



Images: UNIC.

A unique opportunity

After nearly 30 years in Carros, in southeastern France, coffee machine manufacturer UNIC has transferred production to Aubusson in the country's central region.

INAUGURATED IN 2000, Electrolux Professional Group's Aubusson facility is a state-of-the-art manufacturing hub where precision and scale converge. Long home to Dito Sama food preparation equipment production, the site has now added another string to its bow, becoming the new global home of all UNIC coffee machine manufacturing from April 2026.

UNIC says this major decision represents a "strategic step designed to strengthen industrial capabilities while preparing the brand for the future of the global coffee market".

This is echoed by Philippe Zavattiero, Electrolux Professional President Business Area Food Preparation and Beverage, who says this important step is intended to strengthen UNIC's long-term competitiveness and ability to serve customers with the highest quality and reliability.

"The Aubusson site is a state-of-the-art facility offering a world-class manufacturing environment for producing advanced, high-performance machines to

the highest standards," says Zavattiero.

"Its increased flexibility and capacity enable UNIC to better respond to seasonal fluctuations and market demand, enhancing efficiency and competitiveness while supporting sustainable growth and long-term customer value."

All functions not directly linked to production – including R&D, Sales, Customer Services and Marketing – remain based in Carros, ensuring that full historic knowhow and brand heritage are maintained.

So why Aubusson?

Zavattiero notes that when UNIC became part of Electrolux Professional Group, it brought three things: a historical company with a 100-year-long story in coffee; a high-end product that's recognised in the market; and ultimately, a reputable French brand.

Today, those products include the fully automatic TANGO XP, the multi-boiler Stella Epic, and the traditional Aura and Classic coffee machines lines.

"We invested in UNIC, not only to be part of the coffee sector which is strategic to Electrolux Professional, but also into a

French company, and it's very important that we keep this identity by continuing producing on the French territory and maintaining a French-made product," says Zavattiero.

He says the Aubusson facility was already recognised as a best-in-class factory within Electrolux Professional, well organised and efficient, with the possibility and opportunity to revise the layout to make space for coffee machine production. There was also a desire to bring different product lines across the portfolio under the same roof.

"The beauty of this organisation is that we can share common services and have a dedicated product line for commercial services," says Zavattiero.

All hands on deck

Aubusson's status as a leading factory is supported by Electrolux Professional's Plant Food Preparation and Beverage Manager Alexandre Lépée.

With a surface area of around 18,000 square metres, 2,000 of these were freed to make room for the UNIC production line.

Lépée notes the involvement of the local authorities in the Aubusson community, including the mayor, with the company already well-known in the area.

Lépée says workers from the Carros plant were also offered jobs at the Aubusson site. Various employees took up the opportunity.

"We rely on those experienced workers as a pillar of the production, because they have the knowledge, and we also involve them in training the other people that we've hired ... we really want to keep the same level of quality, which is very important for our customers," he says.

"The Aubusson plant is very well organised – so we're following the same standards and best practices we've established over the last couple of years, and we will apply these to the coffee production line."

A new chapter

UNIC General Manager Tommaso Fontana-Rava describes the company in chapters – the first, its birth in Italy in 1919 and move to France in the 1930s; the second, becoming a nationwide-known company within the French market.

He says the move to Aubusson is the third big chapter for the brand.

The site is now the production home of UNIC's popular TANGO XP series, a fully automatic espresso machine – enabling it to benefit from advanced manufacturing infrastructure.

"This move marks a new chapter for the brand – one where, under Electrolux Professional, we see UNIC expanding its global industrial presence and strengthening its position on the world stage in a more sophisticated way," he says.

Fontana-Rava also expects the move to strengthen UNIC's scalability – with the chance to increase volume and the speed at which the brand can respond to the market.

"The premium espresso market is really competitive – we have strong players coming from Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and all of these are well known for efficiency, engineering, precision, and manufacturing capacity," he says.

"This means customers will enjoy working with a more reactive company, and it will definitely allow us to become more competitive; not only because of the heritage, but also because of a new way that we are able to execute our industrial manufacturing."

Fontana-Rava also notes demand patterns are shifting and no longer following a predictable seasonal fluctuation model.

"We're seeing that large chains don't follow these patterns, and they require business partners that can be reactive and fast, and can follow them with expansion," he says.

Fontana-Rava says UNIC has met demands in key markets, such as the United States and Asia, with the company reacting to business dynamics that occur quickly.

"When these companies suddenly experience a possibility to expand ... we need to be a partner that's ready and equipped to respond. We need to be able to move fast, to increase production, to be flexible, to respond with very short lead times," he says.

As for what's next, Fontana-Rava believes the Aubusson move is the next phase of growth for UNIC.

"It creates the possibility for us to expand, not only in terms of volumes and production times, but also in terms of new products," he says.

Fontana-Rava says UNIC is one of the few

manufacturers with the ability to produce traditional and fully automatic machines, and notes the importance for the company to communicate with stakeholders that it will not compromise on the quality of its products.

"This is what is making UNIC different and standing out in the market – the fact we have extremely high-quality products and work with high-quality components," he says.

"UNIC machines are known for being resistant, and for having a very good coffee extraction ... we want to build on this, which is why we have chosen to move the facility."

"Keeping our knowhow and excellence, and at the same time being able to expand industrially, I think it's a unique opportunity – no pun intended." **GCR**

For more information, visit unic-espresso.com



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