

From America's Cup to

From Naples to Milan, my recent trip to Italy took me out on the open seas and inside the hautest furniture fair yet.

April 11-15, I attended the 34th America's Cup World Series Round Four in Naples, Italy. Nine of the best international yacht racing teams competed for the first time this year as a prelude to America's Cup 2013 in San Francisco. Following the loss of Spanish-Italian GreenComm and French Aleph teams from the America's Cup World Series, nine crews and seven teams competed in Naples with ORACLE Racing and Prada's Luna Rossa both fielding two boats.

On board Abuelo, the ORACLE Racing hospitality boat with America's Cup defender Golden Gate Yacht Club Vice-Commodore Tom Ehman as commentator, I had a close look and comprehensive analysis of races and teams.

Starting from Day One on April 11, the teams competed on very rough seas with gusting winds up to 25 knots and strong rain showers. In just the first race, Team Sweden Artemis with American skipper Terry Hutchinson capsized and dropped out of the race, and Team China encountered mechanical problems and Oracle 5 suffered a crack on the boat. Only six boats made Race Two. With sea conditions worsening further, it was decided to cancel the third race. This was the worst weather I have seen in the 17 years I have been coming to Naples.

The day 4 races were cancelled not because the racers couldn't handle racing on the edge in the stormy weather, but because of the danger of loading the racing boats into the water on cranes. Each day after the race, all boats got lifted off the water, hosed off clean, disassembled and stored away and then assembled each day and lifted back into the water before the races start. I watched the ORACLE team doing this with their two boats, storing the 2 giant wings in a tent. It was quite an amazing sight.

To the delight of tens of thousands of Italian fans lining the waterfront racecourse in Naples, Prada's Luna Rossa Piranha won the World Series Round Four. Prada CEO and yachting enthusiast Patrizio Bertelli was all



ORACLE Racing 4 won the Day One fleet race



Patrizio Bertelli, CEO of Prada whose Luna Rossa Piranha won the World Series Round 4



America's Cup racing was waterfront in Naples where spectators could watch



Emirates Team New Zealand won the Day Two fleet race



Starting line on Day 1, courtesy of Oracle Media

The Milan Furniture Fair

smiles when I congratulated him with Tanti Auguri. This was the two Prada boats' first time racing AC45.

After covering America's Cup in Naples, I visited a friend's place in Villa Balbiano in Lake Como amid the excitement of the Milan Furniture Fair (Salone Internazionale del Mobile) in nearby Milan.

The Fair is the world's largest home design exhibition held annually from April 17-22. It was there that my friend Lenny Kravitz invited me to the "Kartell Goes Rock" event. He was welcomed by cheering fans that gathered in such numbers that traffic was blocked off. It was so reminiscent of the opening night of the silver screen hit *The Hunger Games*, which Lenny acted in.

The posh event took place at the Kartell showroom, the space where Lenny and internationally-renowned designer Philippe Starck took center stage to introduce their collaborative project. The two redesigned a series of chairs for Kartell based on Starck's iconic "Mademoiselle" armchairs. Exotic materials like python, leather and fur added, in Lenny's words, "feel, texture and plushness to create vibe and atmosphere" to the symbolic furnishings. Every piece I saw echoed with Lenny's signature style, which resounds with an undeniable exotic chic.

I wasn't the only one who thought so. Lenny and Starck's collaboration for Kartell was well received in Milan. A humble Lenny told the delighted crowd, "I am glad to be doing what it is that I love. I appreciate it now more than ever. I am really savoring being creative, really savoring each moment." Lenny has had a passion for design since childhood and it materialized later in life; he started his company Kravitz Design in 2002 in New York. Other projects in his impressive portfolio include South Beach staples the Florida Room at the Delano and a deluxe recording studio in the Setai Hotel.

Lenny and his team Kirsten Mattila and Brandt Pilgrim also launched the sleek black and white tiles inspired by water drops and waves, called Goccia (Italian for drop), designed for LEA Ceramiche.

I toured the exhibition for one day and enjoyed the vast selections of furniture presented by Italian and international vendors in their impressive showrooms. Indeed, this is the most important furniture and decoration event in the international calendar.

VIEW MY FOOTAGE OF AMERICA'S CUP WORLD SERIES ROUND 4 AT <http://vimeo.com/41207052> AND CHECK OUT THE MILAN FURNITURE FAIR AT <http://vimeo.com/41039534>

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Olivia with Lenny Kravitz at Kartell Goes Rock



Armet Showroom



Alessi Showroom



Milan Furniture Fair



Lenny and Philippe Starck at Kartell Goes Rock in Milan



Villanova Showroom