

The History of FIAT

A history that goes back more than a hundred years. A history written by capable, passionate men and women.

Products and achievements that have shaped the world around us: machines, designs, engines that have made entire generations dream.

This is the Fiat that has represented the Italian spirit to the world for more than a century.

This historic timeline intentionally excludes the activities of the agricultural and construction equipment and the trucks and commercial vehicles sectors subsequent to the creation, respectively, of Iveco (1975) and CNH (1999). Products, activities and events relating to these two companies are described in detail in the history of the Fiat Industrial group.

<http://www.fiatspa.com/en-US/group/history/Pages/default.aspx>

1899 - 1910

Fiat is founded at the end of the 1800s - a period filled with the fervor of grand initiatives, inventive spirit and new ideas - and is destined to rapidly become one of the world's leading industrial groups.

1899: On July 11th, the deed of incorporation is signed giving birth to Società Anonima Fabbrica Italiana di Automobili Torino - F.I.A.T. The first car built is the 4 HP.

1900: The first plant is inaugurated and production reaches 24 cars a year.

1902: Giovanni Agnelli becomes Managing Director.

1903: The company is listed on the stock exchange and begins producing its first vehicles for goods transport.

1906: Out of a total 8 million lire in annual sales, export sales reach 6 million lire. Auto production is expanded with the addition of the 8, 10, 12, 24, 60, 100 and 130 HP models. The company also begins making trucks, buses, trams and marine engines.

1908: The company begins manufacture of aircraft engines: the first developed is the 50hp SA 8/75, which incorporates the experience acquired on the auto racing circuit.

1910 - 1920

In Europe, as the new century unfolds, significant economic and scientific progress continue. But the eruption of the Great War has a considerable impact on industrial activity as it is transformed to support the country's military effort.

1910: Six new models are launched: the 12-15 HP, 15-20 HP, 20-30 HP, 30-45 HP and the Type 5 and Type 6.

1912-1914: Fiat cars win a number of international races, such as the American Grand Prize, the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race and the Gothenburg-Stockholm Winter Cup. The first small displacement production car, the Fiat Zero, is created.

1914: As part of the war effort, almost 20,000 units of the 18BL lorry are produced and, in the years following, various aircraft engines.

1915-1917: Construction begins on the Lingotto factory, the largest in Europe at the time. The Group enters the steel and railway sectors.

1919: Immediately following the war, Fiat comes out with the 501 "economy", 505 and 510, as well as its first tractor, the 702.

1920 - 1930

Life in post-war Italy is marked by intense political and social conflict. These are difficult years for the Company requiring rigorous attention to cost management. In 1923, with the crisis having passed, the Lingotto factory is inaugurated and it becomes the symbol of a Fiat whose future is now inextricably linked to the concept of industrialized production. Inside the factory, the assembly line is introduced and working methods are transformed.

1920: Giovanni Agnelli becomes Chairman of Fiat.

1922: The AL biplane, Fiat's first civil aviation aircraft, takes its maiden flight. The same year, the company establishes Grandi Motori for the construction of marine engines.

1921-1929: The decade sees the release of many models, including launch of the SuperFiat, the 519, a six cylinder luxury car, the 509 and the 503. In 1927, the 520 is offered in left-hand drive and in 1928, aluminum cylinder heads are adopted on production model cars, representing a world first. 1929 sees the arrival of the economical 514 and the elegant 525. The 1014 van is also launched: with six wheels, dual transmission and articulated chassis, this vehicle is unbeatable off road.

1930 - 1940

For Fiat, the early '30s are marked by the consolidation of its manufacturing base and significant expansion abroad: from France to Spain, Poland and the USSR.

1930: The arrival of the "Littorina", the world's first railcar.

1932: The 700C tractor is launched.

1930-1935: Fiat releases 15 more models. Some are to become milestones in automobile history: the popular 508 Balilla, the deluxe 518 and 527 Ardita, the aerodynamic 1500, the economic 500 Topolino and the 1100 "Musone".

1934: Francesco Agello reaches 709.209 kilometers per hour in a Macchi-Castoldi M.C.72 powered by a Fiat AS6 engine, setting a world record for propeller-driven seaplanes that remains unbeaten.

1937: Construction begins on the Mirafiori plant. It is inaugurated two years later, introducing the most advanced working methods to Italy.

1940 - 1950

With entry into the war, Fiat has to convert production to military purposes. The company dramatically reduces production of cars, while output of trucks is multiplied five-fold. Armored vehicles, airplanes and marine engines are also produced.

1940: The Fiat 016 locomotive exceeds 160 kilometers per hour, breaking the world speed record in the diesel engine category.

1942: Launch of the 700D wheeled tractor and the model "50", the first diesel-powered heavy crawler. The latter is hidden underground for fear of requisition by the Germans. It is recovered at the end of the war and mass production begins.

1945-1947: Senator Agnelli dies on 16 December 1945 and Vittorio Valletta becomes chairman. Large-scale production of cars resumes, with models such as the 500B berlinetta and estate, the refreshed 1100 and 1500, and the sporty 1100S. Alongside these are trucks and buses, high-power tractors, railcars, airplanes and large marine engines.

1949: The number of employees tops 71,000 and the company returns to bottom line growth.

1950 - 1960

Italy experiences a period of economic boom and the car industry is one of the main drivers of intense growth: one car for every 96 inhabitants in 1949 becomes one for every 28 inhabitants in 1958 and one for every 11 inhabitants by 1963. Fiat now has more than 85,000 employees and car production grows six-fold over the decade.

1951: The transatlantic liner *Giulio Cesare*, powered by a Fiat engine, enters service and Italy's first jet, the Fiat G.80, takes flight.

1952: The high-performance 8V sports car reaches 200 kilometers per hour and the 7002 model helicopter is presented. The same year, production begins on the 682N lorry which goes on to be produced for more than a quarter of a century and becomes a milestone in transport history.

1953: Launch of the 1400, Italy's first diesel-powered passenger car.

1955: Arrival of the popular 600, the first Fiat rear-wheel drive passenger car. Impresit, a company specialized in civil engineering founded in 1929, constructs roads, tunnels, bridges and dams, such as the Kariba dam on the Zambesi river.

1956: The new 500 and the Autobianchi Bianchina are launched. The Fiat G.91 is selected as tactical fighter for NATO.

1960 - 1970

The decade begins with a general spirit of optimism and the economic miracle continues in Italy. Fiat experiences dramatic increase in production volumes: the number of cars constructed per year goes from 425,000 to 1,741,000; trucks from 19,000 to 64,800; tractors from 22,637 to 50,558; earthmovers from 3,000 to 6,255. Fiat doubles the number of employees to almost 171,000.

1964: Launch of the two-door, five-seat Fiat 850 sedan.

1966: Giovanni Agnelli, grandson of the founder, becomes Chairman. A major agreement is signed for construction of the Vaz plant in Togliattigrad, Russia, which will produce two thousand Ziguli passenger cars a day.

1967: Vittorio Valletta dies. Production begins at the Rivalta plant. Fiat takes a majority stake in Magneti Marelli. The 124 is named "Car of the Year" and the Fiat Dino Coupé is launched complete with engine based on Ferrari technology.

1969: The company acquires Lancia and purchases a 50% interest in Sefac-Ferrari. The same year, Fiat Ferroviaria designs and produces the Pendolino, the world's first tilting train.

1970: The 128, Fiat's first front-wheel drive car, is named "Car of the Year".

1970 - 1980

Toward the end of the 1960s, there is a long period of protests and social unrest that also involves Fiat and has significant repercussions on the group's results. Despite these difficulties, the group invests heavily in the south of Italy and begins construction of plants located in Termini Imerese, Cassino, Termoli, Sulmona, Vasto, Bari, Lecce and Brindisi. During the same period, Fiat begins the process of decentralizing its operating activities, transforming the company into an industrial holding. Among the first companies to be established were Fiat Macchine Movimento Terra, Fiat Engineering and Iveco.

1971: Presentation of the 127 which achieves extraordinary success and the following year wins the "Car of the Year" award. The historic sports brand Abarth becomes part of the Group.

1972: Lancia begins production of the Beta, which is followed in subsequent years by the Stratos, Gamma and Delta. The same year, Lancia wins the World Rally Constructors' Championship and takes the title again in 1974, 1975 and 1976. Fiat takes first in 1977 and 1978.

1975: Ferrari wins the Formula 1 World Championship. This triumph is repeated in 1977 and 1979.

1976: Centro Ricerche Fiat is founded.

1978: The innovative car chassis assembly system, "Robogate", is installed at some plants. At the same time, new factories are constructed in Italy and Brazil. Comau and Teksid are established.

1979: Fiat Auto grows and eventually brings together the Fiat, Lancia, Autobianchi and Ferrari brands.

1980 - 1990

In the Eighties, the industrial world underwent profound changes, linked above all to the development of electronics and new materials. Attention for the environment also increases and Fiat demonstrates its sensitivity by creating electric and natural gas vehicles, and setting up the Fare project, for the recycling of cars destined for demolition.

1980: Launch of the Panda, which immediately becomes key player in the economy segment.

1983: At Cape Canaveral in Florida, Fiat Auto presents the new Uno, a symbol of innovation and technological rebirth for company. It goes on to win the "Car of the Year" award in 1984.

1984: Alfa Romeo becomes part of the Group.

1985: Production begins on the innovative FIRE (Fully Integrated and Robotized Engine).

1987: The world's first direct-injection diesel engine for passenger cars is developed.

1988: The state-of-the-art research center Elasis is established at the Group's initiative. The same year, the Fiat Tipo is named "Car of the Year". Other cars to achieve success during the decade are the Fiat Regata and Croma, the Lancia Delta, Thema and Y10, the Alfa Romeo 164, and the Ferrari GTO, Testarossa and F40, as well as the commercial vehicles Fiorino and Ducato.

1990 - 2000

In response to increasingly tough international competition, Fiat Group adopts a multi-track strategy: on one side, it invests in product and process innovation and the search for new markets outside Europe with high development potential and, on the other, it implements a plan for cost containment and internal reorganization.

1990: The Panda Elettra is the first mass-produced electric vehicle.

1993: The Company acquires the prestigious automaker Maserati and also introduces Progetto Autonomy to facilitate mobility for the disabled.

1995, 1996 & 1998: The Fiat Punto, Fiat Bravo-Brava and then the Alfa Romeo 156 are named "Car of the Year".

1997: The Alfa Romeo 156 becomes the first car in the world to be fitted with a diesel engine with Common Rail system, which within the space of a few years revolutionizes the market for diesel-powered cars.

1998: The Fiat Multipla, Lancia Lybra and new Punto come onto the market.

1999: The world's first automated manual transmission (Selespeed) goes into mass production. During the same year, CNH-Case New Holland is formed to create a leading global player in agricultural and construction equipment.

2000 - 2011

During the decade, the Group goes through a profound cultural change and refocuses its activities to concentrate on the automotive sector. All brands launch new models: Fiat presents a restyling of the Punto, the new Idea, the Bravo, and relaunches the iconic 500; Alfa Romeo debuts the 159, 166, MiTo and Giulietta; for its 100th anniversary, Lancia launches the new Ypsilon; from Maranello, production begins on the innovative Ferrari F430 and 599 GTB Fiorano; and, Maserati comes out with the captivating GranSport and GranTurismo coupés.

2000: An industrial alliance is formed with General Motors that would be dissolved in 2005. Alfa Romeo brings out the 147 which is elected "Car of the Year" the following year.

2001: Fiat presents the Stilo and the following year Lancia launches the Thesis, its new flagship luxury model.

2003: After almost half a century at the helm of the company, Giovanni Agnelli dies and his brother Umberto takes over as Chairman. Fiat invents the MultiJet technology and the SDE, the smallest direct-injection diesel engine ever produced. In Brazil, the company introduces flexfuel technology, which enables two different fuels (e.g., gasoline and ethanol) to be mixed in the same tank.

2004: Umberto Agnelli dies and the Group's new leaders are appointed: Luca Cordero di Montezemolo as Chairman, John Elkann as Vice Chairman and Sergio Marchionne as Chief Executive Officer. The Panda wins the "Car of the Year" award.

2005: Fiat Group returns to profitability and the 16v 1.3 MultiJet engine is named "Engine of the Year". FPT Powertrain Technologies is established.

2006: Launch of the TetraFuel system for alternative fuels.

2007: At the end of January, Fiat launches the new Bravo. In March, one of the most prestigious sports car brands in history, Abarth, is relaunched with its reinterpretation of the Grande Punto. On July 4th, the new Fiat 500 hits the market and becomes an instant success. In 2008, it is named "Car of the Year".

2008: The new Lancia Delta, the Alfa 8C Spider, the 500 Abarth and the Fiorino are all presented for the first time at the Geneva Motor Show. A few months later, Fiat launches the "free space" Qubo and the Grande Punto Natural Power.

2009: On June 10th, Fiat Group and Chrysler Group LLC announce that they have signed a global strategic alliance. The same year, FPT introduces the MultiJet II as well as the MultiAir, a revolutionary electro-hydraulic valve control system. In December, the new Doblò arrives. In addition, Fiat S.p.A. is recognized as a sustainability leader and enters the Dow Jones Sustainability World and Dow Jones Sustainability STOXX indexes.

2010: John Elkann becomes Chairman of Fiat. The company launches two important innovations, the TCT (Twin Clutch Transmission) technology and the TwinAir, the world's first high-tech two-cylinder engine. In April, there is the debut of the Alfa Romeo Giulietta and the 500,000th unit of the new 500 rolls off the production line. On September 16th, Shareholders approve the plan for the demerger of Fiat S.p.A.'s industrial activities and creation of a new group headed by Fiat Industrial S.p.A.

2011: The demerger takes effect on January 1st. Under the new structure, Fiat consists of FGA, Ferrari, Maserati, Magneti Marelli, Teksid, Comau and Fiat Powertrain Technologies (the "Passenger & Commercial Vehicles" powertrain business). The new group headed by Fiat Industrial S.p.A., which is listed on Borsa Italiana, consists of CNH, Iveco and FPT Industrial (the "Industrial & Marine" powertrain business).