

Milano 25 Onlus Via di Belmonte ,32 Antella 50012 –(Bagno a Ripoli) Firenze
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www.milano25.com

Milano 25 is a taxi (a Chrysler PT Cruiser) known throughout the world (just look at the press cuttings) for the charitable work it does 365 days-a-year in Florence and beyond, in collaboration with numerous charities chief .

Milano 25's charitable activity has to do with children and began four years ago after a chance encounter in Florence, when Caterina happened to pick up in her taxi Costanza, who was at the time, who was at the time just three years-old. It was the little girl who chose Caterina's taxi because of the enormous flower on its dashboard. Costanza told the taxi driver that she had a little brother who had gone up to heaven. This was how Caterina learnt that the Bacciottis had lost their son because of a brain tumour and that, following his death; they had dedicated their lives to a charitable foundation for the cure, study and assistance of paediatric tumours.

Thus Caterina began giving free rides to and from the Meyer Hospital for the families of children suffering from tumours. Her enthusiasm was such that three years later the **taxi as friend** project was born which eventually involved all Florence taxi drivers who gave free rides not only to children but also to the elderly.

The story of **Milano 25**, however, dates back to the death from lung cancer, in August 2001, of Caterina's partner, Stefano. He was really the taxi driver while she was a first-class employee in a big office in Prato (see the pages published by Giunti and on the **Milano 25** website in relation to this special story). Before he died, Stefano told Caterina that "you will be Milano 25." And so it was: love's reply to so much pain. A funny, ostentatious taxi, full of bangles and baubles, that stands out in a traffic jam. At the wheel is Caterina with her extravagant hairdo, decked out in bright colours and with white mice on her boots, always smiling her serious smile. Sitting in the back seat of her taxi, one immediately realises that her extravagance and personality are more effective than any social service.

Another important meeting for Caterina and the **Milano 25** story took place recently with Patch Adams. The doctor-clown was made famous by the film, *Patch Adams*, in which he was played by Robin Williams. Caterina accepted Doctor Adam's invitation to come to see him in Russia where, for the last 20 years, he has been doing work for charity in paediatric hospitals, orphanages, nursery schools etc.

Milano 25,fitted with snows tyreswith the backing of the City of Florence, through **Eugenio Giani**, the city superintendent who appointed her ambassador to the City of Florence for solidarity, crossed half of Europe last November to meet up with the doctor-clown. (The details of this journey can be found on the **Milano 25** website.)

Thus was born an important new collaboration with Russia that in a first instance involved Caterina and the City of Florence, represented by Eugenio Giani, in charge of international relations, in the twinning with **Maria's Children**, the well-known arts and rehabilitation centre in Moscow, directed by Maria Eliseeva .

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For donations: **milano25 onlus** , c.c. Cariprato N°.048570204051 CAB:2800 ABI: 6020 CIN: T