



KINDRED SPIRITS IN BUSINESS AND CULTURE

Three years after celebrating the 150th anniversary of bilateral relations, Italy and Japan have seen renewed vigor in their long-running partnership. While separated by much distance and distinct traditions, the two countries share a common ground on which they built valuable partnerships — namely their deep respect for culture and passion for innovation.

“When you visit northern Italy, you will feel like you visited many countries because of the variety of cultures. There is a lot of tradition, technique and technology. Culture is very important, and a new generation of Japanese and Italians can benefit from that,” **Consul General of Japan Yuji Amamiya** said.

Like many of their foreign counterparts, Japanese companies chose to establish their operations in northern Italy, the country’s traditional commercial center and industrial heartland, as well as the home of Italy’s biggest brands such as Ferrari and Pirelli.

And in recent years, Japanese and Italian companies have found new spaces for collaboration, such as in textile development, automotive design, food and beverage and medical technology.

“There is a mutual respect and curiosity between the Japanese and Italian cultures. We would like to develop our

cultural exchanges and commercial business relations with the Japanese. We are investing in medical research for aging populations and believe this is something we can work together on with our Japanese counterparts,” **Mayor of Bologna Virginio Merola** said.

That sentiment is shared by the head of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) in Milan.

“There are a lot of Italian companies with unique technologies. They are looking for cooperation with foreign companies and these partners could be Japanese companies,” said **JETRO Milan Director General Kentaro Ide**.

Because of its well-known work ethic and hardy attitude, northern Italy survived the economic crisis that rocked the European Union a decade ago. Japanese companies did not abandon their investments in a region they found to be accommodating.

A victim of the global economic downturn, Yamaha Motor Europe N.V. suffered a huge setback in 2013. Instead of pulling out of Europe, the Japanese company revised its regional strategy and expanded its operations in Italy.

“Yamaha in Italy has evolved a lot. We aligned our goals with Japanese management. The work was transparent and it was about building a sustainable business,” **Yamaha Motor Europe**

Country Manager for Italy Andrea Colombi recalled.

In Milan, one of the world’s most important fashion centers, textile manufacturer Alcantara S.p.A. has thrived, certainly helped by its proximity to innovators in design and technology.

“There is a mysterious link between Italy and Japan. They attract each other and at a technological level, there is a deep exchange,” said **Alcantara Chairman and CEO Andrea Boragno**.

Founder of the local firm Hands On Design agrees. “Italian creativity and Japanese efficiency complement each other. Together, they create things that are both functionally beautiful and beautifully functional,” **Hands On Design CEO and Art Director Kaori Shiina** said.

Apart from design, if there is an aspect of life where Japan and Italy display extraordinary reverence for, it is food. Few people in the world are as steadfast to their culinary traditions as the Japanese and Italians.

Protective of their artisanal heritage and standards of quality, many Italian food companies have chosen to remain family-owned. These companies also comprise the country’s robust small and mid-sized enterprises that, emboldened by the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement that went into effect in February, recognize the importance of



Sharing a deep appreciation for high culture and excellent design, Italy and Japan have seen a growth of partnerships in a broad range of areas, including the education sector. Enrolment of Japanese students in Italian universities have risen consistently over the years.

international expansion to build a sustainable business.

And the “Made in Italy” brand has served those home-grown companies very well, among them Parma-based Barilla, whose products are found in many supermarkets and are used in several leading restaurants around the world.

“We have had strong operations in Japan for many years. Since the beginning of our joint venture at the start of the 1990s, Japanese consumers have gotten to know our products for their quality. We also provide our food in Japan through gastronomic channels, such as restaurants and chefs,” **Barilla Group Chairman Guido Barilla** said.

Likewise, in the land of pasta, Japanese soba is gaining new local fans.

“Italy is a market that appreciates buckwheat noodles. We found great success in EXPO 2015 and conducted two test marketing activities, the results of which exceeded our expectations,” said **Sagami Holdings Corp. CEO Toshiyuki Kamada**. Last year, the Japanese noodle chain opened its first European outlet in Milan.

In another sector, Italian universities welcome this internationalization. The number of Japanese students has risen and vice versa.

“The world is becoming more global. We need to have more transfer of knowledge across cultures,” **Bocconi University Rector Gianmario Verona** said.

And as northern Italy retains its position as the country’s economic engine, the region’s leaders face the challenge

of attracting more foreign investors while supporting local businesses to venture outside the country.

“We have always felt a lot of affection for Japanese culture and life, and we will warmly accept all entrepreneurial initiatives and visits to our region,” **Lombardy Region President Attilio Fontana** said.

In Turin, the home of automotive giant Fiat, the mayor wants to further consolidate its long-running ties with Japan.

“In both the automotive and aerospace industries, there is already a strong relationship with Japan. We also work at the local level with the Japan Business Forum and with Japan Week to strengthen these connections. We have had a strong relationship with the city of Nagoya since 2005,” **Mayor of Turin Chiara Appendino** said.

And knowing its biggest strength, the city of Verona is determined to stay a top tourist destination in Italy.

“We are investing our resources to make the city a better place and to keep it clean for tourists. So, we are inviting our friends in Japan and other people around the world to visit us,” **Mayor of Verona Federico Sboarina** said. ■



JETRO Milan Director General Kentaro Ide



President of Lombardy Attilio Fontana



Mayor of Bologna Virginio Merola



Mayor of Verona Federico Sboarina

ITALIAN PROSECCO GOES GREENER WHILE RAISING QUALITY

As a stamp of quality, Prosecco DOC guarantees millions of aficionados around the world that they are drinking an excellent product, one that bears a rich history and the unique features of its geographical origins. Produced in nine provinces in the Veneto and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia regions, the secret of prosecco lies in the area’s favourable climate, which bestows an elegant and well-balanced flavor.

Prosecco also undergoes a second natural fermentation that preserves the typical complexity of the grapes and enhances its freshness and fragrance, while maintaining a sober, balanced taste.

The Prosecco DOC consortium’s mission is to protect and promote the uniqueness of prosecco, widely appreciated for its bouquet redolent in floral, fruity notes, its harmonious balance and its trademark vivacity and lightness.

Both as a source of inspiration for new cocktails and a wine that can be taken as an *aperitivo* (pre-meal appetizer) until

dessert, Prosecco DOC has a versatility that goes with a myriad of menus, from the simplest to the most elaborate.

But it’s not just about what’s in the bottle and on the market.

The Prosecco DOC consortium has embarked on a campaign to raise awareness of the environmental issues facing producers and their vineyards. Its members hope to create a system that will provide reliable environmental, social and economic data and help them manage the vineyards sustainably.

One of the first steps taken by the consortium was to promote the planting of hedges and woodland copses around the vineyards to encourage biodiversity and enhance the landscape.

Prosecco DOC oversees 11,391 farms that manage 24,450 hectares of vineyards and 348 sparkling winemakers. ■

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BARILLA: BEST IN CLASS

Established in 1877, family-owned Barilla has brought delicious pasta, sauces and baked goods to the world for more than 140 years. Based in the city of Parma, the company is now run by its fourth generation, faithful to its original commitment to quality, innovation and sustainability.

“We are inspired by the values of the founders of the company and invest heavily in technology and product quality to ensure the continuous growth and development of our products in our business markets,” **Barilla Group Chairman Guido Barilla** said.

Barilla first ventured outside Italy in 1969, with the opening of its commercial office in France. Then, in the mid-1990s, Barilla opened its overseas operations in Japan. Ever since that strategic move to Asia more than 20 years ago, the company has found great success in Japan and continues to strengthen its brand among its

clients and consumers.

Today, Barilla reports more than \$4 billion in turnover, 45 percent of which is generated in Italy and the remaining 55 percent outside the country. The company is growing around 2 percent every year thanks to its commitment to the “Good for You, Good for the Planet” sustainability plan, which strengthens its relationship with farmers and reduces salt, sugar and saturated fats, such as palm oil, in its products.

“Along the chain, we invest a lot in the quality of the product. We make small steps along the way and every year, we do something better,” Guido Barilla said. Barilla has a presence around the world, mainly in its largest markets through subsidiaries and factories that contribute to its supply chain. With its operations now split between pasta and sauces (55 percent) and baked goods (45 percent), Barilla wants to invest more to grow outside its home country.

“We are extremely open to foreign markets. We have great respect for Japanese culture and we look to the Japanese for inspiration on how to run a business and serve the customer,” Guido Barilla said.

“The linkage between Italian and Japanese culture is magical. As much as we love the Japanese for their cuisine and capability to produce good food and provide great tastes around the world, I believe the Japanese can also find a good offering in Italian food and brands. They will find extreme joy,” he added. ■

→ www.barillagroup.com

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CBC-PROCOS – A MERGER FOR THE FUTURE

Founded by two young chemists in 1945 in Cameri, Italy, **Procos S.p.A** specializes in developing, scaling up and producing active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and advanced intermediates, as well as providing related services for the global pharmaceutical industry.

In 1952, Procos received its first authorization to manufacture APIs and soon established a solid reputation among the local population for their distinctive products. The company ventured into the global market after it passed its first inspection by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1982.

It wasn't until after 2006 when Procos was fully acquired by CBC Group that it experienced significant growth. As a wholly owned subsidiary backed by more than 70 years of experience, CBC-Procos has doubled its market share in generic drugs over the last five years, significantly expanded its custom business while upgrading its technological capabilities and expanded its research and development and productions units.

"The growth of this company has been vertical in the last two



Procos CEO Enrico Zodio

to three years, so our focus is to consolidate this growth and diversify our products. Having the possibility to work with and inside a Japanese group has been an exciting honor," **Procos CEO Enrico Zodio** said.

"The combination of our mutual strengths is evident and the results confirm the perfect synergy between Procos and CBC Group. We are able to meld our systems and cultures together. There is clear power in regards to advantage and merit belonging to a Japanese company," he added.

→ www.procos.it/en/

OFFERING BETTER LIVES, NATURALLY

Founded more than 90 years ago, **Indena** is a global leader in botanical extracts for pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and personal care use with a presence in Europe, the Americas and Asia. The wholly-owned Italian company invests heavily in research and development, and processes around 20,000 tons of raw materials every year in five production sites in Italy, France and India.

Indena Managing Director Daniele Giavini has recognized the importance of Japan ever since the company launched its operations in Asia in 2000.

"It's a market that fits Indena because of the top standards and their appreciation for top service. We see our future in Japan with optimism and we have designed



Indena Managing Director Daniele Giavini

our strategy to strengthen our local affiliate," Giavini explained.

To further strengthen its brand, Indena has stepped up efforts to educate its customers and end-users about the quality and uses of its products, through its The Life Guardian™ label and short health videos.

"Our mission is to defend quality and to increase our offer proposition so that at the end of the day, there is improvement in the quality of life of Japanese consumers," Giavini said.

Building on knowledge gathered over nearly a century, Indena remains inspired to improve lives around the world, harnessing the power of nature.

→ www.indena.com

MILAN-BASED FIRM SETS SIGHTS ON JAPAN

Established in 1965, **MBC** is an international business law firm based in Milan comprising a multidisciplinary practice of lawyers and tax accountants, with a diverse range of skills and backgrounds. Its clients are fast-growing and several are leaders in their industry sectors.

With established relationships with selected law firms in important business centers across the United States, Europe and Asia, MBC provides clients with a combination of in-depth local knowledge and a unique global perspective.

In 2005, MBC started offering comprehensive international M&A services to clients when it invited **Julian Berger**, a corporate law practitioner with wide experience in top-tier international firms, to join the firm as partner.

"It was when Julian joined the firm that our international and M&A segments grew very fast. We built our connections with law firms in England, Germany, France, the USA and China, which consolidated our international profile," **Partner Luca Masotti** said.

"Then, when corporate and commercial lawyer **Mascia Cassella** joined us, we developed new areas of business — from compliance to safety and security, restructuring, privacy and anything to do with the energy field. We believe in a process of growth and to fight through any struggle," he added.

Today, MBC is developing new practices for the international market.

"We currently work a lot in life science and hospitals in East Asia, including China. We also work with a very wide range of industries, from manufacturing and energy to fabric and plastics," Cassella said.

"Given our areas of competencies, we would like to make connections in Japan and work with an independent law firm that is team-oriented and committed to clients with a strong sense of partnership," she added.

MBC is proud of the confidence it has built with its clients and the successes it achieved for them because of its extensive network and expertise.

"We accept work in areas that we are confident in. One-hundred percent compliance is our policy. Whatever deal comes our way, one of our four partners will always be sitting at the table next to the client. That's our real priority; not to do the deal, but to keep the client," Masotti said.

→ www.mbclex.com



MBC Partners (left to right) Mascia Cassella, Luca Masotti, Francesca Masotti and Julian Berger

STUDY IN ITALY AT
UNIVERSITA' CATTOLICA
AN EXPERIENCE
LIKE NO OTHER



www.ucscinternational.it

GLOBALLY TRANSPORTING LUXURY WITH AN ITALIAN TOUCH

From the city of Alessandria in northwest Italy, **Ferrari Group** has transported jewelry and luxury goods for many of the world's most famous brands for the last 60 years. The family-owned logistics company has earned the trust of their discerning clientele because of its tried-and-tested security practices and customizable services.

Today, the London-based holding Ferrari Group Limited coordinates a network of 80 offices in 50 countries, with two branches in Japan, where it first opened in 2014.

"We started in Tokyo as a logistics hub for one client. After just four months, we provided international shipments exporting and importing



the added value that Ferrari provides. We hope Japan will become one of the leading countries for Ferrari Group in Asia," Deiana said.

→ www.ferrarigroup.net

AN IDEAL SCHOOL FOR JAPAN'S ITALY-LOVING STUDENTS

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore is the perfect place for Japanese students who wish to experience Italy's *la bella vita* (the good life), while acquiring a university education, learning the language and gaining work experience as an intern in one of the school's partner companies.

Accepting students from more than 100 countries around the world, the university offers exceptional customized services for Japanese. Over the years, the school has seen a growing number of students from its Japanese partner institutions, Sophia University and Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.

Founded in 1921, the university is the largest private university in Europe with four campuses



across Italy — in Milan, Piacenza-Cremona, Brescia and Rome. Its students are able to choose from more than 100 programs taught both in English and Italian across 12 faculties.

Under the leadership of its rector, **Prof. Franco Anelli**, 13 of the school's disciplines were among the top 300 in the QS World University Rankings by Subject and among the top 110 in the QS Graduate Employability Ranking.

With its strong international focus and genuine Italian characteristics, the university is committed to strengthening its ties with Japan by welcoming not only more Japanese students but also visiting Japanese professors.

→ www.ucscinternational.it

YAMAHA MOTOR EUROPE: A PASSION FOR EXCELLENCE

In the town of Lesmo, just outside Milan, **Yamaha Corp.** operates within a single compound that covers all the businesses it conducts in Europe — Yamaha Motor Europe, Yamaha Research and Development center, Yamaha Motor Racing and Yamaha Music.

Yamaha Motor Europe Country Head for Italy Andrea Colombi is proud of the unique setup and excellent synergy that exists within the complex. Reflective of its "Two Yamahas, One Passion" slogan, the location serves not just as an office, but also as a space where employees collaborate with the musicians and athletes the company has partnered with.

Despite the recent economic turmoil, Europe maintained its role as a tastemaker in the world of design. And Yamaha Motor Europe is capitalizing on its location in Italy, where it has built



Yamaha's NIKEN line features a new radical look with unique leaning multi-wheel technology.

a global reputation in design, the arts, culture and motorsports.

"While the numbers may come from other regions, Europe and Italy are interesting markets. We have been developing products in our centers that eventually

become available worldwide," Colombi said.

Dealing with the fast-evolving demands in the field of mobility, Yamaha Motor Europe believes in the customer-driven direction of the company, which is always ready to provide new solutions, on any number of wheels, for any road surface. This focus on innovation and customer service is what will build the company's extensive fan base.

"Yamaha is a leader in mobility and we have all the weapons in our line-up. While we have the best products, in the end, it's the people that make the real difference," Colombi said.

In the years to come, Yamaha's compound in Lesmo will become a center that celebrates Italian and Japanese design, with their differing sensibilities, but shared passion for excellence.

→ www.yamaha-motor.eu

FIRST CULTURE, THEN BUSINESS

In 1999, when Italian lawyer **Adriano Villa** set up for **Pavia e Ansaldo**, the first-ever Italian law firm in Japan, he had already accumulated over 13 years of local experience between postgraduate studies and legal practice with major Japanese law firms.

When the Japanese government relaxed the regulations for the provision of legal services by foreign lawyers in the late 1990s, Pavia e Ansaldo and Villa were ready to take advantage of that decision and opened an office in Akasaka, in the heart of Tokyo.

Venturing beyond Italy's borders and engaging in international business are not new to Pavia e Ansaldo. Since

1961, it has assisted Italian and foreign clients in all areas of business law. With offices also in Rome, Moscow, St. Petersburg and Barcelona, the law firm's approach of putting culture and in-depth local knowledge first has allowed it to excel in the international arena.

This year, Pavia e Ansaldo celebrates its 20th year in Japan. As the only Italian law firm in the country, it has played a key role in facilitating business relations between Japan and Italy.

"The Japanese are serious and competent. They evaluate their investments carefully. We uphold this approach, backed by our lawyers who have remarkable knowledge of both cultures and markets. We want to build and



Pavia e Ansaldo Managing Partner Stefano Bianchi (right) and Adriano Villa

maintain long-term, fiduciary relationships with clients and reputable Japanese law firms," **Pavia e Ansaldo Managing Partner Stefano Bianchi** stressed.

→ www.pavia-ansaldo.it

LEONARDO FIORAVANTI: DESIGNING FOR GOOD

"The car is the ultimate expression of personal freedom." That sentiment has been expressed by car aficionados so many times, it can be brushed aside as a cliché. However, when heard from **Leonardo Fioravanti**, the Italian engineer associated with Ferrari, the statement gains more credence.

Responsible for designing several of Ferrari's cars, including the iconic 365 GTB/4, fondly known as the Daytona, Fioravanti continues to inspire many a car designer with his passion for simplicity, function and speed. Having also conceived cars for Fiat and Alfa Romeo, Fioravanti has built a reputation as one of the world's leading designers.

After leaving Fiat in 1991, Fioravanti joined a self-named architectural practice he founded in 1987 while working in Tokyo, and focused his work solely on prototypes, concept cars and hybrid vehicles. In the course of his long career, the Italian engineer has so far filed 30 international patents. The design studio is where he gets to live his childhood dream.

"For me, it is always function first," said Fioravanti, who has

a fondness for Japan, having worked with Honda, Toyota and Lexus on their most iconic models. In creating new designs for cars, Fioravanti likes pushing materials to their limits.

Recognizing Fioravanti's accomplishments, the Auto Galleria Luce in Nagoya organized an exhibit in his honor in 2016, while the Museo Nazionale dell'Automobile in Turin extended its "Rosso Fioravanti" exhibition this year until next January.

Not resting on his achievements, Fioravanti is planning more projects, all focused on innovating the world of mobility and firmly committed to functionality over form. Assisted by his two sons, Matteo and Luca, Fioravanti's next project involves electric cars and bikes.

Fioravanti is optimistic about the future, including its links to Asia, particularly Japan and China, where he, together with Matteo and Luca, is working with Technicon Design in Shanghai. Its work on hybrid models hopes to offer a solution to air pollution, a common problem in fast-growing cities in Asia.



Leonardo Fioravanti and Sensiva

"The love of cars keeps you young," said Fioravanti, a self-avowed optimist ("The good men in the world always outnumber the bad"), who believes in technology's power to make the world a better place.

→ www.fioravanti.it



ITALDESIGN: A DRIVE TO PERFECTION

Based in Moncalieri, Turin, **Italdesign** combines excellent engineering and distinctive creativity in its work for the global automotive industry. Offering a complete range of services, from styling to engineering, prototyping, testing and validation, the company employs the latest technologies to develop integrated solutions to current and future issues in mobility.

While keeping its focus on the automotive industry, Italdesign, since the mid-1970s, has expanded its services to new products, like trains, planes and sea crafts, as well as consumer products. The company recently launched a sub-brand, Automobili Speciali, to showcase its capabilities in design, engineering and the production of its own ultra-limited series.

A winner of several design awards over the years, the company has nurtured a strong relationship with many famous Japanese car brands, such as Daihatsu, Suzuki, Mitsubishi, Toyota and Lexus.

"We are proud of our relationship with Japanese companies as it makes us special. They challenge us in a positive way. There is always something to



Italdesign CEO Jörg Astalosch

learn from them and from how they view their work as coordinated and holistic," **Italdesign CEO Jörg Astalosch** said.

"The core of our brand is to deliver the perfect service and therefore, the perfect product," said Astalosch.

Having celebrated its 50th anniversary, Italdesign remains committed to its rich design heritage and open to future trends, motivated by the success of its clients and partners, and confident its employees will define the next generation of mobility solutions.

→ www.italdesign.it

LIFESTYLE AND SUSTAINABILITY FROM ALCANTARA

Alcantara S.p.A's eponymous material may have a luxurious touch and an enduring usability, but its most impressive quality is its ability to evoke deep emotion. This unique characteristic is the company's biggest achievement and the reason it has become a popular addition to numerous fashion lines, luxury cars and consumer technology.

A partnership between Japanese giants Toray and Mitsui, Alcantara's technological breakthrough took shape in Milan. The company's brand and values reflect the reputation of those two countries for groundbreaking innovation and refined aesthetics.

"It is Japanese technology with an Italian heart," **Alcantara Chairman and CEO Andrea Boragno** said.

Since the product was developed in 1972, the brand is positioned as the intersection of technology and art, a forward-thinking identity that has led to

its global success today.

As CEO and an environmental advocate, Boragno uses his passion for sustainability to drive Alcantara to become Italy's first carbon neutral company. In partnership with Venice International University, Alcantara held the 5th International Symposium on Sustainability, during which it highlighted the close link between its product and the environment.

"The world now needs an acceleration of decarbonization. We will focus on how to make changes," Boragno said.

To find new applications for its product, the company plans to expand into rival markets, gradually building itself into a lifestyle brand.

"It's the material of the future. It is the material that matches fashion and emotion," he said.

Anticipating further growth in demand, the company will expand its facilities in order to



Alcantara Chairman and CEO Andrea Boragno

increase production capacity without compromising product quality.

Now globally admired and widely imitated, Alcantara remains a unique material, the full potential of which has yet to be reached.

→ www.alcantara.com



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