Zegna unveils new logo, launches techy Zegna Outdoor capsule collection

By Godfrey Deeny - 3 December 2021

Zegna may have just celebrated its 110th anniversary, but this is one brand that keeps on evolving.

This Friday, the Italian luxury marque will unveil its latest collection, a Zegna Outdoor Capsule, and also launch a brand-new logo. The double move coming in the same month as its parent company, the Ermenegildo Group, begins listing on the New York Stock Exchange.
Conceived by Zegna's creative director Alessandro Sartori, the new all-caps logo gets to the heart of the brand’s DNA - blending technology with craftsmanship; intersecting uber-quality with elegant style.

The new capsule harks back to the very origins of house, founded by 18-year-old entrepreneur Ermenegildo Zegna in 1910. That's the name the house had been known as since WWII. From now on, the marque will be branded as simply Zegna; and blessed with new packaging.

“It was very important to go to one brand and one logo. Removing ‘Ermenegildo’ and going to one name made it all more coherent. This way, everything links back to this new statement of Zegna. Where luxury leisure wear and elevated sportwear is at center of our offer,” explained Sartori in a Zoom from his design studio in Milan.

Business-wise, despite Covid, Zegna is certainly in ruddy health. In a buoyant first half of 2021, Ermenegildo Zegna saw sales soar 49.9% to €603 million, as the company returned to profit with net income of €32 million. This fall, Zegna is raising some $880 from the sale of stock in its Wall Street flotation, which values the group at $3.2 billion and will still leave the family holding a 62% stake.

Historically, this house has gone through several name changes. Back in the ‘30s it was known as Fratelli Zegna di Angelo, before becoming Ermenegildo Zegna, as a new generation took over. Now, with CEO Gildo Zegna part of a third generation; and a fourth generation rising through the ranks, rebranding the house as just Zegna makes the logo look sharper, faster and easier to remember.
This Friday, Sartori will also break new ground by launching the bold new Zegna Outdoor Capsule Collection – a sleek encounter of high-altitude ski gear; stylish country weekend looks, and sleek inner-city winter clobber.

“It was very important for us to work with lighter and fresher fabrics I wanted to offer these technical qualities and elevate the craft of Zegna. With high performance fabrics used in ski suits; or pure cashmere done in a winter puffer; or hoodies made using 12-micron fabrics,” added Sartori.

Nearly every look contains technical innovations. Normally active sport, skiing and hiking clothing is made or nylon, but to elaborate their concept Zegna have been able to use cashmere or vicuna. Plus, the house has developed new, ultra-light interior layers of bonding – sourced from regenerative sources, so you don’t feel there is a membrane inside. Quilting is made of recycled fabrics or second-generation down.

The meeting between technology and top-shelf materials dates back to Ermenegildo’s policy begun in the ’20s of buying the very best yarns from as far afield as Mongolia and South Africa. Or investing in modern English machinery, helping to win the house the reputation as a unique supplier of rare fabrics, something it has never lost.

Born in the Biellese Alps of Piedmont, Ermenegildo was ecologically minded decades before the term was invented. He built Road 232 – which runs from Zegna’s hometown of Trivero to Biella, the world’s most important city for producing of silk fabrics – a route that twists through the high mountains. And he gradually acquired an immense nature reserve there, known as Oasi Zegna, 100 square kilometers sprawling over multiple hills and mountains where he planted over 500,000 Alpine pine trees and other species.
Ale, as most people know him, has been skiing since he was knee-high and hits the slopes regularly in nearby Courmayeur. Though he has also taken his creative squad on a team-building hikes in Oasi Zegna, an experience echoed in a great lookbook and ad campaign for the capsule. Shot by the great South African photographer Koto Bolofo, whose work has graced Vogue, Vanity Fair, The New York Times and Numéro, and who has shot campaigns for the likes of Burberry, Hermès and Louis Vuitton.

“It’s a pretty amazing shoot, more done with an editorial slant than a classic shoot. Koto is very sharp, and we roamed around in the snow, looking for special angles and vistas. We woke up at 5pm each morning to be at the top of mountain at 7pm! All shot in the last snow of the season back in April, mostly in Oasi Zegna,” enthuses Sartori.

These past few months, Zegna has also been busy on complimentary collabs, seen in multiple natty elements in the shoot. With Kask, Zegna designed a new customized version of the iconic Piuma-R ski helmet in black and cinnamon-hued vicuna; with Zai, robust performance black skis. La Sportiva from Trentino partnered to make hyper-breathable trail running and mountaineering shoes, while Sigg created a black aluminum drinking bottle.

Besides that, Zegna has been busy opening new stores, notably in Boston and New York, built with a new modular systems, allowing great flexibility in terms of collection choice and seasonality. In New York, Zegna recently unveiled Zegna Lab, a dynamic space on Lafayette Street with changing limited-edition collections and immersive experiences where clients can play vintage vinyls, selected by Sartori. Important spaces for this new capsule, which is conceived as multi-purpose.

“This is not just about skiing but also walking and hiking – and blending into city style. We have located this collection in luxury leisure – everything made in very high-quality materials, while working our key color cards – off white, mid-gray and vicuna,” explains Sartori.

The designer intends to take his next bow after Zegna’s planned show on Friday, January 14 in Milan, the opening day of the Italian menswear catwalk season.

While Zegna Outdoor launches worldwide this Friday in about 30 flagships including Moscow, Shanghai, Milan and New York; in wholesale accounts, including a series of pop-ins and pop-ups; an in e-commerce, notably in China with Tencent and e-Mall.
May the road rise up to meet them.

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