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A ROOM WITH A VIEW:

Salvatore Ferragamo

Beyond the Business

of shoes

SHARE

Salvatore Ferragamo

BEYOND THE BUSINESS OF SHOES

Salvatore Ferragamo is synonymous with innovation, elegance and class. Once just a footwear brand, the Ferragamo empire today has evolved into a dream house of clothing, fashion accessories, fragrances and eyewear. Earlier this year Kempinski Hotels announced a strategic partnership with the power house to make travel experiences that much more luxurious as Salvatore Ferragamo takes Fashion-Branding to the next level

By: Luigi Irazuqui

Salvatore Ferragamo could not have dreamt that the little store he opened at his parent's store near Naples would become the phenomenon that it is today. But not many people know his connection to Hollywood. By moving to Boston in 1914 to work at a cowboy boot factory he gained experience in shoe making, and with knowledge in hand, Salvatore moved to California where Hollywood welcomed him with his gorgeous made-to-measure shoes in his "Hollywood Boot Shop". In a short time he became the "Shoemaker to the Stars" and iconic celebrities of the time insisted to wear his hand crafted one of a kind creations on film. Inspired by the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922, his Egyptian inspired shoes became all the rage at the time as well as his famous cork wedge heel which became the inspiration for the famous Judy Garland shoes. In fact, Ferragamo has been credited for crafting the iconic ruby red slippers that Garland wore in *The Wizard of Oz*. But Ferragamo knew that he wanted his shoes to be known for more than just their beauty but also comfort. He wanted his shoes to be a "treat for the eye and bliss for the feet". After studying anatomy at USC he made his way back to Florence in 1927 where his celebrity clientele grew to fan icons at the time such as Greta Garbo, the Duchess of Windsor and Gloria Swanson. During WW II he stunned the fashion world by using simple materials to design his shoes such as cork and raffia. His "Invisible Sandal" would win him worldwide accolade. Salvatore Ferragamo had become the "Shoemaker of Dreams".

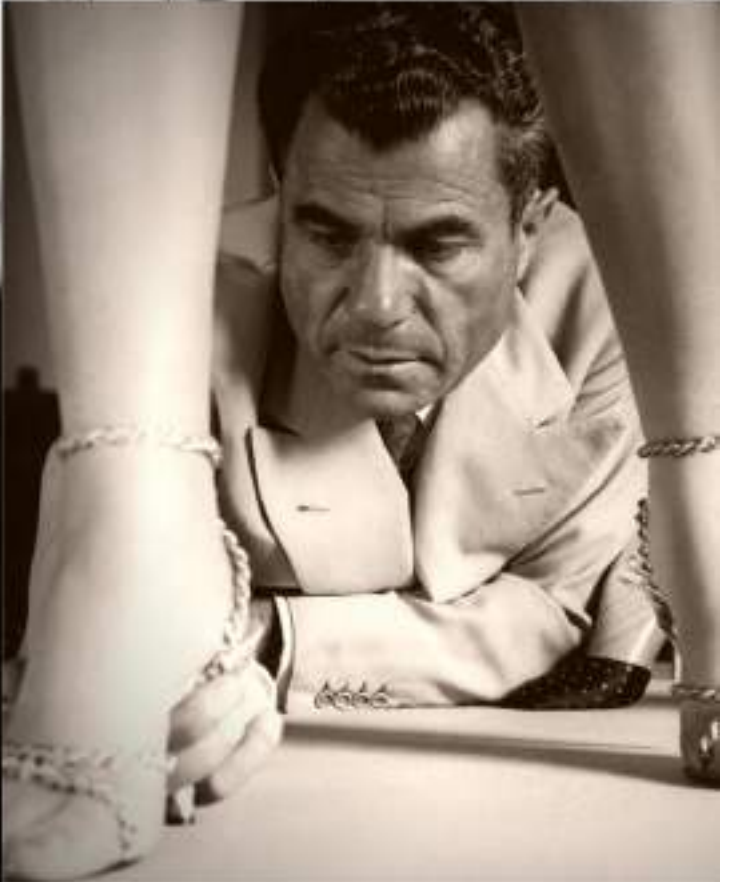
It was Ferragamo's mission to create shoes that fit well and had artistic design. The designer got most of his design inspirations from the famous artists throughout history, and the beautiful architectural buildings in Italy. On his return to Italy Ferragamo sets out to conduct design experiments and inventions to apply for patents. It is at this time that he starts to design for powerful and wealthy women such as Eva Peron and Marilyn Monroe. In 1951, during his first Italian fashion show in Florence; Ferragamo launched the 'Kimo', a sandal with an interchangeable ankle-sock. Three years later, Ferragamo designed one of his most iconic styles; a suede ballerina shoe with a strap, for Audrey Hepburn. This is still today one of the most popular shoes ever created and copied by every shoe designer.

Inspired by Italian symbols, Ferragamo started designing scarves in 1955 followed by bags as well as the first ready-to-wear clothing collection.

Ferragamo was always recognized as a visionary, and his designs ranged from the strikingly bizarre "objet d'art" to the traditionally elegant.

Salvatore Ferragamo remains one of the most innovative shoe designers of the 20th century

Ferragamo lives on as an international company, which has expanded its operations to include luxury shoes, bags, eyewear, silk accessories, watches, perfumes, a ready-to-wear clothing line and now it has set out to reinvent the luxury hospitality experience with its exclusive Lungarno Collection in Florence and Rome.





The Lungarno Collection

HOW THE FERRAGAMOS BUILT THE ULTIMATE HOTEL COLLECTION ON A SHOE LEGACY

By: Luigi Iruazqui
Photos by: Daniel Baseggio

The Lungarno Collection comprises 5 exquisite Uber-luxurious hotels in Florence and 1 in Rome each with its own distinctive personality. With its guest-centric philosophy and the iconic name of Ferragamo behind it, these exclusive boutique hotels range from a modern twist on the classic Italian style to a new eclectic concept in hospitality.

When deciding where to stay we ended up choosing the Portrait Firenze: an all-suite property this is definitely not your regular kind of hotel.

It is an incredibly personal and intimate place: an exclusive space that plays homage to the city that saw the birth of Renaissance, with emphasis on the "Fabulous Fifties" when high fashion, glamour and lifestyle in Florence had a huge surge as witnessed by the Ferragamo brand.

The building was once known as the Grand Hotel Royal de l'Arno dating to the 1200's. The name itself expresses the concept of tailor-made hospitality, as if reflecting the "Portrait" of each individual guest.

Portrait Firenze offers panoramic views of the city and the Arno River, and it is literally 100 feet from the iconic Ponte Vecchio as the photo from our fabulous suite can attest. The interior design of our suite was luxurious, sumptuous yet subtle with soft grey hues, polished surfaces and luscious fabrics Italian style.

The legacy of the Ferragamo family is evident everywhere at Portrait Firenze: warm wooden panels sensual curves, vintage furnishings filled with antiques and sculptures all with a very distinctive Florentine touch.

Known for his sumptuous, residential-style interiors for beloved hotels around the world, the Portrait was designed by Florentine architect and designer Michele Bönan.

The sophisticated, cinematic and ever-so-sexy energy of the Portrait Firenze had us reminiscing on an Italian holiday from days gone by.

The feeling of timeless exclusivity is palpable in every corner of this hotel that won Conde Nast's Reader's Choice Awards in 2021.

It captivated us and has become our favorite "private" space in this fascinating city.





"Historic walks stepping back in time to the Renaissance."





*"At **Caffe' Dell'Oro** the dishes exude our love for Italy and its very unique flavors..."*



“Everyone should live at home like they’re in a hotel...and in a hotel like they’re at home...”



*Michele Bönan
designer*

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