



SEBIME of Spain brought together European forces

Since 2007, SEBIME has been advocating its EuroFashion Bijoux label, aiming to unite fashion jewellery manufacturers in Europe. Through this campaign, members hope to refresh and reaffirm the image of individual companies and the whole European scene.

EuroFashion Bijoux, a novel brand and concept, was founded in March 2007. It is a non-profit company set up by SEBIME and Club Bi, which are Spanish and Italian fashion jewellery manufacturers associations, along with numerous different European forces in such countries as Germany, Greece and France, aiming to promote authentic Europe-made fashion jewellery, guarantee its delicate quality and enhance the position of European manufacturers internationally.

President of SEBIME and EuroFashion Bijoux and CEO of Plastimoda SA, Matthias Roters, believes that bringing as many European countries as possible together can produce a greater strength to fight against copycats and their low-quality products.

"EuroFashion Bijoux gives manufacturers a chance to introduce their products in the appropriate markets and to find a niche in the luxury market too," he said.

Manuel Hernández, owner-designer of Metalfor SL, stated that the fashion jewellery industry in Spain is now encountering a rather big crisis. Customers nowadays have easier access to fashion jewellery, and there are more imports from China selling at lower prices too. Therefore, he worries that all these are going to saturate the market. "All products under the EuroFashion Bijoux brand are guaranteed to have component and material sourcing and production processes of the highest standards. So, it is a good idea to team up to make ourselves stand out from among Asian products and maximise our profits," he continued.

Now, let's have a glimpse of the latest products and developments at Metalfor and Plastimoda, two fashion jewellery manufacturers in Spain:

Metalfor — Intense romance

Established in 1951, Metalfor is one of the oldest family-run fashion jewellery businesses in Europe. With its workshop located on the island of Minorca in Spain, the company hand-makes medium- to high-class fashion jewellery for fashion-savvy individuals worldwide. Wholesale prices range from €6 to €20 (US\$9.4 to US\$31.33) and targets are wholesalers, chain stores and department stores of all countries.

The company regularly launches two collections per year, and 15 to 20 workers are responsible for producing 200 to 2,000 pieces per month. "We have advanced technology to tackle any difficulties that we may encounter. We generally do the 3D designs on the computer first, and send them to the casting machines to do other modelling procedures before realising them. That's how we produce our pieces," said Mr Hernández.

He describes his pieces as simple, classic and elegant. Self-made resin, Swarovski stones, quality pearls are the main staples for the company's latest collections. "It's quite a new concept to mix pearl with crystal and resin. It's interesting and customers do like it," he continued. In addition, European-style brooches, metallic pieces and big pearl items are also among their latest products, and these big pieces are the most popular items among customers. Mr Hernández believes these prominent pieces will continue to dominate the market in Spain in Autumn/Winter 2008/09.

At the moment, the company does not have plans to venture into the accessories field, but a tailor-made service is available. Metalfor is pleased to have its fashion jewellery sewn on customers' favourite trousers, shoes or belts as special accessories.

"The world was badly hit by the global economic crisis in 2006 and 2007; so we would rather take a more conservative approach, maintaining our business first before we expand it further," Mr Hernández related with hope.



Plastimoda – Colour galore

Minorca-based Plastimoda was founded in 1975, producing acrylic beads and components for shoes and apparel along with its fashion jewellery items. The company's pieces are dedicated to children and young and fashionable ladies around the world, and it targets wholesalers, chain stores and manufacturers in Europe, Asia and United States. Usually the company produces 10,000 pieces for acrylic beads and components and 40 pieces for each of the other fashion jewellery items for each colour per month.

"Colours are our core elements. As customers love those fruity colours so much, many of our collections abound in different colours, especially the summer collection. It is all about green, red, blue and purple. Products wholesale from €3 to €6 (US\$4.7 to US\$9.4)," Mr Roters revealed.

Plastimoda has ranges of colourful and cute designs of dolphins, turtles, stars, flowers and other animals for children and teenagers, providing them with a chance to enjoy being accessorised.

"More fashion jewellery brands are arising in the market these years, particularly in the field of necklace and bracelet production; so we want to be slightly different from others. We may consider launching earring collections in two years," he continued.

"Our annual turnover for 2006/07 reached €1.5 million (US\$2.35 million). Despite the global financial downturn, I still hope to maintain a steady business for my company," Mr Roters concluded.