



F J BENJAMIN

**VALEXTRA TO MAKE SOUTHEAST ASIAN DEBUT IN SINGAPORE WITH
F J BENJAMIN**

- *Valextra's first standalone store in Singapore to open at Paragon Shopping Centre end 2013*

SINGAPORE, 25 June 2013 – F J Benjamin is bringing Valextra to Singapore. It will open the first standalone store in the Republic for the Milan-based maker of luxury handcrafted leather goods.

The Singapore store, to be located in Orchard Road's premier Paragon Shopping Centre, will open by the end of this year and will carry Valextra's entire range of luxurious hand bags, wallets, luggage for both women and men. The move followed the signing of a six-year distribution agreement, renewable for another six, between Valextra and F J Benjamin, Singapore's leading luxury and lifestyle fashion company.

Founded by Giovanni Fontana in 1937, Valextra combines the delicate craft of ancient saddlery with timeless, understated styles in luxury bags, travel cases and accessories. Valextra is recognised for its innovation. Many Valextra pieces have become best-sellers. They included the award-winning '24 Hour Bag' that is exhibited at MOMA, New York, the first ever 'Grip Spring' coin purse for men, and the 'Avietta 48', one of the most coveted airplane cabin bags.

A Valextra creation is recognised for its clean lines, discreet details such as the thread used for stitching, special piping, hand-lacquered piping, soft light-coloured leather lining and hardware accents finished in an array of more than 20 colours. Valextra is produced only in Italy by about a team of 60 highly skilled craftsmen.

Nash Benjamin, CEO of F J Benjamin Holdings, said: "We are delighted to be given this unique opportunity to introduce this heritage brand that stands for the epitome of Italian luxury and timeless style. Valextra's story of artisanal excellence and their commitment to delivering quality down to the last stitch resonated deeply with us. We look

forward to bringing this partnership to new heights and fulfilling the expectations of Valextra in Asia.”

Ben J Benjamin, General Manager of F J Benjamin’s Luxury Division, said: “We are thrilled to introduce Valextra to our clients in Singapore and the region. I am sure they will be impressed by how Valextra effortlessly fuses styling that’s classic and timeless with innovative and contemporary touches. It’s simple, iconic and of the utmost quality. A real luxury insider’s brand.

“This latest brand partnership once again demonstrates F J Benjamin’s leadership in luxury brand management and underscores our commitment to continuously delighting our customers with some of the most beautiful products that are being created in the fashion capitals of the world.”

Valextra CEO Marco Franchini states: “We are very much looking forward to collaborating with F J Benjamin as, thanks to its extensive experience in the luxury retail sector, is the most suited partner for Valextra’s debut in the Southeast Asian area.

“Singapore is a strategic market in luxury with a very dynamic and international clientele who seek sophisticated and high quality products. I’m certain Valextra is able to meet this request with pieces that express the excellence of Italian design and craftsmanship.”

Valextra is the latest addition to F J Benjamin’s luxury portfolio that already includes other highly coveted labels such as Celine, Givenchy and Goyard.

Valextra counts its customers among the most discerning and fashion forward people in the entertainment, sports and political arenas including Angelina Jolie, Jennifer Aniston, Katie Holmes, David Beckham, Sharon Stone, Cameron Diaz and US First Lady Michelle Obama.

– End –

About F J Benjamin Holdings Ltd (www.fjbenjamin.com) – F J Benjamin Holdings Ltd is a leader in building brands and in developing retail and distribution networks for international luxury and lifestyle labels across Asia. Its portfolio includes fashion and lifestyle brands like Banana Republic, Catherine Deane, Celine, Gap, Givenchy, Goyard, Guess, La Senza, RAOUL, Sheridan, and timepiece brands such as Bell & Ross, Converse, Chronoswiss, Girard-Perregaux, Guess? Watches, Gc, Marc Ecko, Nautica, Rado and Victorinox Swiss Army. It also has an interest in St James Holdings Ltd.

About Valextra S.p.A

Valextra was founded in 1937 by Giovanni Fontana in Milano, Italy.

Specializing in leather products with distinctive shapes designed for the comfort of sophisticated and cosmopolitan clientele, Valextra, during its long history, became an internationally renowned Italian luxury brand and its name is synonymous with a timeless style, innovative trends, exquisite craftsmanship and artisanal techniques of supreme quality.

Most of Valextra creations became historical best-sellers and icons of design, such as the first “24 hour” attaché case that was entrusted in history, the name “24 Hour Bag” and won the prestigious “Compasso d’Oro” prize in 1954; the first ever “Grip” coin purse for men, the “Tric Trac,” a wrist bag for men’s essentials, the most coveted cabin bag “Aviotta 48” and the first ever “hobo” women’s bag, the “Carita”.

In 2000, Emanuele Carminati Molina, with his family business group, invested in Valextra and decided to restore the company to its former glory, remaining faithful to the original spirit and style of Valextra whilst developing products that responded to the needs of the moment, combining tradition and innovation to the essential and elegant forms.

In 2013, Neo Capital, a London based investment firm specializing in the international building and development of brands, acquired a large share capital in Valextra with the aim to support the international growth of Valextra, whilst maintaining its rich heritage, the tradition of excellence, the sophisticated luxury appeal that has been preserved through the years.

Concurrently, Marco Franchini joined Valextra as its new CEO.

To date, the business counts 1 boutique in Milan, 4 free-standing stores within Japan and South Korea and a diffused network of shops in shop located in USA, Asia and Europe. In addition to the traditional retail network, the company has recently launched the e-shop platform www.valextra.it in order to satisfy the new requirements of the global market.

In the near future, Valextra plans to open new points of sale in various strategic areas crucial for the brand’s expansion.

For media enquiries, please contact:

F J Benjamin Holdings Ltd

Cheryl Li
Tel: (65) 6508 7708
Email: Cheryl.Li@fjbenjamin.com

Catherine Ong Associates

Catherine Ong
Tel: (65) 6327 6089
Email: cath@catherineong.com