

# Best Expression of Place Identity Through Design



## Courmayeur

Entered by Interbrand



Courmayeur, born as a thermal spa town, put on the map by pioneering mountaineers in the 1800s, has long been an Italian gem nestled away on the side of Mont Blanc. Courmayeur needed to grow and differentiate itself from other European mountain venues. Aware of the need to move forward and evolve, the team had to embark on a new path that would enable it to assert itself as a major international resort by adopting a brand focused approach - company like - giving the city a credible and relevant positioning and a unique identity.

This led to the development of a broad rebranding project geared towards the creation of a brand that not only identifies the city but is also capable of supporting the long-term growth of Courmayeur interacting with citizens, tourists and partners. The goal was to convey to experience-seekers, Courmayeur's authentic identity as the pinnacle of Italian spirit and high-altitude premium hospitality. At a first we wanted to gain a deep understanding of the status quo, analyzing the competitive scenario and establishing the potential across key stakeholders.

Through a first immersive phase we defined which attitudes were associated with Courmayeur: magical, intimate and unexplored. It's the place where to choose what you want to do freely, relaxing and enjoying mountain sports. This analysis - along with the contributions of target audiences in Italy, as well as Sweden, Switzerland, Great Britain, and the United States - lead to the next step of the process: the definition of the new Courmayeur brand.

We outlined Courmayeur's new proposition - 'Enjoying Italy at its Peak' - and a new brand manifesto that shapes the essence behind the new brand. The new positioning summarizes all that Courmayeur is: a place

where people can find the thing that best suits their needs— whether it's relaxation, adventure, excitement, the joys of eating and drinking, or shopping—a place, that is, where Italian style can be appreciated in all its facets. The general principles of the brand are conveyed by Courmayeur's three distinct personality characteristics: multi-faceted, vibrant, and refined; and by its core values: freedom, curiosity, and understated elegance.

The new identity features this proposition through a dynamic and unusual wordmark and through specific visual codes. The new wordmark embodies the immediately recognizable white capped silhouette of Mont Blanc, that looms above the city.

The result is a dynamic wordmark featuring an expressive, custom lettering inspired by the rugged mountain profile in an iconic premium style. The use of icons and a texture based on contour lines enrich the identity and the brand expression while lending themselves to the creation of new visual applications and merchandising. With the creation of this new identity, the Courmayeur brand will no longer represent just a place, but a whole ecosystem of products and services that people interact with— a truly radical transformation in how the city presents itself and engages citizens, tourists, and partners alike.

Through this project, the town council secured new prestigious and influential partnerships with renowned brands such as Maserati, Cantine Ferrari and American Express. Furthermore, new events organized after rebranding attracted new visitors. But ever more important, after the brand launch on October 25th, 2016, Courmayeur saw an 10% presence increase and 18% arrivals increase, compared to the same period in 2015.