

# Wallpaper\*

\*Architecture | Design | Art | Travel | Entertaining | Beauty & Grooming | Transport | Technology | Fashion | Watches & Jewellery    DECEMBER 2022

## LET'S GET TOGETHER

Sumptuous feasts, top-tier hospitality  
and timely tokens of affection  
in our annual Entertaining Special



**Vincent Van Duysen's  
pavilion for Molteni & C**

**Vegetable, forest, ocean:  
inside Noma's new cookbook**

**Ryuichi Sakamoto's  
pioneering music and art**

**Atelier Bow-Wow's minimalist  
Mediterranean hideaway**



Design

# Cloistered existence

Vincent Van Duysen's pavilion for Molteni HQ offers  
a sleek and secluded spot for social engagements

PHOTOGRAPHY: STEFAN GIFTTHALER  
WRITER: ROSA BERTOLI





Above, from left, Andrea Molteni, vice president of Molteni & C, Vincent Van Duysen, creative director of Molteni & C, Giulia Molteni, chief marketing officer of Molteni Group, and Giovanni Molteni, vice president of Molteni & C, photographed at the Giussano HQ

Opposite, the entrance that leads visitors to a new pavilion designed by Van Duysen

The Molteni & C compound in Giussano, 30km north of Milan, evolves constantly, making it a fitting representation of the furniture behemoth. Home to its HQ and factory since 1934, the compound is also an architectural treasure trove, where Molteni's creative collaborators have left their marks over the years. Examples include Ron Gilad's 2014 Glass Cube, which was recently transformed into the Molteni Museum (W\*255), and Patricia Urquiola's 2006 Spazio Q alla M (a multimedia centre dedicated to the company's past and future), as well as a four-storey 1950s showroom, designed by Luca Meda with elements by Aldo Rossi, with whom he often collaborated.

'The compound is a testament to the history of Molteni & C and the great names of design and architecture that have worked with the company,' says Molteni's chief marketing officer Giulia Molteni.

Molteni & C has now unveiled a new chapter in the compound's architectural history with a pavilion complex by its creative director, Belgian designer Vincent Van

Duysen, adding a hospitality element to the brand experience. The starting point for the design, which is Van Duysen's first architectural project for Molteni, was Meda and Rossi's showroom, which is punctuated on one side by a discreet colonnade. Those columns inspired the pavilion, which is designed to serve as a reception area and restaurant and hospitality space surrounded by cloistered gardens. The ground floor of the showroom has also been redesigned and has since been dubbed the Luca Meda Room, in honour of the designer's work as Molteni's creative director from 1968 until his death in 1998. Meda was instrumental in the company's transformation from being a traditional maker of classic furniture to a global contemporary design brand.

When Van Duysen joined the company in 2016, the scope of the collaboration was to merge his minimalist rigour with a Mediterranean flavour, something he has demonstrated over the years with products and interiors. 'Molteni is interested in seeing its pieces come alive in the context of architecture, placing them within a much »





This picture, the reception area features an 'Elain' armchair, 'Cleo' coffee tables, a 'Paul' sofa, two 'Yoell' armchairs and a 'Stripe' rug, all by Vincent Van Duysen, for Molteni & C  
Below, a column-lined walkway

## **‘The pavilion has a lot of respect for the existing building. It represents Molteni’s determination to create a holistic, all-round experience’**

broader cultural aura,’ says Van Duysen. ‘This interaction and synergy between architecture and furniture relates to the art of living in a very modern way.’

The designer feels that the new building blends well with the original 1950s architecture. ‘It’s a continuation of that language that I took over in a modern but not obstructive way. It has a lot of respect for the existing building. The extension represents Molteni’s determination to create a holistic, all-round experience.’

The design encompasses a series of covered walkways, lined with thin black columns, that lead visitors around the complex, from the security check-in area to the reception and restaurant and to the ground-floor showroom. The cloistered gardens are by Italian landscape architect Marco Bay, who created a discreet composition, mixing textures and heights to express the idea of nature evolving over time. The outdoor spaces will also be used



to showcase the brand’s outdoor furniture collections, launching next year.

The restaurant will be a key aspect of the pavilion, and will form an innovative approach for Molteni & C: overlooking the gardens, the space is both minimal and warm, featuring glass and concrete, with light oak walls. ‘The collaboration with Vincent has always followed the evolution of living,’ says Giulia Molteni. ‘Since the pandemic, we have deemed it a necessity to reach a simplicity of forms, shedding the superfluous and looking to incorporate warmth, lightness and attention to detail.’

Everything in the space was designed by Van Duysen, from the benches inspired by his ‘Paul’ sofa to new tables designed for the occasion and the ‘Janet’ chairs, a 2022 addition to the Molteni & C catalogue. The architect also conceived the lighting in collaboration with Nemo Lighting.

The restaurant’s details create an atmosphere that reflects the Italian »



## Design



Left and below, the restaurant, set among cloistered gardens, features glass, concrete and oak, as well as furniture designed by Van Duysen, including his new 'Janet' chairs, and table settings selected by Van Duysen and food writer Csaba dalla Zorza

Below left, the entrance to Molteni HQ, with the showroom on the left and the factory straight ahead



approach to hosting, and its interiors 'represent the soul of the company,' explains Giulia Molteni. For the table settings, Molteni & C enlisted Italian food writer and television personality Csaba dalla Zorza, who worked closely with Van Duysen to select objects that connect with his aesthetic vision, while the food offering was entrusted to the Bergamo-based Vicook, a branch of local three-Michelin-starred restaurant Da Vittorio, whose gastronomic offerings include Italian classics such as *paccheri al pomodoro* (a pasta dish served with generous helpings of slow-cooked tomato sauce and Parmesan) and *coroletta alla Milanese* (deep-fried breaded veal cutlets).

'We are proud to host within our compound a piece of architecture designed by our creative director,' says Molteni Group chairman Carlo Molteni. 'A contemporary addition that is integrated into the historic site and signals the company's path towards the future.' ✱ [molteni.it](http://molteni.it), [vincentvandyusen.com](http://vincentvandyusen.com)