

Looking Back on Milan Fashion Week

Kayla Pantano (September 27, 2016)



A recap of the six-day event, where Italian designers paid homage to heritage while heralding innovation.

[Milan Fashion Week](#) [2] commenced with a lunch hosted by Prime Minister [Matteo Renzi](#) [3], which instilled a further sense of purpose into the leading Italian designers, who were already eager to reveal their cherished designs. Manifesting that same energy, the six-day event closed with a spotlight on emerging designers, whose looks emanated youth and adventure.

Overall, key collections debuted in Milan embodied heritage and zeitgeist. A blend of timelessness and trendy vibes, this season was filled with jaw-breaking innovation that drew on history and imagination. The highlights include an abundance of couture performance gear, heaps of floral, and glitter, of course.

Day 1



[Gucci \[4\]](#) kicked things off with a fantasy-filled collection rich in colors, fabrics, and prints, featuring embroidery reminiscent of a fairytale and accessories just as whimsical as the clothes, from floppy hats to square and sequined eyewear. Creative director [Alessandro Michele \[5\]](#)'s bohemian aesthetic shifted to favor a more punk look that veered through the eras, which included inspirations from the beloved 1970s, evident in the denim bell-bottoms and slim jackets.

Needless to say, the reference point of [Peter Dundas \[6\]](#) at [Roberto Cavalli \[7\]](#) was also the '70s. But with a pioneering spirit in mind his mélange of influences, from Buffalo Soldier to Victoriana, takes you all around the globe. An exciting mix of the brand's go-to flared pants, fringed kimonos, concha belts, beaded purses, and Native American tribal jewelry, your eyes can't stop moving up and down the models perched on wooden clogs and dressed in bright and varied hues.

Day 2

[Max Mara \[8\]](#)'s show was infused with the modernist approach of Italian architect and designer, [Lina Bo Bardi \[9\]](#). The house's classic tailoring coexist with the collection's sporty twist, featuring hooded jackets, corset-topped onesies, jumpsuits, visors, and slip-on clogs. Safari greenery and exotic animal prints dominated the color palette, as well as head-to-toe monochromatic looks in black, white, blue, orange, and yellow.

[Karl Lagerfeld \[10\]](#) of [Fendi \[11\]](#) also designed with sportswear and street-wear in mind. However, he combined the cultural trends with playful pinks, delicate florals, bow motifs, porcelain prints, wispy materials, cupcake sleeves, and boudoir layers, resulting in a ready-to-wear collection with a dreamlike feel. Models donned metallic lips, striped crop-tops, neon knits, and vintage football pants, and completed the look with for-the-field inspired shoes with a curved, striped heel paired with athletic socks.

[Miuccia Prada \[12\]](#) debuted [Prada \[13\]](#)'s collection in collaboration with Oscar-nominated director, [David O. Russell \[14\]](#), whose short film screened during the show. She fused 50's shapes, 70's colors, and '90s minimalism to create bold and print-heavy clothes in contrast to the models' simple, uniform hairstyles and barely-there makeup. She incorporated pajama-inspired trousers, bomber jackets, box-pleated skirts, waist belts, and feathered edges, many of which in retro, clashing prints, matched with flats.

Day 3

[Giorgio Armani \[15\]](#) dubbed his collection "Charmani" and subtly weaved multicultural references, from African beadwork to Indian sarong skirts, into the house's calm and neutral style. Shots of red and lots of gray spiced up the signature blues, but fringe was the star of the show. From the straps of bags to the arms and hems of his timeless blazers and evening coats, he tweaked the classics for an extra pop of elegance and sensuality.

Donatella [Versace \[16\]](#) opened the show with a sporty flair, featuring runway stars, such as [Naomi Campbell \[17\]](#), dressed in green, purple, and blue windbreakers, color-blocked leggings, parachute-like dresses, and tailored power suits. Using the same lightweight nylon, she reinvented red carpet wear with easy-to-move-in cocktail dresses and high-slit skirts. From thinly pleated creations to dynamic patterns with the brand's fret motif, the multi-faceted collection epitomes a sexy, modern, woman.

Day 4

To celebrate the brand's 50th anniversary, [Bottega Veneta \[18\]](#) shied away from grand gestures and paid homage to their craftsmanship, focusing simply on the clothes. The first time creative director [Tomas Maier \[19\]](#) showed women's and men's wear together, he recreated 15 bags from the archives, flattering, glossy leather shirtdress and coats for the ladies, and 1950s-esque leather jackets for the guys, worn with colorful polo sweaters and pleated pants. Before his runway bow alongside his teary-eyed team, legendary model and actress, [Lauren Hutton \[20\]](#), stunned the crowd as she strutted alongside [Gigi Hadid \[21\]](#) in hues that complimented their skin tone, hair, and age.



Day 5

The [Dolce & Gabbana \[22\]](#) “Tropico Italiano” themed show, on the other hand, was an extravagant affair front-lined with millennial bloggers and celebrity kids alike. Break-dancers opened and closed the show, and models dazzled in sequins, studs, flowers, and pearls during all the moments in between. The collection itself was an ode to the South’s seaside cuisine, featuring items like a hessian-bag dress with a can of tomatoes painted on it. From signature wiggle dresses to light up LED heels and headpieces, closing with a finale of souvenir Dolce & Gabbana T-shirts, the collection was designed to share amongst Generation Z.

[Consuelo Castiglioni \[23\]](#) at [Marni \[24\]](#) utilized her idiosyncratic outlook to create an artsy aesthetic, featuring neutrals and her trademark prints and jewelry, along with large poacher-pocket bags for an added sculptural note. Unconventionally chic proportions were apparent in her ivory and khaki sleek trenches with billowing pockets, sophisticated tops with oversized sleeves, and skirts with arched hemlines. Apart from the finale of all-black paneled dresses and tops, colored pieces included a raspberry pleated plissé dress and a spearmint green military-style suit, along with an array of florals and gentle geometrics.

Currently in between designers, [Salvatore Ferragamo \[25\]](#) dove into the 80s with a 21st century take on femininity and sportswear. Big shoulders and high-waisted pants in techno fabrics provided for a fun flash to the past with a modern twist. Floral dresses offered a dainty feel, balanced out with crisp, slim suits in solid colors, while the shoes, like chunky wedges with crocheted socks, played up the sporty vibe.

Day 6

Thirty-year-old Sicilian [Salvatore Piccione \[26\]](#) of [Piccione Piccione \[27\]](#) explored the fragile transition from adolescence to adulthood through marine motifs. Shell prints, pearled fringe, and fishnet stockings on chiffon and silk fabrics, matched with a mix of golden stilettos and flat slippers, personified the themes of change and evolution that are inherent in growing up.

Three cities down and one to go: Ciao, Milano, Bonjour, Paris!

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