

Itala 35:
A compact SUV marking the return of an icon,
interpreted by Italdesign

- Italdesign has been entrusted with the exterior design of the first model in Itala's relaunch, within a project bringing together shared industrial platforms, Italian automotive expertise and supply chains, and international partners.
- Strength and elegance are the defining design principles of an icon of innovation, performance and refinement.
- A project of reinterpretation and integration, positioned between heritage and future.
- Itala 35 represents the first step in a broader strategy, with the same design language set to extend across additional models in the range.
- A project that highlights Italdesign's ability to operate across different scales of design.

Moncalieri, May 21, 2026

More than a century after its founding, the Itala brand, renowned for innovation, performance and refinement, returns to the road with the new **Itala 35**, the first model in the **brand's relaunch under the *Historic Italian Brands* project promoted by the DR Group**. The initiative brings together heritage and contemporaneity, with the aim of reviving some of the most iconic names in Italian motoring while projecting them into the future.

The Itala 35 is conceived as a synthesis of shared industrial platforms from Asian partners of the DR Group, specifically the GAC Group (Guangzhou Automobile Group Co.), combined with a design sensibility strongly rooted in Italy.

The exterior design has been entrusted to Italdesign, tasked with defining the visual language of the first model of the relaunch, within a program that also involves Italian expertise in electronics, suspension systems and overall system integration.

“Our work developed from a clearly defined technical base and well-established design constraints. This was not about developing a vehicle from scratch, but about shaping its visual identity through a measured and coherent approach, one capable of being immediately recognizable, working on an existing structure and several fixed elements, such as the lighting units. This meant relying on design to build a distinct identity by focusing on replaceable components,” explains Cristiano Fracchia, Exterior Project Leader at Italdesign.

The intervention focused primarily on the front and rear ends, with a complete redesign of all non-structural plastic parts, including bumpers, the upper bonnet fascia, tailgate and spoiler. Elements such as the lighting units were retained and integrated into the new identity, developed through two-dimensional styling proposals.

Within this framework, the project strikes a precise balance between continuity and discontinuity: while based on an existing platform, the objective was to create a strong and immediate perception of renewal.

Compact in its proportions yet assertive in its presence, the Itala 35 builds its identity through tension: not a structural break, but a reinterpretation capable of generating a new perception of the product.

“The challenge was not to replicate the past, but to reinterpret it. The brief given to our team revolved around two seemingly opposing concepts: strength and elegance. On one hand, there was the need to give the car a bold character, expressed through sharp lines, dynamic surfaces and sculpted volumes; on the other, the intention to preserve formal clarity and

coherence,” says Cristiano Fracchia. “We translated this into a design that is defined yet balanced. In particular, we concentrated on the expressive core of the project at the front end, through the grille, which takes on a key role in shaping brand identity. Special attention was given to detail, for instance in the design of the grille mesh, conceived to bring together uniqueness and heritage, incorporating symbolic references to the Itala brand and the city of Turin.”

With the Itala 35, the first chapter of a broader journey takes shape, with this design language set to extend to other *design by Italdesign* models in the range: the Itala 56, a compact/mid-size 5-seat SUV, and the Itala 61, configured to accommodate 7 passengers.

The Itala 35 project showcases an approach that is part of Italdesign’s DNA: the ability to operate across different scales of design, from the full definition of a product to targeted interventions on existing systems, while maintaining the same level of rigor and coherence in the outcome.

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