconi



[MISE EN PLACE]

The standouts on this table in the Italian Embassy in Paris are the Dolce Vita water, wine and champagne glasses, all in synthetic crystal. A lovely informal setting that brings a welcome touch of playfulness and lightness

They look like very formal banqueting ware yet on closer inspection they are made from very surprising acrylic... In a myriad zingy colours... A table in signature Mario Luca Giusti style

Being born in Florence is a real privilege for anyone with creative leanings. The beauty and culture that permeate every single corner of the city are powerful stimuli and also provide a solid historical grounding for creating new designs. Mario Luca Giusti had just such a start in life but before he even turned 18, he'd already moved to Milan to further hone his knowledge of style and fashion. His time spent there proved very useful indeed when he arrived back to his native city and took over the historic family footwear company which was founded in 1865.

Giusti showed a talent for business but never stopped looking ahead. By the mid-2000s, he had realised that the markets were undergoing sweeping changes and that small, long-established footwear firms were facing into a very serious crisis. His eureka moment came after he bought a set of very lovely glasses by chance which all his friends adored and he realised he could copy their shapes using high tech materials. No sooner said than done: Giusti already had the production facilities and all he had to do was convert them to a different kind of manufacturing. In 2007, he launched his new brand and his first tableware collections which were a fine mix of the elegant and the practical.

The glasses and a whole range of other tableware were all made from acrylic called synthetic crystal, while the plates were melamine.

They looked luxurious but were imminently practical with the result that Mario Luca Giusti's lines went from strength

[MISE EN PLACE]



Miscellanea by Mario Luca Giusti. Clockwise: a variation on the Dolce Vita glasses; the reassuringly rounded Palla, Pallina and Plutone jugs, also in synthetic crystal; melamine Corallo plates; the Aimone plates, with central fish motif with relief clouds, are also in the same material; the kaleidoscopically colourful Lente glasses



to strength, particularly for settings that demand a more informal kind of elegance. That meant al fresco areas such as terraces, gardens, poolsides and, of course, on yachts. The Florentine brand became a standard-bearer for casual chic helped by the fact that the colours of the collections – which range from good old black and white to downright fluorescent - change every year. There was also a nice choice of solid and transparent colours and materials.

This pop art take on aristocratic table services goes down a treat aboard and it is surprise that the Florence maison's wares can be found not just in larger cities but also in department stores and their own boutiques in the chichiest coastal areas. Sea and sun demand a light, fun touch and casual conviviality. And that is something Mario Luca Giusti is well aware of.

<https://mariolucagiusti.it>