



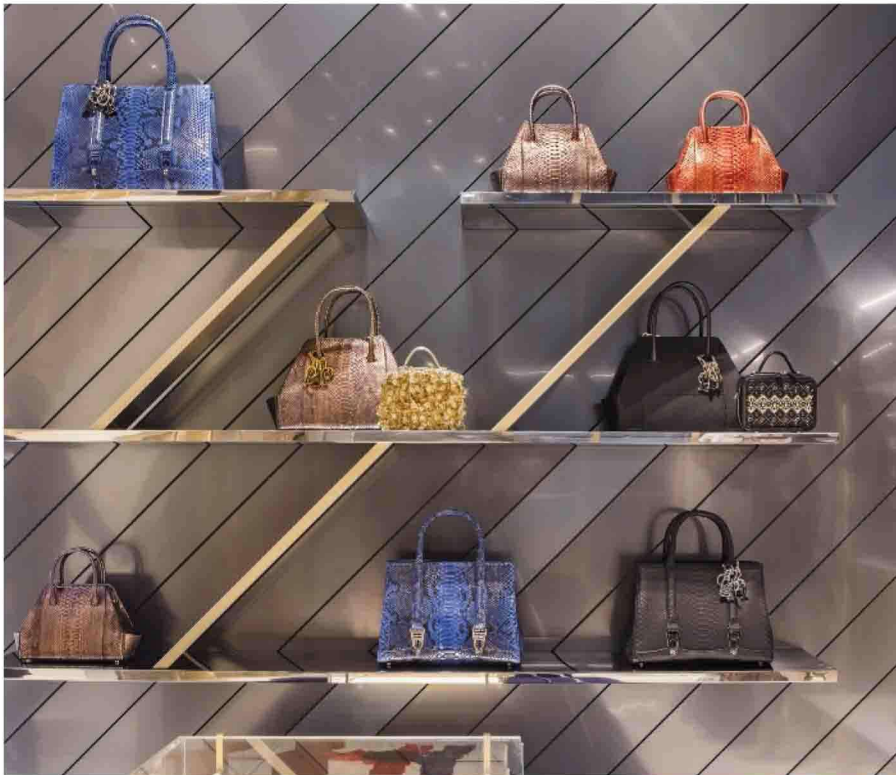
SPEAKING *Intimately*

THE BOLOGNA, ITALY-BASED RETAILER LA PERLA
POSITIONS ITSELF ON MILAN'S VIA MONTENAPOLEONE.

By Eric Feigenbaum, Editorial Advisor/New York Editor

SINCE 1954, LA PERLA (BOLOGNA, ITALY) – MEANING “THE PEARL” IN ITALIAN – HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH LUXURY AND FEMININITY. Originally founded by master corset-maker and couturière Ada Masotti, the brand has been an international staple since the '80s, lending a range of style influences to the lingerie market at large. Reflecting Masotti's reported motto, “never compromise on quality and innovation,” the company recently sought to position itself in the center of Milan's fashion district with a luxe flagship.

The city's Via Montenapoleone offered an ideal location for La Perla to plant its company banner – its overarching goal being to project its brand image on the iconic fashion street alongside other recognizable high-end boutiques. In essence, the 2580-square-foot, two-level store was designed as a communication tool, physically announcing the arrival of La Perla onto the international retail corridor.



LEFT, ABOVE The interior features a contemporary design supported by a range of quintessential luxury materials, from velvets to brass.

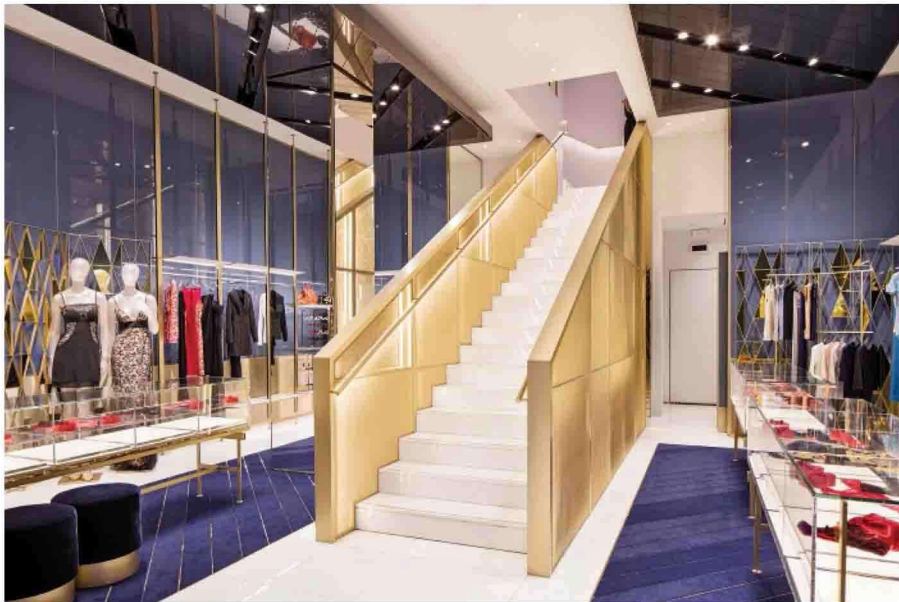
Partnering with design firm Baciocchi Associati (Arezzo, Italy), La Perla wanted its Milan flagship to exude a sophisticated, feminine aesthetic. According to Architect and Founder Roberto Baciocchi, “The design was focused to respect the femininity of La Perla and its sophistication with a strong attention to detail.”

The primary challenge facing Baciocchi and the design team was creating a contemporary space, while also acknowledging the brand’s rich history. To that end, the environment features a mix of modern feels with classic materials, like lush velvet, brass and marble.

The ground floor is defined by richly lacquered robin’s egg blue panels on its perimeter walls, divided by a series of vertical brass mullions. Customers are welcomed into the



LEFT, BELOW
Metallic accents throughout the space visually link the other materials used, helping to create a cohesive statement.



space by a white marble floor adorned with two sapphire blue moquette carpets featuring a diagonal fishtail pattern. Its French twist carpets flank a contemporary metal-clad grand staircase, a strong architectural statement further accentuated by strips of light dividing the staircase's metal panel coverings, making it glow. Positioned on the thick pile carpets are sets of linear glass showcases with brass legs and trim.

The metal on the showcases and verticals, as well as the staircase, is used throughout the space on freestanding and wall-mounted fixtures, and even as a 10-centimeter-thick border around the lush moquette carpets. The walls on the upper level are composed of satin-padded and coated panels in three rich shades of purple. Here, the various brand collections are divided into rooms, each with subtle color changes, ranging from a soft lilac hue to amethyst, that differentiate each area.

Handbags and accessories are presented on feature walls finished with blue-gray diagonal aluminum slats. The merchandise is elegantly highlighted on polished steel shelves with brass detailing, creating a dynamic focal point.

“The furniture and fixtures have been designed to offer maximum flexibility for the housing, showing and displaying of the branded products,” Baciocchi says. “The interior design is focused on creating an intimate environment for the customers while still allowing for a maximum view of the entire shop.”

With a curated mix of decadent materials and modern design elements, La Perla makes a strong fashion statement on Milan's tony Via Montenapoleone. ▴

PROJECT SUPPLIERS

RETAILER La Perla, Bologna, Italy	LIGHTING Zumtobel, Dornbirn, Austria	GENERAL CONTRACTOR Polverini Arredamenti, Arezzo, Italy
DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE Baciocchi Associati, Arezzo, Italy	MANNEQUINS/ FORMS Bonaveri, Ferrara, Italy	