

PRESS RELEASE

Xandra Falcó, new President of Círculo Fortuny

The first woman chair of one of Europe's leading high-end associations will promote excellence as a driver of local economic recovery and international tourism

She also aims to enhance the visibility of Spain Par Excellence, which the Association has been exporting for nearly a decade

Madrid, 11 June 2020. - Xandra Falcó y Girod is the new chairwoman of Círculo Fortuny, Spain's high-end association of luxury and excellence, following a unanimous decision at the General Assembly held yesterday. She thus becomes the first female chair of the organisation and the only woman to head one of the five leading high-end associations in Europe—Walpole British Luxury, Fondazione Altgamma, Comité Colbert, and Mesterkreis—which together make up the European Cultural and Creative Industries Alliance (ECCIA).

Inheriting the position from her father, Carlos Falcó, who chaired Círculo Fortuny from its inception in 2011 until March 2020, she will assume the important challenge of promoting Spanish luxury and excellence as a driver of local economic recovery and a key attraction for international tourism.

Xandra Falcó, Marquesa de Mirabel, takes the reins of a strong institution, with more than 50 partners, the primary mission of which is to unite brands and companies in Spain's cultural and creative sector that embody excellence and provide them with national and international visibility.

In 2019, the billing of Europe's cultural and creative industries totalled EUR 1.3 billion, representing 72% of the sector's global turnover. They also account for 10% of all European exports and employ two million direct and indirect workers. Currently, the industries are among Europe's principal assets, both culturally and economically, accounting for 4% of European GDP, or roughly EUR 800 billion per year.

Naturally, in 2020 the sector was affected by the confinement of the global population and the restrictions on travel, but there are some positive data, such as the perpetual growth of the online market. The new chair's first objective is to address the challenge of the digital transformation by advocating training and expertise within the sector, in addition to promoting measures to combat counterfeiting.

All of this comes at a pivotal moment when the codes of excellence are being redefined to add value to the new global scenario and the new consumer, who increasingly seeks craftsmanship, unique pieces that reflect cultural heritage, as well as environmental and local sustainability.

Another of her main challenges will be to enhance the perception of the Spain Brand as it shifts toward Spain *Par Excellence*, which Círculo Fortuny has been exporting to the world for nearly a decade, promoting the intangible values inherent in Spanish culture and attracting value-added tourism that drives hospitality, gastronomy, art, fashion, and craftsmanship.

In the coming years, Círculo Fortuny will focus much of its work on the latter, promoting master craftsmen and clusters of excellence, thereby ensuring the knowledge and expertise handed down for centuries from generation to generation in Spain—which constitutes the main cultural and anthropological legacy of our society, the true excellence that we have exported to the world—is not lost.

Career and experience in enhancing the value of the Spain brand

As head of Círculo Fortuny, Xandra Falcó will use her extensive training and insight in marketing (having studied at ESIC and the ESCP Business School under the Paris Chamber of Commerce) to give greater visibility to the Spanish high-end industry, as she did during her stint in the private sector before arriving at the family winery, Marqués de Griñón, in 2001.

In the family business she developed a career, holding various positions, including sales director of the Marqués de Griñón brand, general manager, and CEO, a fruitful period when she implemented a robust internationalisation strategy for the winery and the mill that enabled the export of 70% of their output to more than 40 markets.

Her extensive international experience as head of Marqués de Griñón will be instrumental in the promotion of Spanish excellence beyond our borders and the repositioning of the Spain Brand—synonymous with excellence, quality, and well-being—in the global market. Moreover, her daily dedication for nearly two decades in the field with master wine and oil makers, coupled with her passion for Spanish cuisine, will be key to improving the competitiveness of the Spanish artisanal industry and ensuring its legacy.

In the words of Xandra Falcó, becoming the chairwoman of Círculo Fortuny means, “continuing the hard work that my father started, defending the values of culture, history, creativity, expertise, and innovation, and taking the brands of Spanish excellence that are part of Círculo Fortuny to the next level, positioning them where they deserve to be in Europe and around the world.”

In this new phase, the chair will be backed by the Board of Directors, recently approved at the Assembly and consisting of 15 brands belonging to Círculo Fortuny: Abadía Retuerta LeDomaine, AYA-Aguirre y Aranzábal, Cinco Jotas, Grupo Nuba, LA



Organic, La Zagaleta, Lladró, Loewe, Marqués de Murrieta Estates and Wines, Natura Bissé, Puerto Banús, Rosa Oriol Atelier
Tous, Sotogrande, Bodegas y Viñedos Sierra Cantabria, and Vega Sicilia.