

HIGH-QUALITY ECOLOGICAL PAPER PRODUCED IN ITALY BY RECYCLING ESPARTO GRASS AND INDUSTRIAL SCRAPS

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The historic [Favini company](#) founded in 1736 in the Veneto Region (Italy), continues its innovative work through the production of ecological papers. By using a wide range of plants and recycled industrial scraps, the company contributes to reducing the use of tree cellulose and improving the environment.

[The latest innovation created by Favini is Sparto Paper](#) launched in 2025 and inspired by a natural plant fibre, esparto grass, which grows in arid zones. Sparto is Favini's new eco-friendly paper, made with alternative fibers and without tree cellulose. It takes its name from esparto, a perennial grass that thrives in hot, arid climates and acts as a natural barrier against desertification.



[Sparto sustainable paper is perfect for creating luxury packaging, high-quality printing](#) and sustainable design projects. [Sparto's eight colours are inspired by the natural environment](#) that we help to protect with this truly special paper. Sparto is FSC™ certified and made with 100% self-produced hydroelectric energy. It contains esparto fibre, post-consumer recycled material and bagasse, the by-product of sugar cane processing.

[Esparto grass \(Stipa tenacissima L.\)](#) is a perennial plant belonging to Gramineae family, widespread in the semi-arid areas of the western Mediterranean, particularly in North Africa and southern Spain. It grows on chalky soils, withstands wide temperature variations and does not require irrigation. It is not a woody plant, but a grass with compact tufts of solid cylindrical stems, whose leaves can reach up to one metre in length. Flowering occurs between May and the end of June, and harvesting is still done manually.



Esparto grass has a significant ecological impact: it acts as a natural barrier against desertification, helps prevent soil erosion and promotes biodiversity in the Mediterranean landscape. It requires very little human intervention, has a low carbon footprint and is renewable and biodegradable. The use of esparto grass in paper production began in the 19th century. However, with the advent of modern wood pulp, which was cheaper and more readily available, the use of esparto grass in paper production gradually declined, giving way to more standardised and less expensive industrial processes.

Today, esparto grass is used in Favini's Sparto paper as a result of the company's ongoing research into alternative sustainable fibres. The fibres of this plant have particularly interesting characteristics for the paper industry because they are:

- Rich in cellulose and low in lignin, which simplifies the transformation processes and reduces the environmental impact;



- Short, highly fibrous, elastic and with excellent mechanical resistance;
- Naturally smooth in surface, improving the aesthetic and tactile quality of the derived materials.

The reintroduction of esparto grass in paper production demonstrates how historical fibres can find new relevance in a modern context. This grass, used for centuries and then set aside by the industry, is now making a comeback thanks to its renewable nature, low environmental impact and technical properties. With Sparto paper, Favini is promoting this resource showing how innovation can also arise from the rediscovery of natural fibres from the past. Sparto confirms itself as a versatile, high-performance paper, capable of combining aesthetics, sustainability, and high-level printing results, ideal for applications that require precision and quality.

The Sparto Paper is made by Favini incorporating esparto grass fibres obtained from the Esparto plant and bagasse, the fibre obtained from sugarcane residue after juice extraction. Both of these resources boast rapid and sustainable growth: esparto grass thrives in arid areas without the need for irrigation, pesticides or fertilisers, contributing to a very low water and carbon footprint compared to traditional forestry. Similarly, bagasse makes use of an agricultural by-product that would otherwise be discarded, whilst offering long fibres that enable high technical performance with a lower environmental impact. The Sparto paper was launched on the market in 2025, registering great success.

The first ecological production of Favini framed within circular economy strategies that attracted attention both in Italy and in other countries is [Shiro Alga Carta](#), an ecological paper produced in 1993 by recycling algae that proliferate in the Lagoon of Venice, a polluting material difficult to dispose of. The algae were collected and mixed with certified fibers, replacing up to 30% of the pulp used in paper production. The recycling of the algae can therefore not only protect the marine ecosystem, but also save the use of tree pulp.

Favini continued its work to innovate the paper production with the [Crush eco-friendly papers](#) created in 2012 and made by replacing up to 15% of virgin tree pulp with the residues of organic products. Crush papers include by-products from lavender, citrus fruits, grapes, coconut, cocoa, cherries, corn, olives, coffee, kiwi fruits, hazelnuts and almonds. These natural raw materials are saved from landfill and used to make distinctive papers. Crush is FSC certified, GMO free, contains 40% post-consumer recycled waste and it is produced with 100% green energy. The carbon footprint is reduced by 20% using by-products and 100% green energy. Any unavoidable emissions generated during the production of this eco-friendly paper are fully offset through Carbon Credits used to finance activities that can absorb CO2 in the atmosphere. [The Crush Stories document: for every ingredient a story of circularity](#) describes the different products used for the recycling process.

In addition to Sparto, Alga Carta and Crush, Favini produces a total of seven [lines of ecological high-quality paper](#) in its collection, including:

- [Remake paper created in 2015 and made from the discarded residues from the leather manufacturing process](#) is an example of *upcycling*. [This innovative paper replaces 25% of wood pulp with leather residues](#). Remake is not only a unique paper made of leather, but it is also 100% recyclable and biodegradable. Remake contains 40% recycled pulp and the leather by-products are sourced from traceable Italian origins. Remake is produced using renewable energy and Favini unavoidable emissions are offset. Remake is FSC™ certified, recyclable and biodegradable.



- [Refit paper from cotton and wool](#), launched in 2019. Waste from wool and cotton textile manufacturing processes, after a special treatment, is introduced into the pulp used to produce the paper. [Refit contains 40% post-consumer recycled waste](#) combined with 15% wool or cotton fibres.
- [The Shiro Echo Paper](#) is the highest quality 100% recycled paper. [Favini produces Shiro Echo](#) with energy from renewable sources and unavoidable emissions are offset. Shiro Echo is FSC™ certified, recyclable, biodegradable.
- The Favini company has also launched the [Shiro Tree Free](#) paper produced [with fibers from annual plants like bamboo, cotton and sugarcane scraps](#).

Created in 1736, the Favini company boasts over 30 years of successful experience in applying circular economy strategies. The company conducts ongoing research into new fibres that can be used as alternatives to traditional tree cellulose in paper production. The last innovation is Sparto Paper, launched in 2025 and produced using fibres derived from esparto grass and bagasse, the by-product of sugarcane processing. Bagasse is also used in the Shiro Tree Free paper line, produced using renewable non-wood biomass, specifically fibres originating from annual plants such as bamboo or cotton and bagasse.

Favini's website contains all the information needed to appreciate its working methods and the extraordinary products it launches, based on the principles of environmental and high quality. One aspect the company emphasizes is the industrial symbiosis that can be implemented at a local level by through circular economy strategies. By using each other's by-products, these strategies enable alliances between local companies that would otherwise be competitors. These virtuous alliances have led to the creation of the eco-friendly production lines of Alga Carta, Cruch, Remake, and Refit.

Favini's future objective is to further strengthen its ecological industrial approach by increasing the percentage of waste scraps and decreasing the use of virgin tree pulp in production process. On the other hand, by partnering with interested industries, Favini aims to expand the impact of ecological industrial symbiosis by transforming industrial by-products into in high-quality papers instead of waste destined for landfills.

[In 2023 Favini became a participant in the United Nations Global Compact](#). This commitment is part of their sustainability journey and reflects its dedication to promoting worldwide standards for sustainable and responsible business practices. As a participant of the Global Compact, Favini aligns its strategies and operations with principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. In its [2024 Sustainability Report](#), Favini reaffirms its commitment to long-term sustainable growth and to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

To know more

[Sparto Paper in Favini website](#)

[Sparto Paper brochure](#)



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