



GINA BALDASSARRE | MAY 24, 2013

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The entrepreneur enjoying the fruits of her labour



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A young businesswoman has found success in a male-dominated industry through constant innovation.

Ruth Gallace, CEO of the boutique fruit winery and cider house [Rebello](#), has been named a finalist of the Women in Business award in the [2013 Australian Excellence Awards](#).

"Women often second guess themselves and find it difficult to say no, but you learn very quickly that in order to succeed you need to have confidence in your decisions," says Gallace of what she's learned in business.

Originally a graphic designer, the mother of two created Rebello with her husband Matt eight years ago while living on his family's strawberry farm on the Mornington Peninsula. Coming back from a family holiday overseas "beyond broke", they were looking for something new to do with their lives.

With Matt's father having made fruit wines for many years, the couple decided to buy off this part of the business and build on it.

Success came slowly in the early days, with the pair working on it as a part-time pursuit. Gallace realised the problem was that while buyers loved the product stylistically, there was no category for them.

"What we learned quite quickly was that we needed to start blending to make them a little bit more accessible," she says.

"That's where we really started to see some success, because all of a sudden the retailers and restaurateurs knew what it was and where they could place it in their fridge, and they knew how to talk to their customers about the product."

One blended product they created is the wine now known as the Strawbellini, a curious blend on strawberry wine and moscato that won double gold at the San Francisco International Wine Competition.

The urge to innovate led to Rebello trying its hand at cider, creating Australia's first 100 percent real fruit blended cider two years ago.

"It's something ingrained in our culture because of the type of person I am and the team that we've built...we're all creative types and relentless with coming up with ideas. We're definitely the type of people who are energised by new ideas and new projects," Gallace says.

While she's honoured by being named a Women in Business award finalist, Gallace says she's never really given much thought to being one of just a handful of women in the alcohol industry.

She says, "The best person for the job is the best person for the job."

Tags: Entrepreneur, Profiles, Women In Business, alcohol industry, Businesswomen, Entrepreneurial Women, Innovation, rebello wines, Ruth Gallace, Women in business

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