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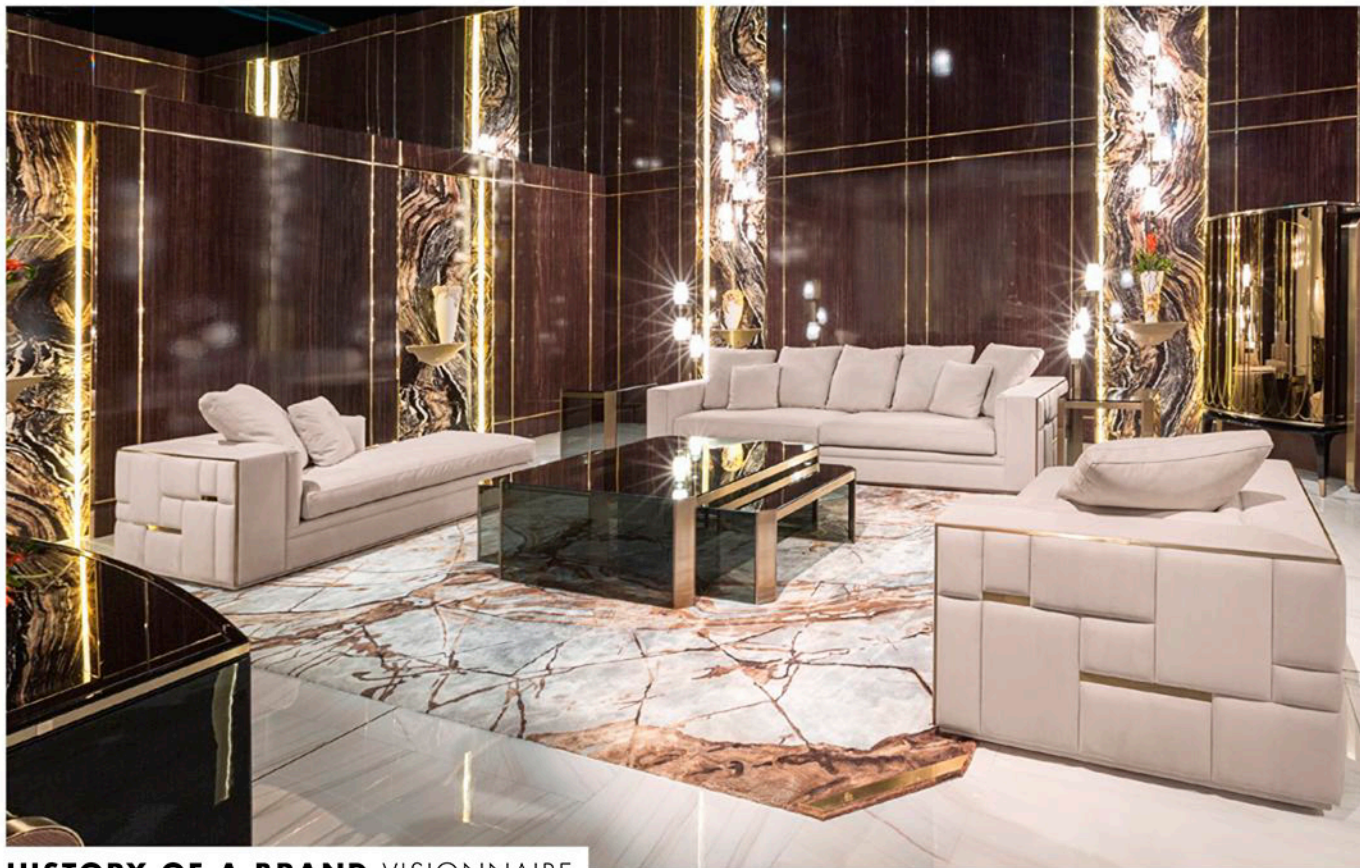
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HEARST



HISTORY OF A BRAND VISIONNAIRE

This purveyor of Italian luxury is more than a furniture brand, extending its reach to interior design, hotels and even private jets

It seems appropriate that some of Italian design brand Visionnaire's most high-profile projects should be in the world of travel, styling the interiors of yachts and private planes, for its origins also lie in this sphere. The company was founded in 1959 in Zola Predosa, on the outskirts of Bologna, by brothers Pompeo and Vittorio Cavalli, and specialised in making padded seating for Lancia cars. They christened their firm IPE, an acronym for *imbottiture prodotti espansi* (expanded padded products). Its technology for moulding polyurethane, a new-generation plastic, was regarded as groundbreaking.

Realising that their method could revolutionise furniture construction, the brothers launched their first interiors collection in 1961. However, it was Vittorio Cavalli's son Luigi and Luigi's children, Leopold and Eleonore, who

Influences and styles may differ, but opulence is a constant across Visionnaire's collection

created the brand as we know it now. The company, renamed in 2004, now includes more than 2,000 items in its furniture collection. Influences differ, from the boxy, 1970s-style of the 'Babylon' sofa (above), whose padded form pays tribute to the brand's heritage, to the Art Deco look of the 'Bradley' bed. Opulence, however, is a constant. Personalising spaces is also key – Visionnaire has designed a number of private homes from top to toe, as well as the interiors of hotels and restaurants around the world. 'Our clients love to collect unique, handcrafted pieces,' says Leopold Cavalli, explaining why the brand has its own art collection to complement its furniture, carpets and lighting. You can experience the art at its showroom in Milan's Piazza Cavour, which also boasts a coffee bar and a gallery, aptly named the Wunderkammer (cabinet of curiosities). Can't make it to Milan? Visit the new Visionnaire store at Harrods, London to experience its art, furniture and accessories. visionnaire-home.com; harrods.com

DID YOU KNOW? VISIONNAIRE FACTS

1 The brand has 24 stores around the world, in cities such as Miami, Moscow and Beijing, as well as more unexpected locations, from Baku to Tehran.

2 Among its best-selling designs in 2017 were the 'Bastian' sofa (right), a linear design with slim arms and contrast piping, and the 'Emotion' bedroom, which includes a statement padded headboard with integrated display shelves and bedside storage.



3 In 2013, Visionnaire unveiled its design for a 12-seater Dornier private jet, kitted out entirely in its own furnishings and finishes, enhanced by futuristic lighting effects.

4 Inspired by the idea of green spaces as a modern luxury, Visionnaire's latest designs focus on eco-friendly materials. The 'Sunny' outdoor collection is made using Materiko, a polymorphic resin that can replicate any surface found in nature. Derived from plants, it is 100 per cent recyclable.

5 The company has designed hotel interiors around the world, including The Reverie Saigon hotel in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (left). Here, the brand showed its flair by decorating a suite in pure, plush white and Calacatta marble, with a polished gold spiral staircase at the centre.

