

spotlight



CATHERINE CERVASIO

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ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT

Natural skincare entrepreneur **CATHERINE CERVASIO** believes being multi-passionate is the key to her success.

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

We're most well known for having developed AROMABABY over 20 years ago – the first brand to combine the use of natural and organic ingredients with research. Our products are used in select hospitals and have become as well known for their celebrity clientele as for their success with sensitive skin.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WHAT YOU DO?

I love that I've been able to make a difference in my own small way. Before AROMABABY, there were no natural skincare products for babies. With one in four babies suffering from skin irritation or eczema in their first year, making low-allergy, natural products available has been so rewarding. I also get to work around raising my two gorgeous sons – for the past 10 years as a sole parent. Our skincare brands are produced in Australia and exported to, for example, Hong Kong, Singapore, China, UAE and South Korea, which means I've taken my children to countries we may not have otherwise visited, where they've been exposed to different cultures, which is truly wonderful.

IF YOU COULD DO ANY OTHER JOB, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

If I wasn't running a skincare company, I would love to publish a magazine – I'm

a freelance writer and have written on skincare for Chemist Warehouse's *Wellness* magazine, travel style (*The CEO Magazine*), travel with kids (*Jetstar Magazine*) and vintage couture in Paris (*Provincial Living Magazine*). In a former role, I was the beauty editor for a luxury lifestyle magazine. I am very visual and love style, food and of course, beauty.

WHAT TRAIT HAS HELPED YOU MOST IN YOUR WORK?

Perhaps passion. I'm passionate about everything – the way I parent, the way I share my business story and so on. I'm not sure you can develop passion as a skill; it has to be authentic. Even if I'm having a bad day, when I talk about my business or my boys, my eyes light up and the passion takes over.

WHAT IS THE ONE TRAIT THAT HAS HINDERED YOU MOST IN YOUR WORK?

A reluctance to embrace change. Again, this flows into my personal life – long

relationships, long time in the same home and so on. Having been in business for decades, obviously I understand “change” is essential. If you don't evolve, you don't have a business. I've had to do some serious work on embracing change. While I wouldn't say I'm an expert yet, I'm no longer afraid of it – I'm excited by it.

DO YOU BELIEVE WOMEN CAN HAVE IT ALL?

I believe woman can do whatever is right for them – if “having it all” describes what some women strive for, then yes they can. So long as your values are aligned with those who are important to you, I believe you can make it all work. Not all partners/spouses (or friends) can handle a woman who is happy to embrace a full, luscious life. I have combined parenting with growing a wonderful business, helping babies with eczema and sensitive skin and educating parents, and I have been involved in charity work the entire time. I breastfed my second child for two years, travel the world, home-cook our family meals and am a very hands-on parent. I recently sold the family home on acreage and scaled down so I could spend more quality time with those who matter most to me, instead of spending most of my time maintaining the property. You have to prioritise and compromise to ensure “having it all” works for you.

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN FIVE WORDS.

Sensitive, passionate, determined, nurturing and free-spirited.

MY TOP MARKETING TIP Always seek out great collaborations and find ways to do things differently. We have built some great alliances over the years and it's often started with me presenting an idea that will benefit the other party involved.

WHAT DOES BUSINESS CHICKS MEAN TO YOU?

It's a great way to connect with like-minded women. It's also a great way to get a hug from one of your business heroes! I connected with Mark Bouris years ago, long before *Celebrity Apprentice*, after watching him on *Australian Story*. I loved his story and was totally inspired. We had email exchanges back then. It was lovely to meet him in person at an event. ✨

Quick questions...

Last thing I Googled Houses for sale in Provence (did you know you can buy a mini-castle in need of repair for \$500k?). **Three items in my bag I can't live without** My “Greta Garbo” Montblanc pen (I use it for things significant to me), a pot of Barrier Balm (lip balm/cuticle conditioner) and my iPhone, which has my appointments, photos of the special people in my life and essential apps. **Fave app** WeChat. I had a meeting in China recently where the English-speaking staff member had been held up. The company director and I communicated using WeChat, which has a “translate” option – it was very effective (and hilarious).