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Salone Style

Milan became the center of the home design world in June with the return of the Salone del Mobile.Milano.

BY ANITA SHAW

A walk through an art gallery or museum can leave the visitor awestruck, entranced by a sense of beauty, a fascination with what the eye is beholding. Attendees of Salone del Mobile.Milano in Milan, Italy experienced that same sense of wonder, treated to a feast of dazzling design for the home.

Held June 7 through 12 at Rho Fiera Milano, Salone – celebrating its 60th anniversary this year – nodded to its past, with a focus on quality and innovation, as well as embraced the future and its commitment to environmental and social responsibility.

Maria Porro, president of Salone del Mobile.Milano, noted, “Putting together this edition of the trade fair has been a powerfully emotional experience, given its extraordinary symbolic dimension: it is narrating 60 years of history and marking a new point of departure for our sector.”

Indeed, the crux of the massive exhibition centered on beautiful design that is meant for wellness and refuge – and achieving those goals with a dedication to sustainability.

Delayed for more than two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Salone’s return was a celebration of all things design.



Photo: Courtesy Salone del Mobile.Milano/Andrea Mariani

Selves,” promoted inclusive design, fostering autonomy, comfort, movement, usability, interaction and safety for all. New this year was a podcast that brought all of the voices of the participants together as an alternative for the sight-impaired for design without barriers.

Also prominently featured was an installation entitled “Design with Nature,” curated by architect Mario Cucinella to reflect an ecosystem that acts as a representation of a future way of life. Aware that, environmentally speaking, a radical change of approach is needed, the architect worked with Salone on the theme of transforming the ways in which people live on the earth and on the role that architects and designers play in the creation of future spaces. The exhibit investigated the ways that vegetable and animal waste, as well as raw materials used in construction, could be sourced, recycled and upcycled, and the fact that eco-friendly alternatives already exist and need to be encouraged.

Salone also spread beyond the fairgrounds and into the city of Milan with The Magic Box, a site-specific film installation that featured 11 short films by Italian filmmakers. And the design community was treated to a performance by the Philharmonic Orchestra, which performed Prague – Symphony No. 38 in D Major, K. 504 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, followed by Apollo, choreographed by George Balanchine to music by Igor Stravinsky, starring Roberto Bolle.

The week was highlighted by a 60th anniversary event at Palazzo Dugnani, which featured decade-appointed rooms, live music and a celebratory atmosphere.

INSIDE EUROCUCINA

In addition to the International Furniture Fair and the International Furnishing Accessories Exhibition and Workplace3.0, this edition of Salone included the return of the biennial EuroCucina, with its side event FTK – Technology For the Kitchen, as well as the International Bathroom Exhibition. Kitchens featured open spaces that encouraged gathering and display, while baths reflected sanctuaries that provide wellness benefits. All of these spaces included the latest in technology and a nod to sustainability.



Photo: Courtesy Salone del Mobile.Milano/Luca Fummenghi

Architect Mario Cucinella worked with Salone to create the ‘Design With Nature’ installation, which examined ways to work and design in more sustainable ways.

More than 2,175 exhibitors from around the world showcased their products, filling all 20 pavilions at the exhibition center. Attendance of over 262,000 confirmed the importance of the show and exceeded all expectations in terms of turnout.

In addition to the exhibit halls, Salone offered visitors a range of experiences. A program of presentations allowed speakers to share design ideas and stories with audiences, and a collaboration with Identita Golose Milano – the International Hub of Gastronomy – enabled visitors to experience the dishes of some of Italy’s greatest chefs and artisans.

SaloneSatellite, which is devoted to the future of design, features the work of more than 600 young designers. This 23rd edition, which had the theme “Designing for Our Future



The 23rd edition of EuroCucina was a significant draw for this edition of Salone. The kitchens on display reflected areas meant for family and friends to share and spend time. The recent pandemic has made the space more meaningful, a place where families cook, eat, work and interact with children. Designs reflect this return to the kitchen's roots, but with technological updates that make them more livable than ever, whatever their size.

At the same time, the eighth edition of FTK presented built-in technology and range hoods for the kitchen that advance function and ease of use. These electrical appliances boast connected technology for more intelligent operation and a more sustainable future, notes Salone.

Dark and light cabinet shades were prominent, as well as upscale, elegant finishes. Pops of color, glass-front cabinets and hidden storage were also mainstays.

Natural materials, wood and stone featured in concert with more industrial steel and glass pieces made for interesting contrast, as seen in Scavolini's Jeometrica kitchen. J channel and C channel cabinets were also a popular item.

With appliances, there were refrigerators that can set themselves automatically as well as notify homeowners when products are expiring, and even ones that talk to ovens, identifying available ingredients stored and choosing recipes for those food items.

Elica's LHOV presented a new category of appliances, a 3-in-1 solution that integrates cooktop, hood and oven. The filter system is concealed within the product, while the oven is at an ergonomic height. Downdrafts built into cooktops were shown at multiple booths, effective for smaller kitchens or where venting is an issue.

Signature Kitchen Suite showcased a convertible under-counter refrigerator with two drawers that can be regulated with a choice of six different temperatures as needed, independently of each other.

Appliances in all colors and surface materials were everywhere at EuroCucina. Samsung and Fulgor Milano delivered a fresh take on white appliances, while SMEG continued its pursuit of all things color.

Crowds surrounding the Cooking Surface Prime booth area were treated to a live demonstration by a chef cooking directly on a countertop. The company was presenting what it calls "the first invisible industry cooktop."

☑ (Clockwise from top left): Scavolini, Nobilia, Häcker Kitchens, Aran Cucine and Creo displayed kitchens that promote gathering, and trending elements such as sustainable materials, mixed metals, glass fronts, J-channel doors and hidden elements.



☑ Appliance highlights at Salone included Cooking Surface Prime's induction countertop (top), colorful refrigerators from SMEG, white cooktops from Fulgor Milano (right), downdraft cooktop from Bertazzoni and multi-temperature refrigeration from Signature Kitchen.



Designed by Luca Nichetto, Jeometrica is one of **Scavolini's** newest designs. The door showcases a contemporary edge due to aluminum profiles available in three colors, coordinated with a range of lacquered finishes, decorative melamines, veneered surfaces or glass. The curved tubular handle makes a decorative statement. scavolini.com



Maison Valentina aims to combine comfort and luxury in the bath, and its Lapiaz washbasin is designed to do just that. Made by skilled artisans, the company's pieces are fashioned from materials such as polished brass, marble and glass. The Lapiaz washbasin features a stainless steel structure and polished brass tears. maisonvalentina.net



The **NorthPoint Cabinetry** line from Hardware Resources now includes a Slate finish option that delivers an earthy, neutral tone. Made in North America, the cabinets are available in a wide array of in-stock, QuickBuild cabinet designs. Shown is the Catalina door style. hardwareresources.com



The **Aquatica Millennium** is an exclusive, wall-mounted vanity collection that combines solid wood with black NeroX stone composite solid surface. Made by master craftsmen, the built-in cabinet features an ultra-sleek design. Eight different wood types – Oak, Teak, Iroko, American Walnut, Maple, Sapele, Padauk and Ash – are available. aquaticausa.com



The Emerson vanity from **Room & Board** is a fresh salute to the Shaker and Arts & Crafts design aesthetics. The vanity sports clean lines and sturdy construction and is available in six size options. Available finishes include white oak, walnut, ash with shell stain, ash with charcoal stain and white, as well as two hardware finish options. roomandboard.com



The Painted Oak finish from **Dura Supreme** delivers on the continued popularity of painted cabinetry with a modern element that lets the grain texture of the oak shine through. Painted Oak finishes are now available on all of the company's standard Paint finishes as well as its Personal Paint Match Program finishes and Curated Color Collection finishes. durasupreme.com



The Studio S 24" Double-Drawer Bathroom Vanity features a clean, minimalist look with two slow-close drawers sectioned for smart storage and organization. Offered by **American Standard**, the vanity is designed in modular components for customization and is available with legs or can mount directly on the wall for a floating effect. americanstandard-us.com



Lacava's 48" Linea vanity features ample enclosed storage in stacked wide drawers, open display shelving and countertop space featuring solid surfacing, as well as integrated metal towel bars working as the vanity frame. All materials are available in a range of finish and color options. lacava.com

"Using metal accents are a sought-after way to personalize your designs," says Johnson. "Whether it's fully welded constructional fabrication or added pops of metal details such as our newest BAND1 optional upgrade, your Furniture Guild vanity will be a one of a kind statement piece!"

CALMING COLORS

In creating serene, relaxing spaces, both natural materials and softer colors have emerged as recent trends. Hues that mimic nature, such as blues and greens, are popular as well.

"Natural materials are making a return," stresses Hedreen, with natural wood finishes in vertical or horizontal grains. "Buyers are wanting the bathroom to look and feel comforting, relaxing and calming," Hedreen adds.

Gifford notes that the company has had a lot of requests for colors, but these colors are more muted and not as brilliant as they have been in the past.

Lacava agrees, adding, "Pastel colors in matte finishes are becoming very popular."

Downie notes that white high gloss and neutrals that lend themselves to a calming "oasis" feel or that can be dressed up with pops of color are popular. These range from warm, inviting woods that coordinate nicely with the 2022 biophilia trend, to Nordic jewel tones in blue and gray hues.

"We are also seeing a trend toward calming colors and finishes for vanities," Harrison reports. "Select Jeffrey Alexander vanities are offered

in a unique Blue Steel finish that brings tranquility to any space. The color is reminiscent of blue hues found in nature and coordinates easily with silver or gold tones."

Mucha states, "While white will always remain the top-selling color, and grays have continued to hold their own, we are seeing opportunities for painted vanities in blues and even black." He adds that the company is also seeing a return to lighter natural tones that highlight the natural grain of the woods, such as walnut and oak.

In upscale bathrooms, dark wood tones are trending, Rykus reports. "Highlights of gray, blues [and] forest greens bring a homey effect when one wants to highlight their bathroom furniture."

FUNCTION & STORAGE

The primary purpose of bathroom vanities and furniture is to stash essential items close at hand as well as provide ample surface space for self-care and personal hygiene activities. While some open storage is desired, a clean and simple look is preferred, making closed storage spaces a critical element in the room.

"Vanities and furniture cabinets must offer ample, practical storage space across all bathrooms from large to small," stresses Downie. "Above all else, vanities and cabinets allow for concealed storage, making for a more organized, expansive space."