

New Italian Shoes for a New President

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The Presidential shoe department is a workshop in Novara, Italy where world leaders get their kicks tailor-made. Obama is the next President to get his pair

Practically speaking, President Barack Obama won't follow in the footsteps of his predecessor, George W. Bush. But he will know what it's like to step into the man's shoes (literally). Along with his new White House digs, Obama will receive new shoes, hand-crafted by the same Italian who made a pair for Bush.

The Presidential rapport with Adriano Stefanelli, shoemaker to religious leaders such as Pope John Paul II and the Patriarch of Moscow, began with a papal visit to the U.S. Bush so admired John Paul II's shoes that he went straight to the source and commissioned his own. Stefanelli, who is from the Piedmont city of Novara, said the American embassy asked him to think up a creation for the



incoming President, likely to be Obama according to polls at the time. He went straight to work.

Stefanelli calls his uniquely manufactured footwear “a classic Italian product, perfect for a Made in Italy fan like Obama.” The President’s package from Italy will contain what are known as “francesine”, black shoes with natural leather soles sewn entirely by hand.

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