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Family Matters

Camilla and Carolina Cucinelli are embracing their philosopher-designer father's vision of home.

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Sisters Carolina
(left) and Camilla
Cucinelli.

When you arrive at Camilla Cucinelli's hilltop home in the Umbrian countryside, the first thing you notice is the statue of Apollo on the veranda overlooking a sweep of fields and vineyards. The Greek and Roman deity of music, poetry, sunlight, and healing, Apollo is more than mere decoration. Like nearly everything here in Solomeo, it is a poetic symbol of the spirit that permeates this tiny medieval town. The bust was a gift from her father, the Italian designer Brunello Cucinelli, who, with his wife, Federica, has spent the past 30 years restoring the village's ancient buildings, narrow streets, and surrounding landscape—and building a theater, amphitheater, park, and more. "His objective," says Camilla, "was to create a hamlet where there is room for thought, a place to cure our souls, a place of natural beauty."



"I'm an art lover in all of its forms, and music is one of them," says Carolina, who sits at the piano her mother gave her when she moved into the house. OPPOSITE: A bust of Apollo graces a veranda at Camilla's home.

Camilla and her sister, Carolina, have embraced their father's philosophy and his enviable signature aesthetic—a down-to-earth style that defines their fashion, of course, but also their homes and their way of life. On a late fall day, dressed in flowing white shirts, cuffed jeans, and sneakers, they curl up on Camilla's couch and talk affectionately about their father's influence, their cherished Sunday family lunches (where talk of business is happily barred), and their sense of place. "I grew up enjoying the simplicity of my mom's vegetable garden and playing in the open air," says Camilla, 36, who is co-chair of the company's women's style team. "I feel so fortunate to be able to give our daughters, Vittoria and Penelope, a life surrounded by natural beauty, where you can still enjoy an afternoon reading a book under a tree or marvel at the beauty of a special sunset."

The sisters' Solomeo homes were part of the expansive restoration of the once crumbling village. That ambitious project—which includes a sprawling, light-filled Brunello Cucinelli headquarters and factory where employees are served lunch made from locally grown produce in the subsidized canteen—was officially unveiled last fall, and Camilla and Carolina played a meaningful role in the renewal. Camilla and her husband, Riccardo Stefanelli, renovated their 1890s home, which was originally a small hotel, in a layout that recalls a traditional Umbrian country house. It is striking in its simplicity: wood-beamed ceilings, whitewashed walls, and floor-to-ceiling windows fronting the fields, fruit orchards, and olive groves in the valley below. The stacks of books on shelves and in piles around the rooms are part of the

Carolina's kitchen is a gathering place for family and friends. RIGHT: Artemisia Gentileschi's painting *L'Annunciazione ad Abramo* was a housewarming gift from her father. "The painting belonged to him," says Carolina, "so I have a special emotional connection to it, as I do with the story behind the artist. She fought for her freedom as a woman and as one of the first female artists of her time."





library Camilla's parents gave them as a wedding gift—a collection filled with notable volumes on philosophy, art, history, and literature.

Just a few houses away, Carolina, 28, and her husband, Alessio Piastrelli, redesigned their home with an expansive modern kitchen that is integrated into the airy, light-filled living space. "I enjoy cooking and entertaining at home, and when our friends come over, we end up spending most of the evening there," says Carolina, who serves as the company's chairman executive assistant. "I inherited my mom's love of cooking and knowing how to pick fresh ingredients to make simple, traditional dishes that have always been a part of our local cuisine."

Ever present in the sisters' homes and gardens and throughout Solomeo are classical marble sculptures of philosophers and Greek gods.

Brunello Cucinelli commissioned several of the pieces from a young artist in the Tuscany town of Pietrasanta, which is known for its marble caves and classical arts tradition. "I often walk with my daughters through the parks and share the stories behind the historic and mythological figures captured in these sculptures," says Camilla. "It is a way to continue the tradition that has been at the center of my father's life."

Cucinelli has even surrounded his swimming pool with sculptures of Sophocles, Eros, and Apollo. It's as if they are watching over Solomeo as the guardians of his mission, which today is perpetuated by his daughters. "We don't just take care of what we have," says Carolina. "We must work to leave the place we found more beautiful for the future generations." They have set the bar high for those who will follow. ■

OPPOSITE: Camilla's house has sweeping views of Solomeo's picturesque fields and village. BELOW: Carolina's minimalist living room boasts wood-beamed ceilings, white-washed walls, and cozy Molteni couches.

