



DESIGN: ITALIAN STYLE

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ABSTRACT

A Spring 2003 visit to the textile and machinery manufacturers of Italy reveals insights into the aspects of customized textile products for apparel. A traditional high end menswear supplier of wovens is contrasted with the new seamless knitting technology. The market potential for new interactions with consumers at the retail level is considered.

KEYWORDS: Italy, Fashion, Design, Seamless, Knitting

Imagine spring in the Lake Como area and most designers dream of Prada, Armani, and Gucci catwalk shows. But behind every flash of the Italian fashion world is a rich heritage of art, commerce and technology. Italy has created a brand image for “world class” designer products from automobiles to fine apparel for women’s and menswear.

Although the College of Textiles’ delegation to the Milan area came just after the Milan Summer Collection fashion shows, a virtual tour of the “MADE IN ITALY” Fashion Exhibition at Fashion Institute of Technology in New York was a stimulating reminder of the grand traditions of Italian style. This exhibition was sponsored by the Italian Trade Commission (ITC or ICE)

(For a virtual tour see: <http://www.fitnyc.edu/asp/Content.aspx?menu=FutureGlobal:Museum:ExhibitionsAndSpecialEvents:PastExhibitions>)

The viewer is introduced to the collection through the signature evening dress by Roberta De Camerino from the 1970’s. This

gray, black & white knitted jersey is the epitome of Italian sophistication and style.

Innovative Technology Yield Specialty Products

This reputation for craftsmanship and sophisticated style has been maintained in the contemporary world by the integration of innovative technology and an established system of high quality, specialized suppliers. For the first time, the ITC united with ACIMIT (Italian Association of Textile Machinery Producers) to promote Italian - made machinery to textile manufacturers in the United States. This organization for Italian textile machinery manufacturers is about 350 strong and is located in traditional textile areas of northern and central Italy. As part of this campaign, the ITC in cooperation with ACIMIT invited five professors from the North Carolina State University College of Textiles on a trade mission to Italy. (www.acimit.it), (www.italtrade.com)

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