

TAKE

IT

Enveloping comfort
meets outstanding
durability in
Monica Armani's
new outdoor range,
which feels right
at home in an
Australian setting.

OUTSIDE

Words STEPHANIE HOPE

A LOVE OF DESIGN has always been firmly ingrained in Monica Armani's DNA. She's the daughter of well-known architect Marcello Armani, whose rationalist influence can be seen throughout the northern Italian town of Trento, where Monica was raised. She learnt the ropes working by his side, soaking up his diligent commitment to detail and strong sense of place.

Today, Monica is an established contemporary designer in her own right, producing innovative collections for international brands with her business and life partner, Luca Dallabetta. Recently, the duo's designs formed part of a new outdoor collection showcased at B&B Italia's first-ever outdoor showroom, which opened in collaboration with Space furniture in Sydney's Surry Hills. "The collection was born from the desire to bring the same refinement of indoor

This page Italian designer Monica Armani blends form, innovation and engineering in all her creations.

spaces into the open air," says Monica. "These pieces naturally find their place in Australia, where connection to nature, light and outdoor living is essential."

The collection comprises two alfresco pieces which echo the graceful strength of their indoor iterations: the 'Allure O' outdoor table features a hand-airbrushed stoneware top and a sculptural moulded cement base, while the 'Flair O' outdoor chair consists of a lightweight aluminium frame and base laced with polypropylene ribbons using traditional Italian weaving techniques. "I chose technical materials with exceptional performance, without ever compromising on beauty: every detail is designed to ensure comfort, durability and harmony," says Monica.

Alongside designs by the likes of Antonio Citterio, Piero Lissoni, Patricia Urquiola and Vincent Van Duijsen, Monica's collection sits at the iconic site that once housed much-loved modern Thai eatery Longrain. Sandstone walls, exposed-beam ceilings and views of the tree-lined streets provide a quintessentially Australian backdrop for the global offering, with B&B Italia's signature lightboxes and ornamental screens zoning each collection's dedicated space. "Sydney was the ideal location for this first outdoor showroom," says Leighton Clarke, group CEO at Space. "We are blessed with a lifestyle that's conducive to life outdoors and globally [we] are one of the strongest markets for outdoor furniture. Being able to share the complete collection in a new light is really exciting."

85 Commonwealth St, Surry Hills; spacefurniture.com.au

This page (clockwise from top left) Monica Armani's 'Tesa O' outdoor shade for B&B Italia provides stylish versatility. // The 'Allure O' outdoor table and 'Flair O' outdoor chair by Monica for B&B Italia look right at home in Sydney's new Space outdoor showroom. // Each piece can be customised in a range of colours and materials. // The 'Softage' outdoor sofa by Mario Bellini can also be viewed at the Sydney showroom. // Monica's refined furniture range in situ.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LUCA PROSERPIO