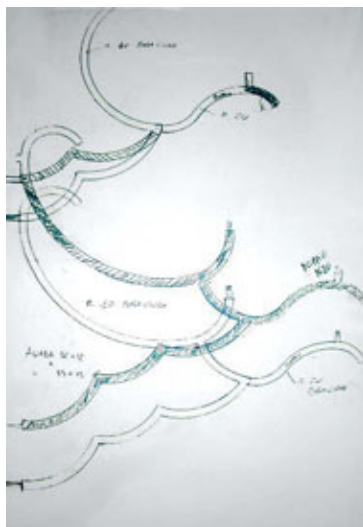


## PORTFOLIO

## MADE IN ITALY

*AD takes a look at three iconic products by design firms that harness classic Italian aesthetics and crafting traditions*

WRITER SAMIR WADEKAR



**Above:** A reference drawing of the chandelier used by the craftsmen in Masiero's factory. **Top right:** The 'Maria Teresa' chandelier can be handcrafted in various sizes and dimensions. **Right:** A component of the chandelier during assembly.

## MASIERO

## 'MARIA TERESA' CHANDELIER

When the lavish 19th-century Prestige Hotel Budapest reopened its doors in 2014 after a major redesign, it chose the stunning Swarovski-crystal-studded 'Maria Teresa' chandelier by Masiero for its main lobby. Since 1981, the company has been handcrafting exquisite lighting products in its factory near Venice for many of the world's best hotels. It takes a team of 10 master craftsmen nearly a week to handcraft a single chandelier. The internal painting department can customize the lighting designs in specific shades and colours. The 'Maria Teresa' uses a patented LED system—a technique that enables the chandelier to recreate different colours and variations of light. "The shape of this magnificent chandelier is inspired by ancient Venetian splendour," says Enrico Maria Masiero, the company's managing director. "This chandelier is made using skills typical of traditional craftsmanship, but manufactured using revolutionary technology. We strive to produce lights that are suspended in time." [masierogroup.com](http://masierogroup.com)



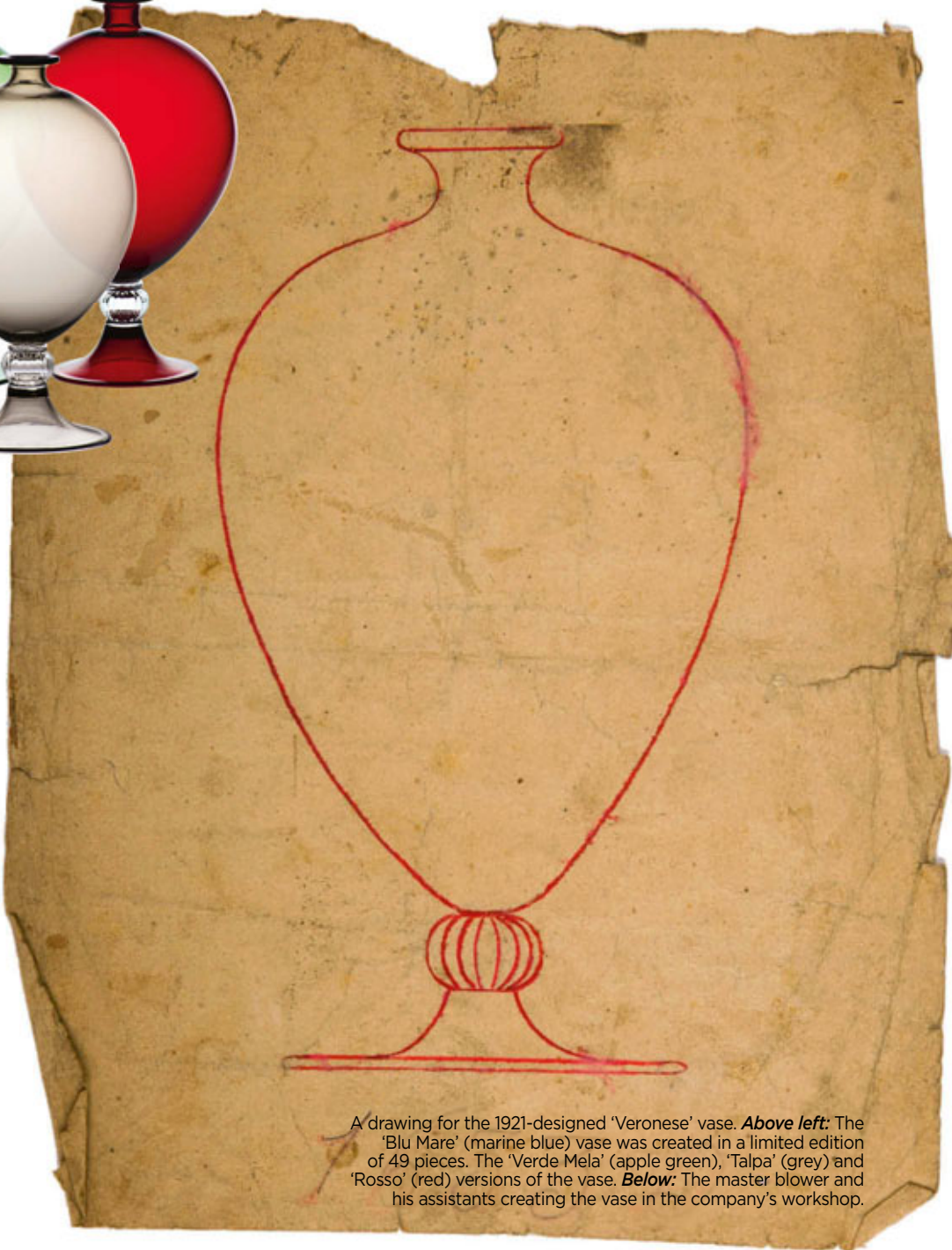




## VENINI

### 'VERONESE' VASE

If one were to grade a company by the people they collaborated with, Venini would get an 'A+'. From Gio Ponti to Tadao Ando, the best minds in design have worked with this Italian brand. Based in Murano, the island famous for its glass-making traditions, Venini was established in 1921. Its then art director Vittorio Zecchin designed the 'Veronese' vase inspired by a vase he saw in the 1578 oil-on-canvas *The Annunciation* by Italian Renaissance painter Paolo Veronese. Ninety-five years later, the vase is still in production, and is now a coveted icon of design. The handblown glass vase takes one master blower and two assistants almost a day to create. The three components of the vase—the base, the small sphere on top of it, and the body—are shaped individually and then joined together. Each piece goes through a laborious quality check before it is given a seal of approval. [venini.com](http://venini.com)



A drawing for the 1921-designed 'Veronese' vase. **Above left:** The 'Blu Mare' (marine blue) vase was created in a limited edition of 49 pieces. The 'Verde Mela' (apple green), 'Talpa' (grey) and 'Rosso' (red) versions of the vase. **Below:** The master blower and his assistants creating the vase in the company's workshop.







## i 4 MARIANI

'WING' CHAIR

Named after the four Mariani brothers—Biagio, Tarcisio, Umberto and Emilio—the 1956-established i 4 Mariani is a third-generation family-run company backed by a formidable team of international designers. The company makes furniture primarily for the home and office from its production facility in the north of Milan. The 'Wing' chair, designed by architect Luca Scacchetti in 2001, is a classic example of the firm's refined Italian aesthetic. Designed with a single seat frame and three curved beech-plywood sections, the swivel chair has leather-covered, CFC-free polyurethane foam. With production time at a mere six hours per piece, i 4 Mariani produces close to 600 'Wing' chairs each year. [i4mariani.com](http://i4mariani.com)



An illustrated rendering of the chair. **Below:** The stitching and application of the leather casing at the i 4 Mariani factory. **Left:** The leather-clad and beech-plywood backed 'Wing' swivel chairs.

