

*A* Amongst the outright ridiculous, the completely unwearable and the utter bad taste, we glimpsed some stunning style at the Milan show.

– A British fashion journalist reporting for *Female First*, an online style magazine

Woman: eternally bella wearing intimates by La Perla

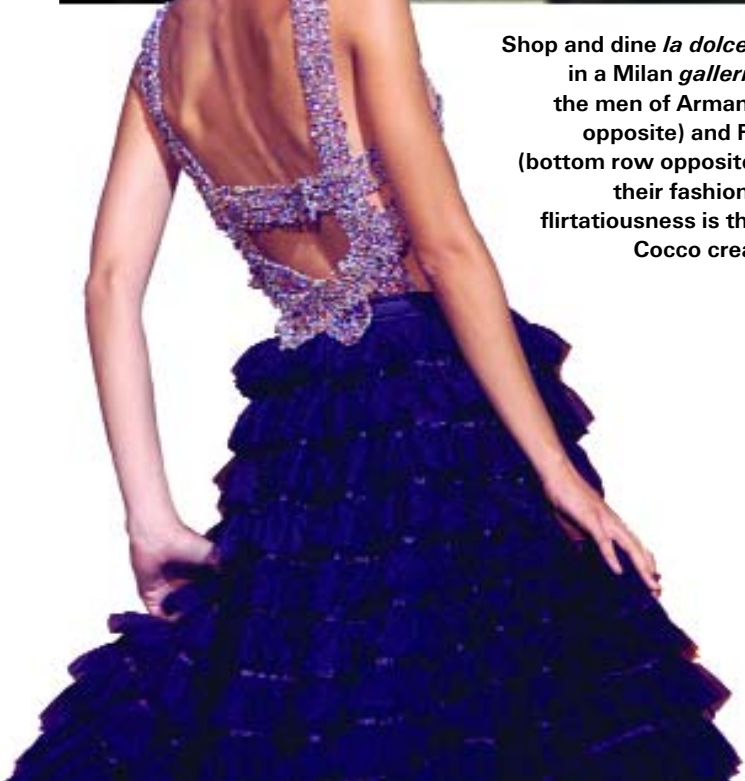
# *The* Fashion Seductions MILAN *of*

*Outright ridiculous!  
Completely unwearable!  
Oh, honey, trust me: Such utter bad taste!*

Ever since 1967 when Italian designer Missoni sent braless models prancing down the catwalk in black-silk dresses that under the lights became transparent, Milan has loved to shock. As fashion's capital of the subversive attitude, both the city and the aesthetic shared by the Italian houses of style at home here – well-known names like Armani, Versace, Prada, Ferragamo – get a kick from the wicked. How the world did snicker when in the '80s Moschino dolled-up his models in "anti-fashion" Minnie Mouse dresses! How a fright was fraught when the late Gianni Versace went hard rock-and-roll and rolled-out clothes of leather and chains that hinted – heavens! – of bondage.



Shop and dine *la dolce vita*-style in a Milan *galleria* (above); the men of Armani (top row opposite) and Ferragamo (bottom row opposite) express their fashion panache; flirtatiousness is this Daniela Cocco creation (left)



*What was he thinking?*

I know what he was thinking. I know what they *all* are thinking with their “ridiculous,” “unwearable” get-ups. They’re thinking style-loving flyers like me, Pilot Michael, will be so shocked and distracted by a few design shenanigans that I won’t notice what’s beneath the so-called subversion: That Milan is more than braless models in see-through silk dresses. Milan is *gorgeous*, mind you. Milan is fun. And in the enchanted “Golden Triangle” formed by three downtown streets – Via Montenapoleone, Via Saint’Andrea and Via della Spiga – Milan is absolutely super shopping.

And I don’t mean for Minnie Mouse dresses.

I mean for an elegant, custom-tailored Cerruti 1881 suit. Some beautiful Gucci shoes. A pair of high-style Armani slacks. And for my sweetie a sexy Cavalli dress. Yes, who needs leather and chains when stores in this half-mile square quarter (which earns several billions of dollars of revenue yearly) located in Milan’s heart between Italy’s largest cathedral, the glorious Gothic Baroque Duomo, and the renown opera house of La Scala, will send me home from my trip looking like some suave continental squire?

*Oh, honey, trust me: He’ll be fabulous!*

I’m not alone in knowing Milan has a way of making itself wanted for such expressions of *la dolce vita*. Virtually every invader in European history has taken a turn at ruling the place – Gauls, Romans, Goths, Longobards and Franks, not mention a whole host of crowned heads from Spain and Austria and France (remember King Napoleon?). As one of the first independent city states of the Renaissance governed (1277-1500) by the aristocratic and cultivated Visconti and Sforza dynasties, Milan’s madness for great style goes way back. You can see this today in the shopping district’s spectacularly extravagant Gallerie Vittorio Emanuele, a glass-topped, barrel-vaulted, *Belle Epoque* splendor that’s one of the planet’s earliest – and nattiest – malls. Savor a *caffè* or dine in a *ristorante* here and amid the city’s splendid Beaux-Arts facades and luxurious 19<sup>th</sup> c. palazzos, the magic of Milan’s look will slip into your soul.

Before prowling the shops of the Golden Triangle (*I’m coming, tailor-made shoes at Tanino Crisci; heads up for me, new ties at Valentino!*), I simply can’t miss *The Last Supper*. Da Vinci’s newly restored masterpiece once called “the saddest work of art in the world” by novelist Aldus Huxley





Designer Daniela Cocco's fancy in satin and fringe

for the WWII bombings and other horrific abuses it has endured, is painted on the wall of Santa Maria delle Grazie, a former Dominican monastery; viewings are by reservation only (in Milan dial 02-89-42-11-46). Side trips are a given, too, to visit 1.) the Teatro alla Scala, where Verdi established his reputation and Maria Callas warbled her way into opera lore; and 2.) the dazzling Duomo, where 135 marble spires and 2,245 marble statues were lure enough to convince poet Percy Bysshe Shelley it was the most *primo* place in all Italy to read and contemplate Dante.

Don't get me wrong. I'm here in Milan to worship at the house of Armani as well. And Missoni. And not to forget Prada Uomo. A map of the best boutiques is posted on a pole at the corner of Via della Spiga and via Borgospesso, so there's no chance of losing my way to Trussardi for a perfect white poplin shirt, a chalkstripe wool suit, a soft leather parka. Before maxing out my accounts, of course, I'll pop into Dmagazine (Via Monte Napoleone 26); this, a designer seconds outlet, sells last season's designs (some lovely lingerie for my love?) at a snippet of the original price. There's even a flea market every third Saturday on Via Fiori Chiari; given that the Milanese, down to each well-coifed, sleekly chic person, ooze style or die, who knows what famous designer finds lie here – a beautiful Bottega Veneta bag for my baby? An enviable Etro leather something for me?

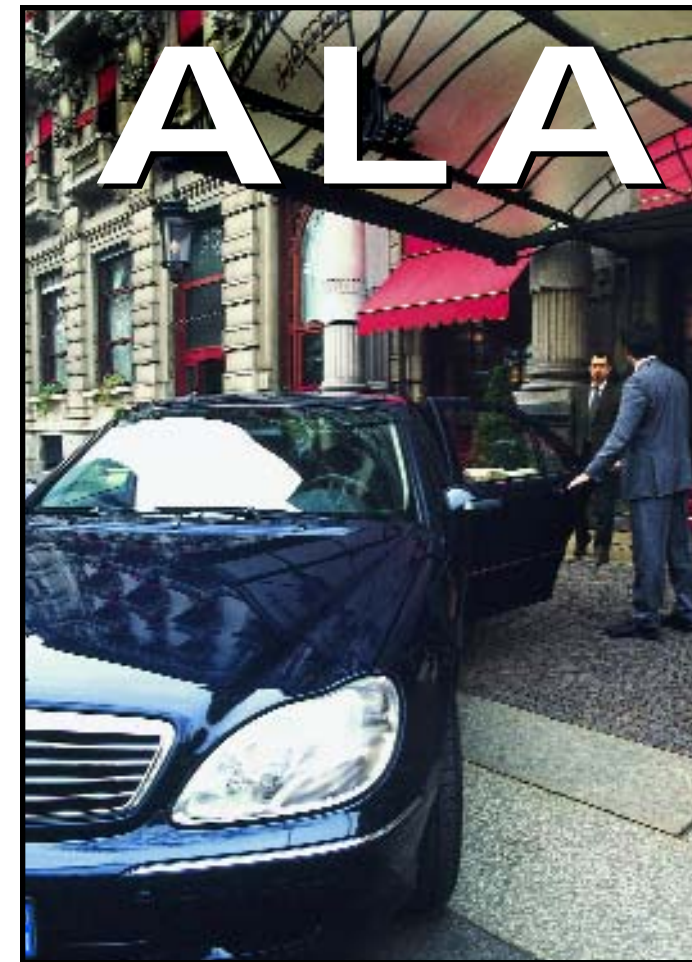
*No one I know will end up sporting any of the get-ups those poor saps had to strut down the runway – fashion for the freaks! But it was an absolute pleasure to see [in Milan] some designers who stuck to what men would traditionally be seen wearing.*

– Austin Silver,  
fashion commentator of Askmen.com

The Milan shows may be where fashion gets its catwalk kicks with controversy, inciting *fashionistas* worldwide to gleefully get wicked – to wit, this cattiness from commentator Silver: *Gucci reverted to the bad boy image that Marlon Brando was noted for before he packed on 10,000 pounds. But I'm no fool. I see beneath the play to the enduring style that fits this city like a sprayed-on pair of Dolce & Gabbana jeans – and if I don't sport it already I can shop to acquire it...how cool!*

*Oh, honey, trust me: that Pilot Michael? Such utter great taste!*

For information on travel to Milan, visit [www.alltravelitaly.com](http://www.alltravelitaly.com).



## Limousine Association

*Your trust in exchange of our seriousness*

ALA has a fleet of 286 Luxury Vehicles throughout Italy with offices in downtown Milan and at the Malpensa International Airport. Our drivers speak English and French to meet the needs of an International Clientele. ALA offers 25 years of experience and the resources to perform any kind of requested assignment, *all at reasonable prices.*

### ALA Limousine Association

Via del Bollo, 8

I - 20123 Milano

E-mail: [info@ala.to](mailto:info@ala.to)

[www.ala.to](http://www.ala.to)

Phone: 39 02 86 45 0010

Fax: 39 02 72 00 3036

Toll-free: 39 800 90 4430



### LINATE AIRPORT (LIML)

#### AIRPORT DATA

Elevation: 353'  
Runways: 18L/36R 8,005' 18R/36L 1,969'  
Approaches: ILS, VOR/DME  
ATIS / ASOS: 39.02.756.119

#### FIXED BASE OPERATIONS / FUEL / SERVICES

Universal Aviation 39.02.7020.0424

#### TRANSPORTATION

ALA Limousine 39.02.86.45.0010  
Contact FBO for taxi and rental cars  
39.02.7020.0424

#### AIRPORT RESTAURANTS

Several restaurants located at the terminal

#### AIRPORT LODGING

Grand Hotel Duomo 0039.02.88.33  
Melià Milano Hotel & Convention Centre  
0039.02.44.406  
Milan Marriott Hotel 0039.02.48.521

