

Furla: 90 Years, 3 Generations

Tommaso Cartia (November 22, 2016)



After Furla's record-breaking achievements all over the world and its breakthrough in the oriental market, the company—currently exporting to 71 countries— was in search of the perfect place to maximize its brand's footprint in the US. A natural choice, the new flagship boutique recently opened in New York City on Fifth Avenue, the most glamorous shopping street in the world. We sat down with Scott Link, CEO of the Americas, to talk about Furla's new adventure in the US.

"Made in Italy" is a somewhat overly abused term that doesn't necessarily rhyme with authenticity. But there's no better way to address Furla, the Italian artisanal haute couture maison founded in 1927 by the [Furlanetto](#) [2] family in Bologna, which specializes in luxury yet accessibly-priced handbags and accessories. A true ambassador of "Made in Italy," the Furla brand embodies all the Italian fashion principles of quality, durability, and design. It offers captivating beauty, original craftsmanship, and the constant search of new technology in simple shapes, saturated colors, and rich textures that embrace la dolce vita of the Furla man and woman. In 2015, Furla finally landed in the U.S. and settled in NYC on Fifth Avenue.



The new CEO of the Americas, [Scott Link](#) [3], is the ring leader of this umpteenth Furla crossing. With 20 years of experience in the fashion industry and a true passion for retail, Link has worked with the biggest names in the business, such as Gap, [Polo Ralph Lauren](#) [4], French Connection, and C. Wonder. He is now ready to officiate the new marriage between Furla and the U.S. We sat down with him to better understand how and if the Furla brand changed throughout the years and what its new approach with the American clientele will be. We set out to determine the firm's future goals and marketing strategies in the region and how [Furla Fifth Avenue](#) [5] is more than just a regular boutique.

Be 90 – and not feeling it!

“In 2017, Furla will celebrate its 90th anniversary. It's amazing how this brand managed to stay relevant and contemporary in the fashion world with the simplicity of quality handbags and accessories, whose bright joyful colors still speak to the modern girl just as they did in 1927. While it evolved, the brand has always been faithful to its tradition. This is apparent in New York through our variety of clients. We speak to three international generations of women: grandmothers, mothers, and daughters. The brand is transverse and that makes it very competitive, few other brands have that”.

What Scott Link talks about on a retail level is exactly what Furla's artistic director, [Fabio Fusi](#) [6], had in mind while thinking about the idea of the Furla woman, who didn't change but rather evolved with the modern times. She is still a busy, intelligent working girl, curious, refined, and fascinated by art but also outgoing, fun, and glamorous – a party girl. That's why her accessories have to be functional, durable, and easy to wear but also trendy and beautiful for her fun times.

The traditional “Metropolis Furla bag” found a new backdrop to accompany its style: the exuberant, fast-paced day of the New York man and woman. For the new opening, Furla designers launched the “Fifth Avenue” limited edition collection of bags, small leather goods, and accessories, mixing Furla classical lines with New York City's signature iconic elements – abstract skylines, graffiti letters, and cartoon apples. Tradition and modernity is a bond that runs through the brand's DNA.

A sensorial experience

Furla Fifth Avenue reflects the vivid exuberance of the stylish brand with its bright colors coated in LED screens, minimal lines, and pastel tones that embrace the items effectively and make them shine – a pure pleasure for the eye. You are infused with a vigorous, electrifying vibe when you step into the boutique. The vivacious energy of the retail team is infectious, young, and dynamic; their kindness is only comparable with the precision and the attention for detail with which the accessories are exposed and presented to the client. Scott Link's vision and philosophy is behind this, “We wanted to create a nice, inclusive energy within the team, who are really passionate about what they're doing. I approach retail like I would approach hospitality for a hotel or a restaurant. It's about making the experience amazing for you. Everything from the interior design to the music, the smell, the warmth of the retail team is intended to give you a sensorial sensation, something you will remember. With the boom of online shopping we still think the old fashioned way of stepping into a boutique to shop is one of the key elements to deliver the brand's style identity.”

Mario Testino's touch

Again in the name of the bond between tradition and modernity, Furla felt the need to revitalize its commercial image, presenting to the world the authenticity of its Italian roots. Iconic photographer Mario Testino, was asked to immortalize the brand with his ingenuity. The new campaign, starring models Ine Neefs and Aurélien Muller, portrays a young, upbeat couple in the fresh outdoor scenery of the picturesque Mediterranean Sea, one of the most characteristic Italian setting. “Having [Mario Testino](#) [7] for the new campaign was very important for the brand's evolution”, says Link. “The brand felt the need to represent itself in a contemporary, joyful Italian setting with a European feeling.” This also helped to re- launch the brand in countries where it was less recognizable, like the U.S. It was very important to immediately identify Furla with Italy and a colorful, young and fun



feeling.

Future plans

With a renovated image, a brand new boutique on Fifth Avenue, a dynamic team, and a new upcoming collection, this new marriage between Furla and U.S. started with a bang and this is just the honeymoon. Scott Link sounds absolutely thrilled about it, "The balance of this new start is going great so far. It is amazing to see how the market is growing every month. I've been talking with real estate companies and our future goal is to open shops in San Francisco, L.A., Houston, and Chicago. And we also have a collection for men now; we had accessories and bags before, but this is the first time that you can really call it a collection."

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[2] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Furla>

[3] <http://fashionista.com/2015/11/furla-5th-avenue>

[4] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Lauren

[5] <http://visit5thavenue.com/furla/>

[6] <https://thefashionplatemag.com/2016/09/30/interview-with-furlas-creative-director-fabio-fusi/>

[7] <http://www.mariotestino.com>