



## HISTORY OF A BRAND LEMA

*The Italian family business that's mastered the art of made-to-measure modularity*

When brothers Luigi and Enrico Meroni founded Lema – which stands for Luigi Enrico Meroni Arredamenti – in 1970, they already had years of design expertise under their belts. In the 1930s, their father, Angelo Meroni, opened a traditional furniture workshop in Brianza and went on to make a small fortune with a family-run shop in Milan, La Sorgente del Mobile, which turned out high-end designer furnishings. With Lema, the brothers scaled up their craft heritage to an industrial level, calling on the master Italian architect Angelo Mangiarotti to design their first factory. A vast space for the time at 20,000 square metres, it is still used by the company today.

Early on, they teamed up with designer Tito Agnoli on a seemingly simple concept, a modular shelving system named 'Lo Scaffale'. While no longer in production, the range defined Lema's identity – products such as 1995's 'Selecta' shelving system (above) and Piero Lissoni's 'T030' modular units (bottom right) are two direct descendants. Wardrobes debuted in 1981, followed in 1998 by walk-in closets in the sleek 'Novenove' design. Such customised systems became Lema's calling card.

Today, the company is helmed by Angelo Meroni, grandson of the original Angelo, who has taken Lema in new directions and to new heights. Together with iconic Italian designer Piero Lissoni, Lema's art director since 1994, Meroni has worked to diversify the brand's portfolio

to include a broad range of home furnishings and, since 2013, upholstered furniture. The evolution has involved collaborations with a who's who of design, from Neri & Hu and Raw Edges to Spanish up-and-comer David Lopez Quincoces and young Italian designer Chiara Andreatti, who have both created exciting new pieces this year ('Talki' chair and 'Alamo' table, both right). Since 2004, the company has also flexed its design muscles in the contract market, undertaking major projects, such as the interiors of London's Bvlgari Hotel (below left) and the Hôtel Lutetia in Paris.

Lema has done all of this while continually evolving its modular storage systems. The most recent update is the 'Air Cleaning System' for its wardrobes, employing a patented technology that kills bacteria and purifies the air, refreshing everything from shoes to knitwear. Yet, as high-tech and far-reaching as Lema has become, its products are all still thoughtful, elegant and made in Italy. [lemamobili.com](http://lemamobili.com)



## THE EDIT FIVE DESIGNS TO KNOW



New 'Talki' easy chair by Chiara Andreatti, £3,364



'Hangar' walk-in closet, designed by Piero Lissoni in 2011, from £1,150



'Yard' modular sofa system, designed by Francesco Rota in 2014, from £5,580



New 'Air Cleaning System' by Officinadesign Lema, from £2,720 for a wardrobe including the system



New 'Alamo' table by David Lopez Quincoces, £5,668