

## Pontoglio 1883: the corduroy guru *Italy*

Corduroy, which was at its height in the 1970s, is back in a big way. It was ubiquitous at the autumn/winter 2017 men's events, shown by The Gigi in Pitti, Prada in Milan, Officine Générale in Paris and E Tautz in London. That's good news for Pontoglio 1883, the leading Italian manufacturer of this ribbed cotton velveteen, the name of which originates from the French *corde du roi* (cloth of the king).

"Some time ago there were a number of suppliers in Italy but now we're the only one still here," says Marta Pagani, sales manager of the 134-year-old company. "When designers want something developed in Italy they come to us," she adds, pointing out that Pontoglio supplies Burberry, Saint Laurent, Prada and The Gigi. "At the moment velvet and corduroy are very trendy so we're in the high period of production."

Yet that's not always the case. Corduroy is generally associated with colder seasons so, to combat the downturns, the Lombardy-based business launched a summer line three years ago, as well as a collection of upholstery. Now Pontoglio produces the fabric year-round, with pastel shades in the sunnier months and browns, blacks and blues for winter.

"Pontoglio is the most important company for velvet and corduroy," says Alberto Badà, who became CEO in 2015. "I love this company because you can see its history everywhere – many of the 77 people who work here are following in their fathers' and grandfathers' footsteps." — MSS



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