



Press release:

## **MARCOLIN AND MONTBLANC**

### **An agreement signed for the production and world distribution of a new eyewear line**

**The Marcolin Group and Montblanc International have signed today a licensing agreement for the production and world distribution of the new line of Montblanc eyewear and sunwear**

The licensing agreement between Marcolin Group, one of the leading worldwide companies in the manufacture and distribution of eyewear and sunwear, and Montblanc International, one of the most important world luxury brands, confirms the aim of the Italian Group to distinguish themselves in the market for their ability to find concepts linked to the world of luxury and for their determination to concentrate on a significant increase at international level.

The partnership between Marcolin Group and Montblanc International will take shape in the new Montblanc eyewear collection, which will be distributed in Italy, in Europe and in the United States starting from spring 2003, and afterwards world-wide.

"Thanks to this new licensing agreement, Marcolin now has a portfolio of products firmly establishing it as one of the main companies in the eyewear industry for licence brands. The partnership with Montblanc strengthens our will to identify market niches complementary to each other and, through the stylistic independence of each designer - which we strongly encourage - , to offer on the market a well balanced portfolio of products able to please the various needs of different types of consumers"- declares Maurizio Marcolin - Vice President, Licensing and Business Development Director of the Group.

"Montblanc offers useful and unique luxury products of superior craftsmanship with a recognizably timeless design. This brand philosophy has successfully positioned Montblanc over the years as one of the leading luxury brands worldwide. The new licensee agreement with the Marcolin Group is another step towards further continuing the brand's successful diversification strategy and to establishing Montblanc as the genuine house of timeless, masculine luxury products. Eyewear is an important segment in the brand strategy consolidating Montblanc's character as a style brand. We are pleased to welcome Marcolin's experts into the world of Montblanc" - says Norbert A. Platt, President and CEO of Montblanc International.

#### **The Marcolin Group**

The Marcolin Group, bringing together Marcolin S.p.A. and 17 distribution companies among which the French Group Céb , is one of the world's main firms in the production and distribution of eyewear and sunwear. The licensing agreement with Montblanc offers to Marcolin the opportunity to diversify its own product portfolio, today including brands under licence from top designers such as Dolce & Gabbana Occhiali, D&G Dolce & Gabbana Occhiali, Chlo  Lunettes, Mossimo Vision, Replay Eyes, Fornarina Visionup!, Roberto Cavalli eyewear, Miss Sixty Glasses, Costume National, The North Face, and the American brands: Essence, Unionbay, Bob Mackie, FAO Schwartz, NBA.

Marcolin also proposes its own house brands: in addition to the sports eyewear brand C b , the brands Marcolin and Ti22 titanium are produced and marketed.

2001 represents for Marcolin a period of great expansion: in fact a few months ago new licensing agreements were signed with Costume National, for the production of a new eyewear and sunwear collection, and with The North Face, for the production of a sports eyewear collection. To further consolidate Marcolin's expansion there is the acquisition of the American Creative Optics Inc., signed last February, which allowed the Italian Group to double its presence in the American market.

**marcolin®**

### **Montblanc International**

Montblanc is one of the leading international luxury brands worldwide. Established 1906, the brand has successfully grown from a manufacturer of exclusive writing instruments into a diversified brand of luxurious writing instruments, watches, leather, jewellery accessories, eyewear and, most recently, fragrance. Montblanc's range of exclusive products is available in more than 150 Montblanc boutiques and selected jewellery stores and authorized pen and leather specialists all over the world.

The brand's commitment to creating unique works of master craftsmanship and style is symbolized by the famous white star, which refers to the snow-covered peak of the highest mountain in Europe. It's one of the world's best known trademarks - not only signifying the brand and its products of long lasting nature. It also characterises the demanding and cultural lifestyle of the Montblanc customer.

Montblanc is a brand of timeless masculine luxury products, which contain more than a functional beauty - they provide origin, continuity, warmth, friendship and emotion. They are a symbol and expression for a modern, intelligent and successful personality, appreciating products of discrete elegance and timeless aesthetics.

Montblanc International is a member of the Richemont Group

*Milan, 26 July 2001*