DECORATING

AI-Generated Villa Casa Pratesi Shows How Heritage Brands Can Move With the Times

Linen brand Pratesi engaged Dubai-based AI artist Hajar Ali to envision a dreamlike Italian home freed from physical limitations, where the atelier's luxury designs can be shown off to the max

By Amy Bradford

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Step inside Casa Pratesi, an AI-generated villa where heritage and innovation come together like never before.

Artificial Intelligence is already expanding the boundaries of creativity in architecture and design, and now it has delivered a vision of how it might change the retail landscape: Casa Pratesi, the pioneering new virtual showcase by Italian linen house Pratesi, could transform the way we think about heritage brands, and indeed, how we buy from them.

Created by Dubai-based AI artist Hajar Ali, Casa Pratesi is an idealised Italian villa that exists entirely in the digital realm. Serving as a backdrop for Pratesi's hand-crafted linens, it will appear across the company's media channels, from the online store to lookbooks and social media.

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Though the brand dates back to 1906, when Remigio Pratesi established his business in Florence to cater to the nobility, it has no intention of resting on its laurels. "Pratesi is not tethered to the past," says chief marketing officer Eric Johnson. "We are always looking at ways to elevate our story. This AI-driven campaign is a testament to our commitment to innovation, quality and creativity. The concept of a fabulous Italian villa with no physical limitations or compromises lets us explore possible worlds where the inside is open to the outside, the real is enhanced by the fabulous, and our linens are perfectly at home in a lavish dreamscape."

Ali took Pratesi's concise brief – to create an AI-generated villa aesthetically aligned to its foundational years – and spun it into something magical, that somehow still feels very real. She spent around a month pre-selecting images and painstakingly refining the AI's visualisations. "Strictly speaking, the process of generating images using AI takes almost no time," she explains, "but to get the desired outcome takes a lot of experimentation – anywhere between five to ten hours daily."

Amlan Sarkar

The goal was to inject a fresh, contemporary twist to a classic look. "I wanted to create something with clean, unfussy lines that would mirror the homes of Pratesi's original aristocratic clients," Ali says. "I conceptualised a spa-like environment – the kind of estate that was historically built as a countryside retreat and now serves as a portal to the past."

Surrounded by mountains, basking in Mediterranean sunshine and filled with familiar Italian decorative details such as frescoes and worn stone floors, the villa is furnished in a modern style that brings it into step with today's lifestyles. Pratesi's most celebrated designs for bed and bath – including Tre Righe, the three-line motif commissioned by Coco Chanel for her Paris apartment, and Treccia, featuring braid-style embroidery and scalloped edging – are on show in the rooms. While distinctly aspirational in nature, the concept eschews the outlandish fancies of many AI dreamscapes; this is a place you can imagine visiting, and thus a valuable promotional tool.

For Ali, it's the future. "AI is creating avenues for new business models to flourish, just like the internet did in the late 1990s and e-commerce did in the 2010s," she argues. "While interior designers used to start their process by deciding on the furniture and fittings, the process is reversed with AI – the visualisations make those decisions. It's critical for suppliers to recognise this opportunity so that their products appear in AI visualisations. I'm certain that AI tools will power most of the interior design and architectural processes in the near future - and Pratesi is at the forefront of this development."

Coveted by Hollywood stars and royalty, Pratesi's indulgent creations are available at the Harrods department store in London. You can also visit www.pratesi.com and shop directly from the Italian brand.

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