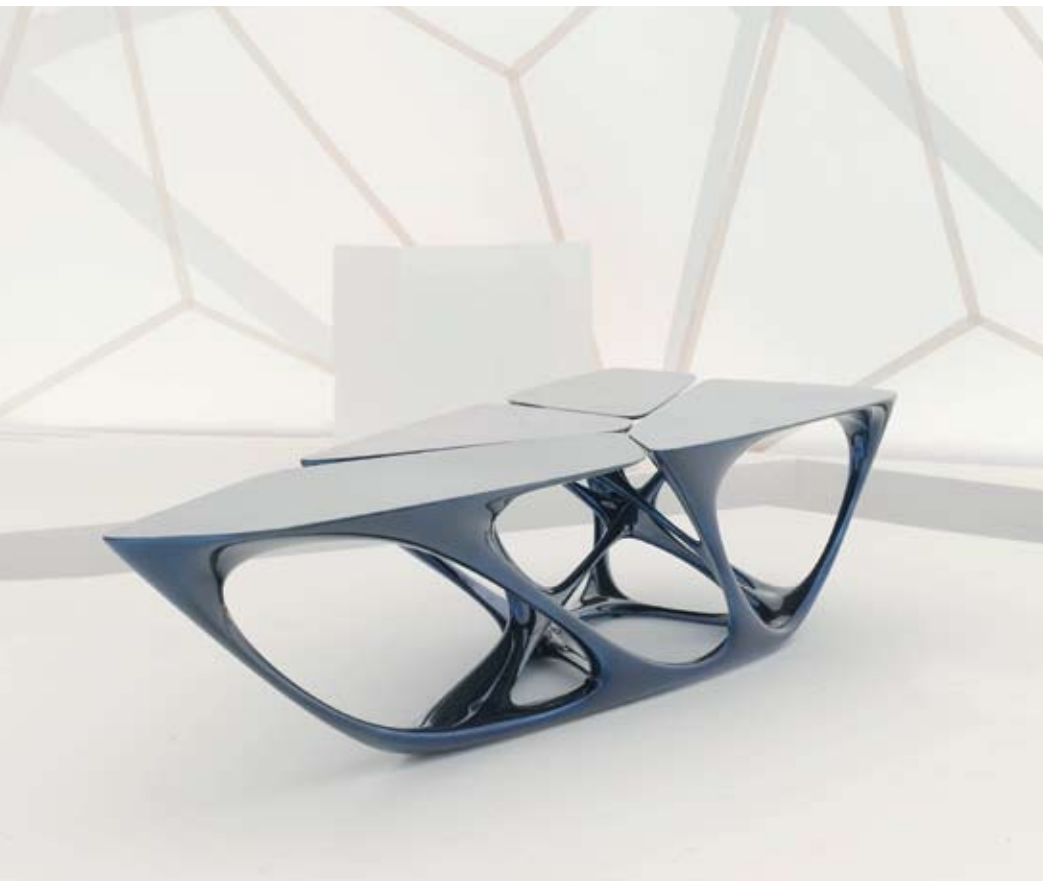




A chance for designers across the globe to show off what clever concepts they've come up with during the preceding 364 days, the Salone Internazionale del Mobile, which ran from 16th to 21st April, attracts big-name designers and manufacturers from across the globe. This year was no exception. Hosted at the New Milan Fairgrounds in Rho, Italy, the 46th edition of the show focused on materials, technologies and styles, with a newly-introduced sector on bedding. Like a full-scale shrine to design, the fair was made up of 220,000-square-metres of central exhibition space, as well as a number of offshoots scattered further afield, such as the International Lighting Exhibition, the International Furniture Exhibition, the International Furnishing Accessories Exhibition, the International Kitchen Furniture Exhibition, the International Bathroom Exhibition, the new International Biennial Workspace Exhibition and SaloneSatellite. Exhibiting some of the more avant-garde prototypes dreamt up by the hottest up-and-coming newbies, SaloneSatellite has become an integral part of the fair.



Sorted by type, products at the 2008 edition ranged from the classic to the modern, from ethnic to designer, from singles to sets, from designer pieces to reproduction antiques, from ethnic to fusion, from accessories to sectionals. An explosion of all that's in vogue, designers included the likes of Alessi, Artek, B&B Italia, Driade, Moooi, Moroso, Poltrona Frau, Swarovski Crystal Palace and Vitra, amongst others. With over 2,500 exhibitors from around 40 different countries, there was so much to see in so little time. But, fuelled by our passion for the cutting-edge, we ran like press possessed through the stands to see what was going down – and up – in the world of interiors. Reporting from the front-line, here we deliver the best of what we saw – and were shamefully tempted to steal – from the stands.

Known for ending old trends and inspiring new ones, the Salone del Mobile has become the modern day tastemaker. A must-see event for any true design-ista, this is certainly a fair to remember.

Photo top, New Balls Please by Tejo Remy and Rene Veenhuizen: It is no accident that this sofa looks like an aortic junction, from organic form to composition; the idea arose to let the seating units originate through cell division. The tennis ball made the perfect chromosome, individual yet identical and soft enough for comfort, they expertly 'serve' up this perfect DNA design for the home. **Photo bottom, Mesa, designed by Zaha Hadid for Vitra:** This alien, sci-fi piece was inspired by her work for an installation created in the Moore Building for the Miami Art Fair. The effect is strikingly similar to sticky chewing gum pulled up out of shape, yet somehow strangely compelling.

Photo right,
Rontonton designed
by Van Vliet for
Moroso: Light North
African in nature, these
Rontonton lamps derive
from a lighting family
recognized by three
dimensional geometric
bodies made out of plastic
and aluminium perforated
sandwich sheet. The
atmospheric radiation
diffuses light and adds an
additional layer onto all
other designs. **Photo**

bottom, Bohemian
Arm Chair designed by
Patricia Urquiola for
Moroso: Patricia Urquiola
is the designer who best
expresses Moroso's vision,
she has therefore created
the new Bohemian range.

The richly upholstered
arm chair has a very fluid
form, the press studded
upholstery creating soft,
enveloping almost casual
lines. This sumptuous,
yet laid-back styling is
apparent throughout the
Bohemian collection.



Photos opposite page, Jet set designed by Jaime Hayon for Bisazza: A flamboyant and extremely fun interpretation of mosaic, 'Jet Set' shows us Jaime's playful and poetic approach to design. This profound representation of the Lear-jet form is adorned with white and gold mosaic tiles and features a white leather Jet-top lounge area. Completing the luxury jet look is a black and white striped floor in Bisazza glass chip mosaic tiles, with interesting reflections between light and shadow creating a movie set atmosphere.