

# SPORTSWEAR

N T E R N A T I O N



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# Relaxation & Charm

**Compagnia Unica open lab, Genova, Via S.Vincenzo 102/104r**

Evolve, therefore I am. Fashion is a game of contrasts and experimentation, and an apparel store should reflect this attitude. At least according to the three fashion insiders behind the new Compagnia Unica open lab - Claudio Ghiglinò and Stefano Petruzzelli, two long-time fashion retailers, and Francesco Sorbino, shop director of one of the six stores owned by the Ghiglinò and Petruzzelli duo. Based in Genua, Northern Italy, an hour and a half drive from Milan, this new shop is a high ceilinged, 800 sq. meter space, that will be redecorated every three or four months. The atmosphere of the place is cool and relaxed, not only thanks to its spaciousness, natural light and tall columns, but also thanks to its clean-lined decor. Walls are white and floors are painted with a mottled, rust-effect finish. Exotic plants and flowers lend an attractive, peaceful note to the store, encouraging passers-by to come in and spend some time. A small pool of water with floating candles adds to the positive atmosphere of this spot. The store's general mood is welcoming and not aggressively aimed at pushing customers to buy at all costs: "Our idea is to create a shop that doesn't display too much merchandise, just a few impressive items," comments Ghiglinò. "It's a way to better focus our clientele on the product and make it possible for them appreciate each item's style, material and details." In fact, according to Ghiglinò, showing too many products together, in great piles of merchandise, is negative for the shop's image as well as confusing for the customer: "Our product offer is purposely not all visible in order to provide an uncluttered ambience," tells Ghiglinò, without making a secret of the fact that, in the beginning, sales personnel needed some training in staying in the background and finding the right sizes and colors. Compagnia Unica open lab actually offers a wide mix of trendy and up-market sportswear labels such as designer second lines and jeans collections by Donna Karan, Paul Smith and Calvin Klein, but also trendy jeanswear such as Miss Sixty, Guess and Levi's Engineered. On the mezzanine level there is a sneaker area, selling brands like Converse All Stars, Gola and Donna Karan footwear. "Our target at present is mostly women aged between 20 and 35," comments Ghiglinò, "although some men are also starting to come in and browse around." In addition to fashion, the shop offers some imported goods such as furniture, fragrances, candles, printed cotton-cloth bags and gadgets from all over the world - attractive products that provide the store with an aura of worldliness. Compagnia Unica open lab is conveniently located on a busy, up-and-coming shopping area of Genua, together with another Compagnia Unica store, which offers designer labels only. <<

Exotic plants, bamboo canes and few clothes on display. This is the relaxed retail concept of the new Compagnia Unica open lab store.

