

WWD

Fashion. Beauty. Business.



Building Blocks

After winning the ANDAM Prize, Bianca Saunders is now ready to embark on her five-year plan for growth.

Pages 10 and 11



What to Watch

What lies ahead in the fourth quarter in beauty, media, parties, the arts and culture.

Pages 16 to 23



Fashion Into Wine

Several of Italy's best-known fashion families also have another vocation: making fantastic wines.

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Venetian Class



Penélope Cruz was one of the guests of honor – along with Kristen Stewart – at a dinner Chanel hosted Thursday night during the Venice Film Festival to fete their respective movies – Pedro Almodóvar's "Parallel Mothers" and "Spencer," Stewart's much anticipated turn as the late Princess Diana, which premieres at the festival on Friday. "It's funny, I'm not nervous for tomorrow," Stewart told WWD. "You do the best you can, you put the work in and now it's time to celebrate." In Chanel, of course.

For more, see pages 25 and 26. PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIELE MANGO

BUSINESS

American Eagle Acquires Airterra

- The retailer continues to deliver on all cylinders, logging \$121 million in quarterly profits.

BY KELLIE ELL

Jay Schottenstein is facing pandemic shortages head on.

While other retailers are fretting over how to handle supply chain headwinds, including rising prices and lack of delivery services, the chairman and chief executive officer of American Eagle Outfitters had his own solution: transform the supply chain.

American Eagle Outfitters Inc. – parent company to the American Eagle, Aerie, Offline by Aerie, Todd Snyder and Unsubscribed brands – quietly acquired the logistics firm Airterra last month for an undisclosed amount in a move that

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BUSINESS

Retailers Regroup After Ida

- The remnants of the hurricane hit the Northeast with unexpected destruction.

BY DAVID MOIN AND JEAN E. PALMIERI AND ROSEMARY FEITELBERG

Ida swept through the Northeast on Wednesday and Thursday morning, leaving death, destruction and massive flooding in its wake and disrupting transportation and businesses on a widespread level.

At least 40 people in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland were killed by flooding into their homes or cars, according to a Thursday afternoon report by CNN. Highways were littered with abandoned cars or cars crawling through flooded roads.

However, major retailers with stores in the region that were contacted Thursday were relieved to have escaped major destruction from the hurricane. There were widespread delays in store openings, with many representatives indicating they would be able to reopen stores at some point during the day. Workers were unable to get to work on time due to transportation delays and cleanups.

Thursday was not a particularly crucial day for business. Retailers could be

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From Fashion to Winemaking, The Italian Way

For Laudomia Pucci and the Ferragamo family, or Renzo Rosso and Brunello Cucinelli, the leap from fashion to winemaking comes naturally.

BY LUISA ZARGANI PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIOVANNI GIANNONI

The leap from fashion to winemaking may be seen as another form of creative outlet, and one that comes naturally for many Italian fashion figureheads, who in casual conversations easily shift their attention from the runway to harvesting.

According to a study presented by Altgamma last May, Italy is the preferred destination globally for true luxury consumers when it comes to travel experiences connected to food and wine, in a luxury tourism industry with sales amounting to 25 billion euros.

Indeed, winemaking has become a business for some, rooted in preserving the cultural and artistic value of an 11th-century village, as for the Ferragamo family's Il Borro estate. For others, such as Brunello Cucinelli, it's a way of renewing the territory's old manufacturing tradition. When in 2018 he unveiled a restored area of the Solomeo medieval hamlet, where his namesake company is headquartered, Cucinelli presented the Cantina, or wine cellar, with a statue of Bacchus placed at the entrance.

"In his beautiful 'Natural History,' Pliny the Elder wrote that the grapevine is the symbol of work, the nobility of cultivation, and worship. The wine cellar is the temple that I dreamed of dedicating to Mother Earth," said Cucinelli at the time. His first bottles of sangiovese, merlot and cabernet wine were ready that year.

Sustainability has become a priority in fashion and is equally top of mind in agriculture now.

A son of farmers, Renzo Rosso believes in protecting the land and in 1993 he bought a sprawling estate to prevent its urbanization. Diesel Farm, located in Marostica, near Vicenza, is a park that is home to cows, goats, sheep, horses and hens, as well as wild boars, roe deer, squirrels and birds, including falcons, not far from the headquarters of the entrepreneur's OTB group, which controls Diesel, Marni, Maison Margiela and Jil Sander, among others.

In May, Rosso unveiled the RRosé wine, which joined the roster of wines produced by Diesel Farm, which include cabernet sauvignon and franc, chardonnay, merlot

and pinot noir for bottles of Rosso di Rosso, Bianco di Rosso and Nero di Rosso. The Diesel Farm vineyards are cultivated according to organic and sustainable principles in that the company only sources grapes from the estate, which are then for the most part harvested by hand, and does not employ sprinkler systems. The farm also produces extra-virgin olive oil and grappa.

From jewelry to grapes, Giovanni Bulgari, after years of traveling the world to seek out the best gems for the Bulgari company, is now living his dream of working outdoors on the land, with products that reflect the territory he loves: Podernuovo a Palazzone, near Tuscany's Siena.

In 2004, together with his father Paolo Bulgari, longtime chairman of the Rome-based jeweler, he bought the abandoned Podernuovo estate covering more than 20 hectares and transformed it into an international agricultural firm and award-winning vineyard.

There are fields of wheat and vegetable and fruit gardens, and a few animals, including hens, so that the estate is basically self-sufficient, as its chef prepares bread and jars of mouth-watering jams and tomato sauce. Everything is natural, as Bulgari uses biological products, algae, propolis and not much copper or sulfur.

"We don't really know what will happen post-COVID-19, but I imagine anything local will be more precious and if you have something to bring added value to, you should," said Laudomia Pucci, in the shade of secular trees at the Cantina di Cerreto

estate on a warm summer's day. On the table, bottles of the Chianti she produces stand amid a fiesta of cherries, apricots, peaches and Tuscan biscotti. "We have a small gem here and I think it's worth focusing on it."

"I was a child, and I remember my father [Emilio] fell in love with the wine project at the end of the '60s," said Pucci.

He bought the Cantina di Cerreto, near Siena, to produce classic Chianti. In fact, he believed in this venture so much he opened a dedicated store in Via Ricasoli in Florence, next to the storied Palazzo Pucci. "He had so much fun, promoting it in the U.S., where he went with soccer in costume [a game invented in Florence in the 13th century], wine and fashion – he mixed everything," she said with a smile.

Emilio Pucci had just launched his perfumes, another sign of his foresight, and his daughter defined him "a multitasking designer. He was very curious and he liked the idea of beautiful wineries, special bottles and labels, the prestige of Made in Italy – he saw it as all being part of the excellence of the territory."

As reported, last month, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton bought the 33 percent stake in the company still held by the Pucci family that it did not own, taking full control of the fashion brand. Laudomia Pucci relinquished her role as vice president and image director after more than 20 years in that capacity. Among other new ventures, she plans to dedicate herself to the archives and ▶

"The focus is on a particular experience, and in fact our guests say it's difficult to describe Il Borro. It's more about feeling welcomed and a lifestyle concept."

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO,
WINEMAKER



Ferruccio and
Salvatore
Ferragamo

promoting the heritage of her late father, and she is now turning her attention to the Cantine di Cerreto. She noted that her son Tancredi, who is 23, has expressed interest in developing the wine.

The Cantine di Cerreto is an estate that covers 57 acres and she is replanting sangiovese grapes, with plans to restore two farmhouses to rent out. These will be an addition to the beautiful and exquisitely furnished main house that sits on top of a hill with breathtaking views of the olive trees, the garden, the Arbia river and the Chianti valley – a property that is already a success with foreigners, especially from the U.K., she noted. “I am looking at high-end hospitality for the houses, not a bed and breakfast space. Privacy has become a great luxury,” she said. Good and high-quality food, connected to the territory, is also increasingly a draw.

The sophisticated black-and-white label – “perhaps not what one would expect from Pucci,” she said – of the Chianti Classico Gallo Nero produced by the Cantine di Cerreto features the family’s coat of arms but arriving at the property one would be hard put to connect it with the fashion brand. Considered one of Italy’s fashion pioneers in outfitting the jet-set, Emilio Pucci founded the brand in 1947 and his colorful, graphic motifs on silk jersey became the signature of the house.

Bottles retail for between 18 euros and 20 euros. Pucci is eyeing “alliances for international distribution,” as the wine for the time being is only available at top restaurants in Italy.

About an hour’s drive from the Cantine di Cerreto stands Il Borro and Salvatore Ferragamo, who shares his name with his grandfather, the founder of the Italian luxury company, agreed with Pucci about promoting the country. “Italy should focus on products of excellence and deliver them to the world and I like to think of Il Borro as part of this,” said Ferragamo. He holds the title of chief executive officer of Il Borro, an 11th-century hamlet bought in 1993 and restored by his father, Ferruccio.

Il Borro is in no way clearly associated with the Ferragamo name or the fashion company – no sign of a link is visible at the estate, which is in Tuscany’s Arezzo area. “We want Il Borro to stand out for its values and not because it’s connected to a brand that has nothing to do with hospitality and winemaking,” explained Ferragamo.

Through the acquisition of Il Borro, Ferruccio Ferragamo’s idea was “to differentiate his investments,” said his son. The Ferragamos were familiar with the estate since they spent weekends and holidays there for years, renting the property from Prince Amedeo, Duke of Aosta.

“My father thought this could be an interesting project with a lot of potential and in the ‘90s Tuscan wines were booming. With foresight, he believed it could become a tourist destination,” said Ferragamo.

There was only one vineyard at the time of the purchase, covering about four acres, the agricultural activities had been abandoned, and “it rained inside the houses in the village.” The Ferragamos worked on it for seven years and, as Tuscany became increasingly competitive, in December 2012 Il Borro became a member of the Relais & Chateau association.

“The focus is on a particular experience, and in fact our guests say it’s difficult to describe Il Borro. It’s more about feeling welcomed and a lifestyle concept,” he remarked.

Indeed, Il Borro, which is perched on a hill, connected by a stone bridge, is a unique architectural, historical and cultural venue, respectfully restored. Artisans, from jewelers to shoemakers, work at small shops that pepper the village, which help emphasize Italian craftsmanship and bring life to the hamlet, noted Ferragamo.



Laudomia Pucci at the Cantine di Cerreto.

Il Borro comprises 38 suites and a villa with 10 bedrooms that is rented in its entirety. In 2019, Ferragamo restored and inaugurated the complex of the Aie, or barnyards in English, with 20 additional suites, on another part of the estate. Il Borro is a personal property of Ferruccio Ferragamo, who holds the role of chairman, and who also has a house within the estate, which covers 3,200 acres.

The Ferragamos expanded the winemaking from that small original vineyard to cover 222 acres and have been producing wines linked to the territory, from the drier sangiovese up higher on the hills to cabernet and syrah on the land close to the Arno river, and merlot at the bottom of the valley, where the ground is clayey.

“This is the concept of terroir, and our wines are all sustainable and certified as biological,” enthused Ferragamo.

Il Borro produces 150,000 bottles of wine a year. The first harvest dates back to 1999, and the first 6,700 bottles of Il Borro Toscana were presented at wine trade show Vinitaly in 2001.

“There was so much excitement and high expectations that we sold them all,” he still marvels. “The labels must tell a story, which in our case focuses on a drawing of the hamlet that dates back to the year 1000,” he said.

Il Borro wines have a balanced global distribution, equally split between the U.S., Europe, mainly Italy, and Japan and China. Americans “love” Il Borro, he noted, and are among the main visitors to the estate.

Ferragamo remains fascinated by the world of winemaking, which he said is “very dynamic and in continuous evolution. It’s a fine balance between tradition and innovation.”

For example, a technique makes use of optical fibers to select the grapes and a sophisticated de-stemmer recognizes the color of each grape, its point of maturity, eliminating pieces of wood and leaves at 12 kilometers an hour. At the same time, the cellars still use gravity to preserve the purity of the fruit, without the use of pumps, and Il Borro has also introduced a selection of terra-cotta vases where the Petruna wine sits, reflecting a thousand-year-old tradition.

Il Borro also produces incredible olive oil and Salvatore’s sister Vittoria is in charge of a vegetable garden, in addition to special projects, visits to the cellars and the



The scene at Il Borro estate.

relations with the artisans. The estate home delivers special crates of vegetables and eggs in the area around Siena, Arezzo and Florence. Chianina veals are bred here, and, from last year, Il Borro also started growing spelt and antique wheat, producing a very light flour, pasta and crackers. This is in addition to honey and tomato sauce.

“And because my father’s energy is boundless, in September we will start having 300 sheep and produce ricotta and pecorino cheese,” said Salvatore.

He himself is enthusiastic about the job he chose back in 1998 after his taking a master’s degree in business at New York University. One of six siblings, he had no doubt about his calling when he decided to work at Il Borro, seeing the potential of the project.

Speaking at Il Borro’s Tuscan Bistro, which offers an alternative to the Osteria del

Borro, Ferragamo touted the quality of the raw materials, which have determined the success of the venue’s restaurants. “This is the true luxury, being able to taste local and biological products with incredible flavors,” he said, affably confessing his own taste for fine food.

Il Borro Tuscan Bistro, headed by chef Andrea Campani, has opened a franchised unit in Dubai at the luxury Jumeirah Al Naseem Hotel, which has been ranked country’s best restaurant and the best Italian restaurant for five years in a row, he beamed.

In September, a second Tuscan Bistro will open in London’s Mayfair.

A Tuscan Bistro also stands at another Ferragamo property, Viesca, bought by his grandmother Wanda Ferragamo in the ‘60s and now comprising seven villas and 17 suites. ■