



True Stories

Creativity, research, and development: meet Gala Cosmetics



Patrizia Poggiali, Co-Founder and Head of R&D of Gala Cosmetics

Natural cosmetics have been my world for nearly 25 years. After graduating in chemistry and pharmaceutical technologies, I immediately started my journey as R&D (Researcher & Developer) in a phytocosmetics company: it was love at first sight!

Nature provides us with extraordinary ingredients for psychological and physical well-being: just think about essential oils, plant extracts, butters, or organic oils. Compared to conventional cosmetics, natural formulas present many more challenges, such as the limited number of raw materials available. At the same time, the effectiveness of natural raw materials is unquestionable, making the use of synthetic ingredients not really necessary.

Alongside my role in Gala, I teach a course in natural cosmetics formulation for the second-level Master in Cosmetology at the University of Ferrara.

NATRUE: When and how was Gala created? What are the values of this company?

Patrizia Poggiali: Gala was born in 2004, when our collaboration with Altromercato started and Natyr, a line of natural and fair-trade cosmetics made with at least 50% of ingredients produced in the South of the World countries, was launched. The project embodied my desire and that of the other founders (Davide Fiumi and Lorenzo Zanotti) to use our skills for a project with a high social value and a low environmental impact. Our company was born from this need, and after 17 years it still represents Gala's essence: creating natural, effective, and transparent cosmetics at a fair price, in partnership with our customers and in respect of the common good and the environment.

NATRUE: Gala is one of the biggest third-party manufacturers of cosmetics in Europe. Can you tell us more about your work as cosmetic manufacturer?

Patrizia Poggiali: Our company has been dealing exclusively with natural and organic cosmetics since its foundation: this has allowed us to develop great know-how and a great reputation. We have always looked at our customers as partners with whom we strive to develop projects that go beyond the manufacturing of a product. This is possible for Gala, because products are developed in-house from start to finish: creativity, research and development, packaging selection, production, regulatory assistance. We also support our client in efficacy evaluation, in sales personnel training and in content creation, in order to communicate the value of our natural cosmetics in the best possible way.

NATRUE: What role does innovation play for Gala in the product's design, from the conception to the formulation and the packaging?

Patrizia Poggiali: Innovation has always been key for Gala. We could say that research and development is our engine and striving for continuous improvement is one of our strong points, as it made it possible for us to grow significantly in these 17 years. Our internal R&D team, focusing on formula development, is our second largest department after production: 8 employees out of 35. Our

marketing department is also involved in a constant research activity to formulate innovative product concepts and identify new trends to share with our customers. Finally, product packaging has also been acquiring an increasingly important role in the last few years. The growing awareness of the environmental impact that packaging can have has prompted us to devote a lot of attention to the search for increasingly sustainable innovative solutions. We have created an internal and transversal working group to deal specifically with the search for innovative packaging solutions.

NATRUE: How has the Italian cosmetic market changed since the creation of Gala in 2004? How has Gala adapted to the changes and new trends?

Patrizia Poggiali: The cosmetics market has changed a lot, especially in the last few years. When we started our company, natural cosmetics were a small niche. Few brands were on the market, their product ranges were narrow, and distribution was limited. There were a few Italian companies offering truly natural and certified products. The market was mainly made of German brands.

Today, the situation is very different. There are many Italian companies offering natural products, and their distribution has been expanded by far. Most of mass retailers and drugstores – some of which are our clients – have decided to develop natural, organic and certified product lines under their own brands. There’s also a lot of greenwashing going on, however, which is confusing to consumers and penalising for the sector.

NATRUE: What is the value of the NATRUE Label for Gala’s brands and clients?

Patrizia Poggiali: Choosing the NATRUE Label means being able to guarantee the highest possible level of product naturality to consumers. It is also a means of demonstrating that what we promise is verified by an external and independent organ. NATRUE also grants great transparency on the criteria upon which their guidelines are based. Finally, since the NATRUE certification is very strict, and aimed at the highest possible degree of naturality for every cosmetic category, manufacturers are pushed towards continuous improvement. This contributes to elevating the quality and innovation degree of natural and organic cosmetics.



For more information about GALA COSMETICS, visit <https://www.galacosmetici.com/>