

FRAGRANCE AND PERSONAL CARE

## Making room for women: Italian beauty enters a new era

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*Italian beauty brands are looking for innovative ways to tap into the booming U.S. market. Image credit: Perlier*

By NORA HOWE

NEW YORK The beauty industry, and specifically Italian beauty, has historically been dominated by male leadership, but women are emerging as the sector's pioneers.

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During a panel hosted by Beauty Made in Italy's Italian Beauty Council (IBC) on April 6 at the Italian Trade Commission in New York, Italian beauty and skincare brand founders discussed how they continue to overcome the challenges of the industry. They have found success by supporting women internally and leading by their own values.

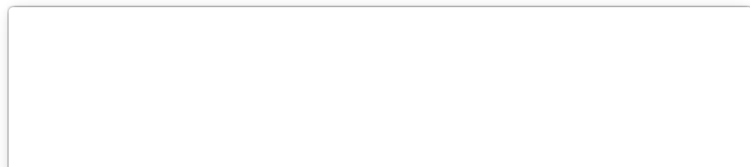
### Women supporting women

Moderated by *Glamour* editor in chief, Samantha Barry, the panel included three female beauty executives: Elisa Giraudi, CEO of Perlier; Lucrezia Del Papa, head of business development at Olivella; and Annalisa Zaroni, founder at Glamove.

When it was founded more than 80 years ago, **Perlier** specialized in the manufacturing of products derived from the ingredients of medical plants. In 1972, the company expanded operations to develop science-backed cosmetics.

Ms. Giraudi, who moved from Italy to Florida to better understand the U.S. market, noted that, while the United States is progressing in how women are represented in the industry's corporate structures and executive-level roles, Italy still has a way to go.

All three panelists agreed that conversions regarding gender equality and social responsibility are not as frequent or fluid in Italy as they are in the United States. As brand leaders, they insisted it is their responsibility to encourage change from within their businesses that will ultimately reach consumers.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Glamove (@glamovefitness)

### *Ms. Zanoni relies heavily on Instagram to stay connected with Glamove clients*

Via a video call, Italy's ambassador to the United States, Mariangela Zappia, jumped into the conversation to add that, while companies have a responsibility to support underrepresented groups within their organizations, it is also a responsibility of institutions.

Especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, values have shifted significantly, and if public institutions do not actively embrace change, then they will stunt the ability of their commercial industries to do the same.

Transparency and connection were also referenced frequently throughout the discussion. Notably, Ms. Zanoni admitted that, while important, financial success comes second to her relationship with her clients.

**Glamove** is a lifestyle brand that blends cosmetics, skincare and fitness, targeted toward those on the move who want to maintain their physical and mental health.

### **U.S. push**

When it comes to Italian beauty brands infiltrating the U.S. market, there are a number of key differences brands should be aware of, most of which come down to social norms.

In sharing her experience running an Italian brand in the United States, Ms. Giraudi said the starkest difference is the apparent network of women in the U.S. At least in the beauty sector, she feels as though women are far more supportive of each other, and people are generally more open about their successes something Italians often construe as "bragging."

To succeed in the U.S. market, however, brands and their leaders must brag. They must show confidence, passion and leadership to make any splash.



*Olivella is an offshoot of a family olive oil business that prioritizes sustainability in beauty. Image credit: Olivella*

As a woman, especially, Ms. Del Papa advises other women to take risks and trust their instincts to make it. She took a major risk by developing a skincare line out of her family's olive oil business.

**Olivella skincare** acts as a green substitute by eliminating palm oil and animal by-products while aiming to deliver the same quality in its products. Its mission is to become the only 100 percent olive concept available to all.

The Italian government first introduced the Beauty Made in Italy campaign in 2018 to promote awareness, availability and excellence in Italian beauty products and brands entering the U.S. market.

The campaign educates member Italian companies on the specific properties of the U.S. market through brand analyses, industry research, webinars, promotional initiatives and events, allowing them to make successful inroads ([see story](#)).

As more than 60 percent of the world's cosmetics are produced in Italy, beauty retail platform Mozzafiato is changing the course of the Italian beauty industry as it represents the largest collection of Italian cosmetics and fragrance brands in one centralized online destination.

Inspired by the landscapes, cities, culture, heritage and style of Italy, Mozzafiato launched in 2020 to provide an immersive, authentically Italian experience to the North American market, introducing consumers to the soul of Italian beauty. Mozzafiato highlights native brands that have stood at the forefront of quality, craftsmanship and tradition ([see story](#)).

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