

AUTUMN/WINTER 2022/23 FABRIC TRENDS

Meeting again

Milano Unica's return to a physical format was greeted with enthusiasm from exhibitors and visitors alike, with new innovations and sustainability initiatives ready to be showcased. **Janet Prescott** reports.

Milano Unica, held at Fiera Milano Rho on 6-7 July, proved to be important as an optimistic move to re-establish contact at the European trade shows. There was great enthusiasm for a physical show and an aura of excitement was fostered after a long absence of face-to-face business.

There were fewer visitors and exhibitors than normal but confidence was boosted by the real encounters and backed up by e-MilanoUnica Connect, the digital platform.

There were 270 exhibiting companies in the physical space, up 29% compared to September 2020, with 224 from Italy and 46 overseas, and 3,100 visiting companies, also 29% higher than last September.

"We are back," declared Reda's Ercole Botto Poala in a tweet, echoing Milano Unica president Alessandro Barberis Canonico's opening speech, in which he stressed: "We have not come back to normality yet, but the signals are surely promising."

Eurojersey, the fabric innovators, reported that Milano Unica was a success

not only for them but for the entire textile sector, adding that customers appreciated how the show was organised. "Visitors were mainly Italian, also German, French, Dutch, and a few US buyers attended the show," the company said.

Matthew Simpson, of UK company Luxury Fabrics, added: "Our attendance was a statement of intent. If customers make the effort then so will we. We will prove it can be done. We are delighted we went – so much positivity."

Milano Unica is especially proactive in its approach to the home Italian market. Its Sustainability Project has attracted increasing attention and plays an important role for the entire sector.

At Moda In buyers could find different sustainable fabrics for autumn/winter, knitted and woven from natural fibres such as wool, linen, cotton, silk and blends, also with examples of strongly eco Tencel, reclaimed fibre and decorative man-made elements. Luxury brands at Moda In included Clerici Tessuto, of Como, typical of the couture end

associated with Milano Unica, and Pongees, from the UK, showing silks, both subtle and glamorous.

Linen fabric developments were presented at the Linen Dream Lab. The European Confederation of Flax and Hemp (CELC) is reinforcing its digital strategy for the constantly evolving textile market, to anticipate the needs of brands and other players in the ready-to-wear sector. It traditionally provides detailed trends, with sourcing and samples of the latest innovations, for function and fashion, in linen and hemp.

Techno fabrics destined for athleisure and sport routinely use soft, fine Merino wool for performance. The latest examples of extrafine and versatile wool development are now accessible at The Wool Lab Digital, from The Woolmark Company, offering designers its detailed supply and trend information, linking up different aspects of the wool value chain.

Eurojersey launched a Sensitive Fabrics range of lingerie fabrics named Relax, made from technical fibres and engineered

Visitors examining fabrics in the trend area.

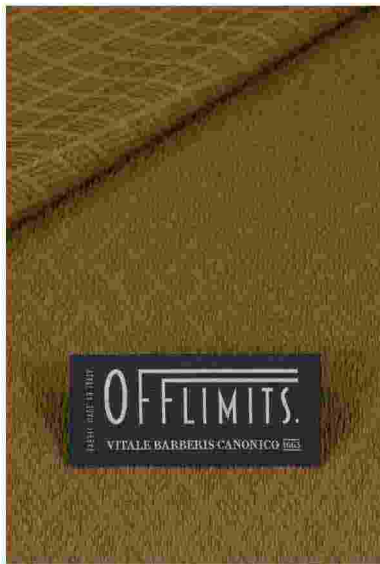
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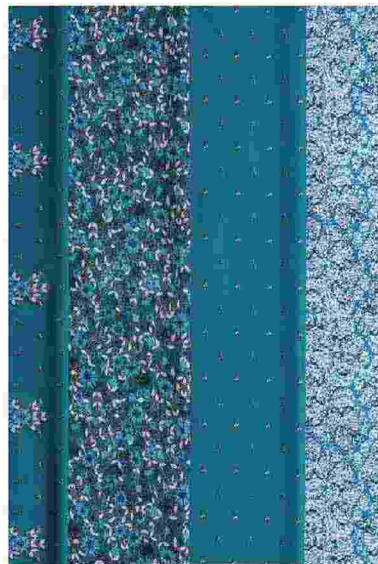
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Oxbridge flannel collection with colour and sheen from John Foster.



Offlimits range by Vitale Barberis Canonico, featuring experimentations with wool and other fibres.



Lingerie fabric from Relax, Eurojersey's new Sensitive Fabrics range.

to be light and breathable, quick drying, and with a second skin elasticity.

Milano Unica's official trends, titled 'Magnificent Passions', centred around several disparate fashion moods displayed in the halls. These led buyers to examine colourful fabrics and accessories reflecting the themes, recreating the familiar buzz of a live event.

Tailoring is proving to be a new focus as fashion companies review their ranges, conscious of the fact that, for the young, the suit is changing. Casual and formal have somehow morphed together in easy fit, with many different choices of colour and texture. The suit has changed but has not disappeared.

IdeaBiella displayed fabrics targeted at apex brands, included worsted classics and flannels and new approaches from the likes of Loro Piana, Gruppo Dondi, Guabello, Vitale Barberis Canonico and the only English worsted or woollen weavers at the show: John Foster, Joshua Ellis and Kynoch.

There were unusually colourful jacketings, blazers and bright jersey fabrics in natural fibres. Designers played around with traditional patterns, breaking them up and recolouring for a revitalised casual look from the British mills.

Bottoli used innovative natural fibres, such as casein fibres from milk; by-products of marine algae; mulberry wood viscose; and Manila hemp, also known as abacá. The mill also showed a fabric with fibres produced from eucalyptus for spring/

summer 2022. Vitale Barberis Canonico experimented in its Offlimits range, featuring wool with recycled polymers, claiming a new raw material.

Shirt Avenue took in the expanded areas covered by contemporary shirtings, across the themed categories of Activewear, Ceremony, Classic, High Performance, Technical, Casual and Glamour. Shirting mills have moved into the sustainable area in force, with organic cotton, undyed

'Confidence was boosted by the real encounters and backed up by e-MilanoUnica Connect'

designs and statements of eco measures. They are also designing for the sportswear area, and this was evident in extensive collections with exotic prints and colour wovens at [Albini](#) 1876, Albiate 1830 and Getzner.

Sustainability initiatives included Lanerossi from Marzotto, introducing the first collection of combed wool and polyester fabrics certified with the Global Recycle Standard (GRS). The range is designed to avoid the greenhouse gas emissions generated from producing new material, and promotes recycling and

reuse of materials at the end of life.

Marzotto also proposed a selection of undyed fabrics, in 100% wool with ranges of beige and brown, all different from each other and completely natural, a look that recalls the traditional Italian paltò.

The Japan Observatory included a range of manufacturers, such as Mokuba, working with pure silk, cotton, wool, linen, jute and other natural materials. These were pure or combined with polyester, nylon, rayon and also vinyl, as well as elastomers. The Japan Observatory stressed techniques and innovation with diverse finishing processes.

The new Larusmiani Tessuti collection presented an expanded range of sustainable fabrics, from Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) cotton in piece-dyed and yarn-dyed fabrics, to organic wools mixed with cotton and innovative wool and bamboo coats. The collection is based on a reinterpretation of vintage colours and patterns from the 1970s presented in a modern context. They are processed by applying membranes and coatings to give new outerwear a high technical performance.

Filo, the yarn fair, had a dedicated space in the centre of Milano Unica to introduce its product proposals prior to its next show in Milan on 29-30 September. The main theme is 'In Search of Authors', conceived by designer and artistic director Gianni Bologna, and showed close cooperation across the Italian textile industry.