

Superyacht

INTERIOR DESIGN EXTERIOR SPACE CREATIVITY AND ARCHITECTURE



DESIGN

CASE STUDY

Eidsgaard Design comes of age and proves its ability to deliver with 77m M/Y *Tango*.
Page 14

IN BUSINESS

Ed Dubois, perhaps the most successful designer of custom super sailing yachts, on the secrets of his success.
Page 38

FOCAL POINT

“Dive, define and design” is the mantra of newcomer to the yachting industry, Adriana Monk.
Page 44

PERSPECTIVES

Luca Mamiani, founder of Personal Identity, shares his thoughts on what makes for true luxury design.
Page 84



UPCLOSE & PERSONAL

The notion of luxury is as old as civilisation itself, but the way in which our dreams and aspirations are made real is in constant flux. In a world of readily accessible luxury goods where 'premium' is commonplace, where do you look for indulgence? Luca Mamiani, the founder of Personal Identity, believes he has the answer.

Creating that sense of 'specialness'—of being part of something select and exclusive—in a market characterised by an ever growing demand for luxury goods and services has never been harder. Arguably the most intriguing factor in our perception of luxury is the changing nature of our expectations. Luxury in the past has most often been defined on the basis of objects and the value people place on them. Increasingly, however, possession or association with 'things' seems less important as an end than as a means to something else: how those things combine to help create a sense of self. The Romans, who openly debated the ethics of luxury, were the first to hint at this idea by stating that there is a natural limit to luxury, beyond which we fail to be satisfied. Today, luxury is better defined as an expression of individuality, through the unique and highly personal experience that luxuries help provide.

Luca Mamiani, a young entrepreneur from Parma, Italy, latched on to this idea while holidaying on the Costa Smeralda in Sardinia. A chance meeting with an influential Saudi Arabian at the opening of an art exhibition led him to ponder the nature of luxury for the very wealthy who have everything. He homed in on the concept of personal identity and how this can be expressed in graphic form. Having already established a graphic design studio focused on creative branding for several multinational corporations, he founded Personal Identity six years ago to provide an analogous yet completely unique service.

"The role of graphic design in establishing corporate identity is well established, but no one has done the same when it comes to the personal identity of private individuals," he explains. "Almost by accident, I had come across an unexplored niche: the creation of personal graphic identities as the highest expression of distinction and exclusiveness."

Although the niche Mamiani had stumbled across was indeed unexplored, it was also the logical outcome of our changing perceptions as consumers. Because if luxury is more and more defined in terms of personal fulfilment and customisation of experience, then consumers will no longer be content to select from the standard range of luxury goods. This implies a parallel universe of luxury products and services—all of which are waiting to be discovered and defined.

Mamiani and his team of graphic designers started by creating personalised emblems or logos, not unlike the heraldic crests of old, for a select series of clients. The design process began by analysing their private histories, values, emotions and memories to produce a graphic synthesis of what distinguished them from anyone else—in short, everything that made those individuals unique. Once created, the logo was incorporated into objects and accessories around the home, from bed and table linen to

stationery, leather goods, ceramics or glassware. It wasn't long, however, before the service expanded to cover not just the clients' homes, but also their private jets, their children, even their pets (Mamiani recently received a request from America to create a personal logo for a pet peacock), and latterly their yachts.

One aspect of yacht design that Mamiani picks up on is how the graphic representation of the boat's name is often left up to the shipyard or the exterior designer to devise—something yacht owners would never dream of doing in the case of their corporate logos. A seemingly minor detail, but one that begs the following question: what can the specialist service provided by Personal Identity bring to the table that other designers cannot?

"At first I didn't think it would be difficult to create a personal logo, given our experience in corporate packaging, but that wasn't the case," admits Mamiani. "Graphic design is an integral part of the world of communication and marketing, but a personal emblem is very different from a product or company logo. A corporate logo has to conform to market perceptions and consumer expectations—a mission statement in graphic form, if you like, which is decided by top management and aimed at the mass market. A personal emblem, on the other hand, draws much more on the individual's aesthetic, creative and cultural preferences. In fact, the approaches are so different I employ different graphic designers to work on the two tasks."

Before visiting Mamiani at his headquarters on the outskirts of Parma, we were under the impression that his company service amounted to simply designing and applying personalised logos to home, jet or yacht interiors. We were wrong. It soon became

"A personal emblem, on the other hand, draws much more on the individual's aesthetic, creative and cultural preferences."

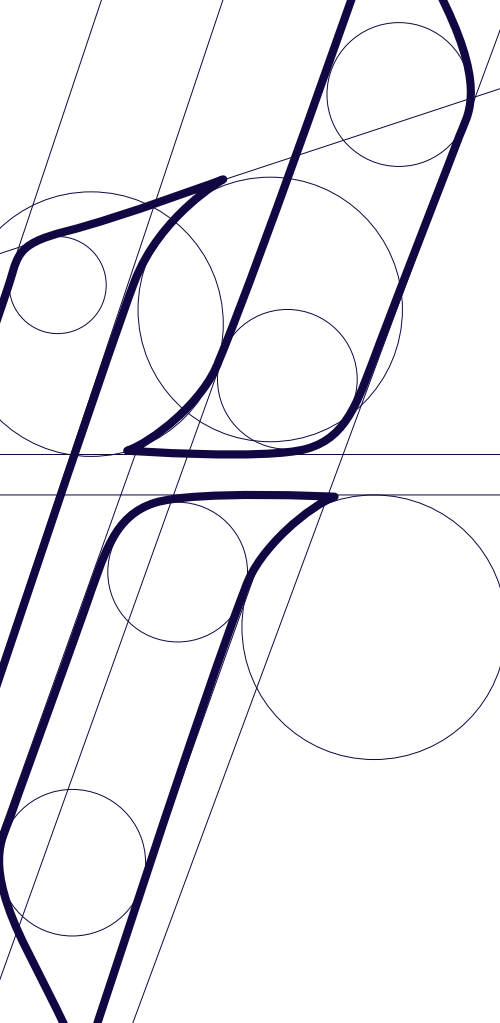
clear that creating the visual identity for the project, be it a 15th-century residence or a 21st-century superyacht, is only the start of the process. Mamiani explained the creative procedure, which involves a curious mixture of graphic and interior design, by way of the watercolour sketches in the beautifully packaged portfolios he presents to his clients. Once the emblem or logo has been finalised, the next step is deciding how and where the design is to be utilised. This varies from project to project, but instead of simply printing the logo on to an off-the-shelf porcelain dinner service, for example, each and every plate or dish is designed from scratch then individually decorated by hand and fired in the kiln. No other dinner service like it exists in the world. ▶



EASY BLUE BALTIC YACHTS



EMILIO BIANCHI

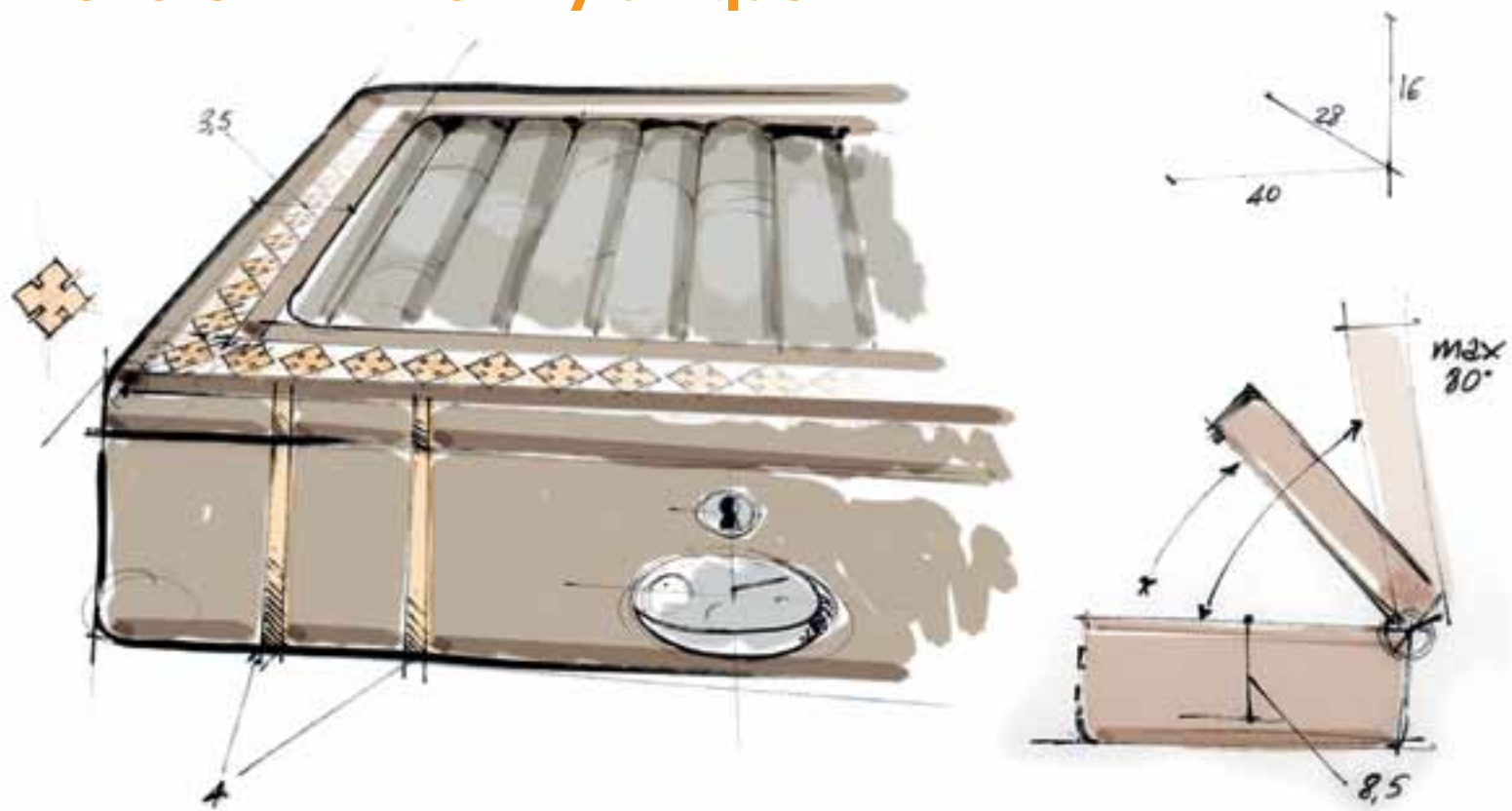


MODEL TENDER MADE OF
CASHMERE FOR S/Y EASY BLUE





“What makes us different from any other luxury brand is that everything we produce is a one-off and totally unique.”





Nudine Tornabuoni

"One of the first things I did when I set up Personal Identity was to create a supplier list of the finest artisans in Italy working in ceramics or glass, leather or linen," says Mamiani. "What makes us different from any other luxury brand is that everything we produce is a one-off and totally unique."

To illustrate the ultra-bespoke nature of the service he provides, Mamiani pointed out an exquisite cosmetics box fashioned from birch burl that was supplied to a Middle Eastern client for use in the bathrooms aboard six family-owned Airbus jets. The birch wood had to match the panelling of the existing interior, while the compartments were specifically designed to hold the client's favourite products from Molton Brown, Hermès and Bulgari. In addition, Personal Identity was given just one week to deliver a consignment of 40 such holders.

For the Italian owner of the Baltic 62' *Easy Blue*, the company created not just the yacht's logo, incorporating the design into interior accessories such as the cushions and stationary, but also commissioned one of its specialist suppliers to produce a scale model of the yacht's tender in cashmere and saddle-stitched leather, complete with actual livery, for use as a *portaoggetti*. Moreover, accompanying the model is a bespoke, anti-static brush to keep it clean of dust. With practicality on a heeling boat in mind, the owner also requested a crockery service made from melamine. This presented a problem insofar as the yacht logo could not be hand-painted on to the thermosetting plastic, so for the only product produced by an industrial process that Personal Identity has supplied to date, they hunted down the one manufacturer of melamine still active in Italy (most is imported from China) to individually mix the polymers and make the moulds.

Other projects include a complete range of individually monogrammed, leather travel bags and cases for the owner of a well-known 105m superyacht, intended for use while travelling to and from the yacht. Personal Identity has also been tasked with developing the basic exterior design of a 70m motoryacht, together with the logo and livery for the client's Boeing Dreamliner 787 jet. The company's most recent commission is from the South American owner of a 56m yacht.

If Hermès or Bulgari cosmetics are not quite up to scratch, then Personal Identity will ask its own herbalist and parfumeur contacts to develop bespoke products based on the client's preferred ingredients. For the Italian owner of a superyacht chain with a childhood passion for spinning tops, Personal Identity produced 50 different tops made from various precious woods, each hand-turned and carrying the



LUCA MAMIANI

client's personal logo on its presentation pedestal, which he gifts to friends and business acquaintances. On client request, the company has also developed a non-PMS (Pantone Matching System) colour it calls Blue Aurora, and even produced an exclusive packaging and filling for tortellini pasta for the owner of a country villa in the Franciacorta region of northern Italy. Other bespoke products include handcrafted, monogrammed clothes hangers made from wenge-tinted ebony (the company recently received an order for 800 such hangers for a private residence) and bed linen or cashmere blankets with a personal logo woven into the fabric using a patented pure gold yarn.

Although all these products are undoubtedly luxurious, Mamiani rarely uses the word 'luxury' in conversation, preferring to focus on the beauty and quality of the objects. Moreover, he cautions against taking the 'Made in Italy' slogan too literally, drawing a distinction between those products designed in Italy but manufactured elsewhere, and the much rarer kind supplied by Personal Identity that are Italian-made from concept to completion.

"None of our clients talk of 'luxury', which is a term that has lost much of its significance through overuse by the market," he points out. "Uniqueness and authenticity are what our clients are looking for. They want to be able to have something that they—and only they—own as an expression of their personal identity." ■