

# Italian watch designer is watching out for you

**Preeti Mehra**

*New Delhi, July 4*

Sometimes he changes his watch every hour. At other times, he co-ordinates it to match the occasion, the client, the venue, or the time of day. But wearing a watch is a must for him, as much as designing them is a passion for Giorgio Galli.

The Italian watch designer who has “designed close to a thousand watches”, but “lost count of the number” by now, has honed his skills to anticipate what consumers want. “I am constantly on the ‘watch-out’ for what people wear, how they behave, what they prefer — it gives me an insight,” says the 49-year-old who runs the design lab of Timex.

The lab was started by Galli to design for his clients. In 2007, the American watch maker bought it over to make it the Timex world design centre, now named the Giorgio Galli Design Lab after its celebrity managing director.

## **'VERY BUSY WITH TIMEX'**

Though Galli has his own design company, he devotes much of his time on Timex and the group's other watch



**Giorgio Galli**

and jewellery brands. “I am very busy with Timex, as they have so many brands going. I just like to keep designing. The basic thing is that you have to keep your eyes open all the time and have a vision. It's all about working with proportions and giving each brand a distinctive signature. Men especially do not have many tools to express themselves — a watch does it for them,” says the designer.

For him, the watch is an accessory that tells a story

that reveals the personality of a person. No wonder then that he has created a host of distinctive brands for the company. His work includes luxury watches such as Valentino, Salvatore Ferragamo, Versace, Versus, Nautica and Marc Ecko.

## **INDIA 'MUCH, MUCH CLOSER'**

What does he think of designs made in India? What trends in design does he see in India, considering he comes here often? Galli, who has been here on work and on holiday many times in the past seven years, finds things changing fast, as “we live in a globalised world. Tastes are getting ‘much, much closer’ between the western and eastern worlds,” he remarks, emphasising, however, that “colour is much more strong internationally”.

Having said that, he is quick to point out that in India, too, colour is becoming important, and that Timex's new youth collection, Helix, is all about colour. The brand, launched in India a few months ago, seeks to fill a niche gap for the 19- to 24-year-olds, has been designed in six family



groups. The six — Fusion, Shield, Aviator and Stunt, and Hook and Constellation — are distinctive, but bear the same signature.

“The collection is in sync

with the latest fashion trends for hip and happening youngsters,” says the designer who, however, prefers a black-on-black Ferragamo to go with the black suit that he wears for the interaction.

Galli has designed for the Indian market earlier as well. The ICC World Cup 2011 watch collection by Timex was also his creation. It sported elements of the game to woo the cricket-crazy consumer and had roped in cricketer Virender Sehwag to support the brand.

## **'AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE'**

The celebrity designer, who sees great potential in the Indian market and would like to be here as often as possible, complains about the new rule that allows foreigners to return here only after a gap of two months. “I was told it is an anti-terrorist law, not the best for business though,” he says.

But to unleash his creativity, Galli just needs his vision and imagination. He describes it as it is for him: “Designing is an intimate process, you dive in and let your mind float...”

Float in time, we presume.

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