

THE NATURAL DYES USED BY THE UMBRIA CASHMERE DISTRICT

In the framework of Expo 2015, the innovative work of the [Umbria Cashmere District Award](#), celebrated in Milan on September 22nd was presented.

The theme of the 2015 Edition of the Award was *Luxe of Botanical Dyed Cashmere: An exclusive way to discover the use of Botanical Dyed Colours for the ethical future of fashion.*

The event was a space dedicated to the values of the Umbria Cashmere District: the art of crafting, environmental sustainability, tradition and innovation.

The [Tintoria Ferrini](#) presented the results of its research and experimentation on vegetal dyes on precious natural fibres: an innovative experiment involving the entire productive chain, from the cultivation of dyeing plants to their transformation in dye, extracting only their non-edible part.

One of the protagonists of the Umbria Cashmere District is the Tintoria Ferrini, an historic Umbrian company, founded in 1972 in Torgiano to dye yarns and knitted items. Ferrini has always been involved in the Umbrian Cashmere District for the finishing of the flake and yarn, with the fundamental step of dyeing. The company has opened its doors to the students who, during these years, have joined the Umbria Cashmere District Award.

During its many years of activity, Ferrini has been researching and specializing on the application of natural vegetal dyes. The company created and experimented productive processes and plants to industrially produce natural dyes, derived from ancient dyeing plants and also from vegetables and fruits from biological cultivations and whose non-edible parts can be used to optimize the waste.

For 2015 Districts Award, the company presented the result of these experiments on 8 pulls dyed with vegetal essences: artichoke, woad, pepper, madder, olive, nut, smoke tree and pomegranate. In particular, woad (*isatis tinctoria*) is a plant widespread in Central Italy (Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Lazio and Abruzzo regions) used in very ancient times to dye fabrics in the colour blue. Woad has been recently re-planted in Italy, after specific research projects and exclusive chain



agreements to which also Ferrini took part. The colour is extracted from the leaves of the plant, macerated and fermented in water. This gives a solution that, agitated and filtered, produces a solid precipitate used to dye textiles (but also in painting and cosmetics).

The sponsor of the Award, [Cariaggi Fine Yarns](#) presented *Systema Naturae*, a project born in 2006 that generated a line of vegetal dyed cashmere yarns. An artisanal looking yarn, yet extraordinarily modern, guaranteed by an absolutely chemical-free dyeing to protect the environment. Three fashion design students from Central Saint Martins College (London) received the Umbria Cashmere District Award, they are: Heera Singh, Kitty Garratt and Aled Own. Together with the students' works, a case-history inspired by Umbria's colours by Israeli designer Ilana Efrati, who translates the suggestions of Umbrian woods and landscapes into knitting, experimenting new natural dyeing techniques on cashmere has been presented.

These events and exhibitions, carried out in a prestigious high fashion framework, show great potentials for the recovery of traditional procedures to make natural dyes. Such procedures do not only meet the ever-increasing demand for high-quality products, but also to the need of protecting and increasing the value of natural resources and privileging productive processes that do not pollute environment.



To know more

[Tintoria Ferrini](#)

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[Tasselli cashmere website](#)

[UmbriaExpo2015](#)

[Umbria Cashmere District Award](#)

[Woad in Wikipedia](#)

[Woad.org.uk website](#)

[Woad in yearofthecelt.co.uk website](#)

[Woad in Botanical.com website](#)

[Livingfield.hutton.ac.uk website](#)

[Central Saint Martins College \(London\) website](#)

