

10 minutes

With...

Mr Lorenzo Garagnani

Consultant Hand and Wrist Surgeon



Mr Lorenzo Garagnani is a highly specialised Consultant Orthopaedic Hand and Wrist Surgeon. He specialises in the whole spectrum

of disorders of the hand, wrist and peripheral nerves of the upper limb – both in adults and children.

He qualified in Medicine and Surgery at Bologna University in Italy, where he also trained in Trauma and Orthopaedics in the prestigious Bologna Specialist Training Programme, based at the world famous Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute.

Mr Garagnani completed his sub-specialist training in hand and wrist surgery in centres of excellence in the UK, where he was Hand Fellow at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London, the Oxford University Hospitals, the Hand Clinic in Windsor and Great Ormond Street Hospital.

1 Why did you decide to study medicine?

Since I was very young, I always wanted to do something with people and, most importantly, for people. Medical studies and training are hard, but very exciting as the progression in scientific knowledge is continuous, and a medical professional never stops learning and constantly perfecting. This profession is challenging yet very rewarding, as there is no greater joy than the one that can be felt after finding a solution for someone else's problems.

2 What made you pursue your specialty?

I have been lucky enough to have had mentors during my training who are not only world-recognised experts in the hand and wrist field, but also very inspirational people who are now my colleagues and dear friends. They made me appreciate the role our hands play in our lives as human beings. No one really understands how important they are until there is a problem, or lack of hand function. Our hands are the main instrument our brain uses to express itself in the surrounding world. They not only allow us to feed and take care of our daily needs, but also allow us to create connections with other people, write, work, perform arts, hobbies and sports, and much, much more. For example, I could not take care of another person's hands if mine did not work! In my opinion, the lithography 'Drawing Hands' by M.C. Escher is the perfect representation of this concept.

3 What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Restoring someone's hand and upper limb function is the most rewarding part of it, as well as the smile of patients who are rediscovering their potential through the improved use of their hands.

4 What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I love travelling and exploring the world. It is never enough, as there is so much to be discovered out there! I enjoy music, reading books, watching movies, visiting exhibitions, and never miss a chance of a good concert or play. London offers so much that it is difficult to get bored over here. I also enjoy good food, especially in the company of close friends and family, this is in my Italian DNA I guess!

5 What is the title of your 'best read' so far?

The Alchemist, by Paulo Coelho. It is about a life trip and the power of a dream. Quoting Coelho himself, "It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting."

6 If you could invite three people to dinner, living or dead, who would they be?

I would love to sit at a table with Leonardo da Vinci and ask him a thousand questions, and enjoy a daiquiri with Ernest Hemingway, whilst Freddie Mercury is singing for all of us.

7 What is special about where you grew up?

I grew up in a village called Bagnacavallo, in the County of Ravenna, in Emilia Romagna, Italy. Bagnacavallo is an ancient village with an intact medieval plan and several historic landmarks, located halfway between the hills and the sea. People there are friendly and notoriously welcoming. In 2014, I was awarded the 'Far Citizen Prize' for my career by the local Council and Mutual Aid Society, with a ceremony that made me feel very proud and deeply honoured.

I completed my medical studies at Bologna University, the oldest university in the world, founded in 1088 AD. My subsequent orthopaedic training rotation was also based in Bologna, mainly at the Rizzoli Orthopaedic Institute, a world-recognised centre of excellence and innovation in orthopaedics. Bologna is a beautiful historic city as well as the place where my father's family, a very ancient family, came from, hence it is a very special place for me, as both my family and professional roots belong there.

8 Where is your favourite place in the world?

This is definitely London, the place where I live. I believe this is the most vibrant, multi-ethnic, and open-minded city in the world.

9 Who would you get to play yourself in a movie?

Would Robert De Niro be asking too much?