

The House of Gucci: A Sensational Story of Murder, Madness, Glamour, and Greed

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<blockquote>The startling and dramatic true story behind the murder of Maurizio Gucci, and the rise, fall, and rise again of the Gucci dynasty</blockquote>

Did Patrizia Reggiani murder her ex-husband, Maurizio Gucci, in 1995 because his spending was wildly out of control? Did she do it because her glamorous ex was preparing to marry his mistress, Paola Franchi? Or is there a possibility she didn't do it at all?

In this gripping account of the ascent, eventual collapse, and resurrection of the Gucci dynasty, Sara Gay Forden takes us behind the scenes of the second trial of the century and exposes the passions, the power, and the vulnerabilities of the greatest fashion family of our times.

From the day Guccio Gucci opened his modest leathersgoods shop in Florence in the 1900s to the day Investcorp took control of the multimillion-dollar company in 1993, from the signature horse-bit loafers and bamboo-handled bags of the 1980s to the sexy, hard-edged Tom Ford designs of today, *The House of Gucci* tells a riveting story of high fashion, high finance, and heartrending personal tragedy.

A world-famous luxury brand, financial skullduggery, vicious family quarrels ending in a sensational murder: the Gucci story just couldn't be juicier, and former *Women's Wear Daily* correspondent Sara Gay Forden does full justice to its gossipy appeal. Guccio Gucci opened his first leather-goods store in Florence in 1921, but it was his son Aldo who expanded the company overseas and made products like the Gucci loafer and the Flora scarf international symbols of status and affluence. Aldo's sons, his brother Rodolfo, and Rodolfo's son Maurizio, all of whom also worked in the family business, didn't always appreciate Aldo's imperious ways, and corporate board meetings often ended with ashtrays and Gucci handbags flying. Things got so bad in the early 1980s that Aldo's renegade son Paolo made public financial documents that very nearly sent his father to jail for tax fraud. Even more lurid was the 1995 execution-style murder of Maurizio, followed by the conviction in 1998 of his ex-wife Patrizia for ordering the hit. Meanwhile, CEO Domenico De Sole and creative director Tom Ford were transforming Gucci from a family-run company into a modern corporation once again on the cutting edge of fashion and marketing. Forden makes the business story as dramatic as the Guccis' personal squabbles (and of course the two were often interconnected) in a highly entertaining family biography that doubles as a savvy business history. --Wendy Smith Sara Gay Forden is the former Milan bureau chief and business correspondent for *Women's Wear Daily*. Now editor in chief of the new Italian magazine *L'UNA*, she lives in Milan with her Italian husband and their young daughter.

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