

If the Shoe Fits

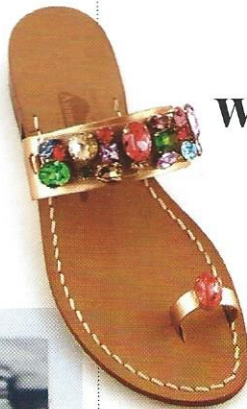
Put your best foot forward with Canfora's custom, wearable art. **By DEBBI K. KICKHAM**

IF THERE'S ONE ULTIMATE SOUVENIR from a trip to Capri, it's a pair of the handmade, custom-fit sandals that Jackie Kennedy made famous in the '60s. Who can forget the inimitable shots of her strolling the Italian island's cobblestoned walkways, looking oh-so-chic?

The tony streets of Capri boast several sandal-makers, but the most prestigious of these is Amedeo Canfora on the sun-splashed Via Camerelle. Today it is owned and operated by Costanzo Canfora, whose grandfather, Amedeo, founded the company in 1946. The business shot to international prominence in 1962, when First Lady Jackie Kennedy made a visit to the Canfora store while on a trip to the

Amalfi Coast. She was traveling with friends, who suggested that she procure a pair of the elegant sandals that Canfora was known for, and which had previously been made for Princess Margaret and Grace Kelly.

"Mrs. Kennedy came in around midnight and ordered several pairs of sandals," says Costanzo Canfora, inside the tiny shop.

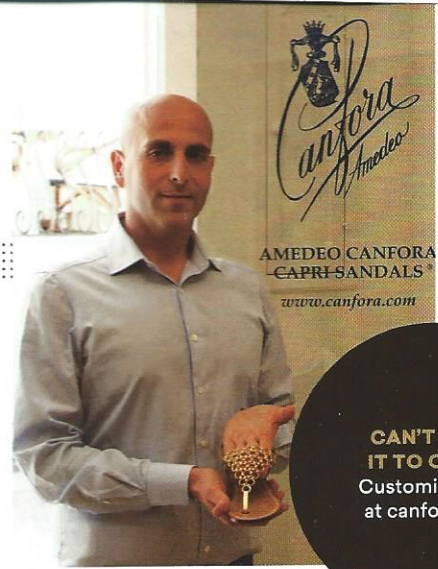


"We care about each small detail. We have customers who come back wearing sandals they purchased 20 years ago."

"My grandfather made a style especially for her, called the 'K,'" which consists of a webbed design of silver interlocking chains. "After that, she kept ordering our sandals from a store in New York," says Costanzo.

Inside Canfora are several large photos of Mrs. Kennedy, which were taken that memorable night when she stopped by the boutique. There's also a store log book that displays the page where Mrs. Kennedy had her right foot traced so that Amedeo Canfora could obtain her precise foot measurements. The page says, in Italian, "Sig. Kennedy" (for Signora Kennedy) on the left, and "Wife of President Kennedy" on the right.

Today, Amedeo's two adult daughters, Angela and Rita, still hand-make the sandals in the same way they always



CAN'T MAKE IT TO CAPRI?
Customize yours at canfora.com.

have: sitting in cramped quarters surrounded by a sea of Italian leather, shoe boxes, wooden foot lasts, and staple guns.

Visit the shop in Capri to order from scores of styles. Your feet will be measured and you'll select the style, colors materials, and type of heel. It takes about 20 minutes for Angela or Rita to create your custom sandals, and the women will also tweak the fit to make sure that the sandals are comfortable.

"The combinations are unlimited, based on the many colors and stones that we have," says Costanzo. "It's unbelievable how many styles we offer."

The "K" in gold or silver is the best-seller, says Costanzo, but other glamorous styles abound, from the "Gail" with a simple T-strap to the bejeweled "Sophie" bearing fake rhinestones. White sandals with "diamond" rhinestones are ideal for brides searching for special footwear. Prices start at around 100 Euros (\$115) and go up to 350 Euros (\$400) for the most expensive pair — in crocodile.

"We care about each small detail," says Costanzo. "And we have customers who come back wearing sandals they purchased 20 years ago."

Besides Mrs. Kennedy, Canfora has sold its sandals to other fashion mavens including supermodel Naomi Campbell, Princess Caroline of Monaco, and socialite Ivana Trump. "Sooner or later," says Costanzo, "they all buy from us." •

