

## MRKET: A Word with Pier Paolo Celeste

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"The American male consumer has now understood that paying a little more for a certain product is not only a great tribute to Italian creativity and quality, but it is an investment in a better end product that is unique and lasts over time. " Italian Trade Commissioner & Executive Director for the US talks menswear and the Made in Italy label of quality

How is the show going and what is the feedback from the companies attending?

We are very happy with the outcome. In addition to what they are telling us we know we have prepared everything pretty well. We were comforted both by the numbers, which are increasing on the American market mostly for everything that is menswear, and by our preparation on the American front. The Italian Trade Commission offers a service where we contact the best local



buyers and we get feedback from the way before the actual event takes place. We want them to report to Italian companies what they will have to deal with when they get here in the US. It is incorrect to think that a show is just three days of showcasing your own product. It must be prepared thoroughly ahead of time. We send invitations to selected people (about 3-4k people throughout the US) that are key players in the menswear network. The American male consumer has now understood that paying a little more for a certain product is not only a great tribute to Italian creativity and quality, but it is an investment in a better end product that is unique and lasts over time.

Italy always means high quality...

Yes, high quality, and great attention to the product. Here we have producers that constantly look for new motifs, colors, brands, styles.. what they bring is not just a product that is thought of and made in Italy, it is an international product for an international man.

What is mostly wanted by the American man? Shoes?

Our numbers show that everything is admired and wanted the same way. Knitwear is loved for the quality of its threads, its unique colors and its long life. Outerwear is a classic that is the product of a long tradition of high quality manufacturing. We are famous for our ties that have exclusive designs and are made with the finest silk. Shoes can last even twenty years... so if preserved well, an Italian product is something that will last you a lifetime.

There are here today some companies that had stopped coming to the US and now are back...

There was a moment when the American market stalled. Some of our Italian companies could not afford to be on a market where there were no sales. So they looked elsewhere. Now many are back. Their product is of such good quality, so unique and creative, and their name is so respected that coming back was easy. Italy always goes for quality so it is like saying that if an Italian company is missing, quality is missing.. it is not an exaggeration, that's really the way it is.

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