

# CONVERSATION WITH FATTORIA LA VIALLA: SUSTAINABILITY PIONEER OF THE YEAR 2024

We had the pleasure to sit down with Rosa Briamonte and Céline Krüger, from Fattoria La Vialla, that was awarded Sustainability Pioneer of the Year 2024. Fattoria La Vialla was recognized for their exceptional commitment to regenerative agriculture, ethical sourcing, and low-emission production practices that extend throughout their supply chain. Follow along as we dive into Fattoria La Vialla's inspiring journey and their approach to sustainability in every detail of their business.

**Rosa Briamonte and Céline Krüger, it's lovely to have you with us! Can you introduce yourselves and share the story of La Vialla?**

**Rosa:** Buongiorno, I'm Rosa. I joined La Vialla in 2013 and work with customer care and business clients, especially during Christmas, and handle everything related to Oliphenolia and our cosmetics.

**Céline:** Ciao, I'm Céline. With a background in communication, I've been at La Vialla for nearly 16 years. I oversee brochures, visual content, and a bit of social media. When I started, neither our cosmetics nor Oliphenolia existed yet. La Vialla was founded in 1978 by Giuliana and Piero Lo Franco with a simple vision: to restore abandoned farmhouses in the Tuscan hills and offer guests genuine, healthy food.

After the World Wars, much of the local farmland had been left untouched, what we now call "virgin soil." From the beginning, we farmed organically, and by 2005, we became Demeter-certified biodynamic. We have grown from producing olive oil, wine, and pecorino to offering pasta, sauces, sparkling wines, honey, and cosmetics, all rooted in sustainability. Making wine and olive oil remains at the heart of what we do.

Visitors are welcome from April to October, whether for a traditional merenda or a full Tuscan dinner under the fig trees. We also rent rustic farmhouses –no TV, no Wi-Fi, a true step back in time. Come mid-October, and you might even join us for the olive harvest.





## What inspires and motivates your work?

**Céline:** We love the land, and we love food. Farming has the power to heal or harm. Our mission is to regenerate the soil and produce nourishment that protects future generations. Sustainability is our foundation, not an afterthought. We use solar power, recycle water, make our compost, and follow rhythms inspired by the Lo Franco grandparents, traditional farmers who respected nature deeply.

One example is Oliphenolia, which was born from Nonna Caterina's habit of drinking the bitter olive water left after pressing, which she called her "elixir." Inspired by her, and backed by science, we explored this overlooked byproduct and discovered its extraordinary potential.

## What's the story behind Oliphenolia and your cosmetics?

**Céline:** Oliphenolia is a concentrated, cold-pressed olive vegetation water, rich in polyphenols, particularly hydroxytyrosol, a potent antioxidant. Scientific partnerships with institutions like the University of Cambridge confirmed its benefits. Launched in 2015 as a supplement, it soon inspired a skincare line. Dr. Thomas M. Schmidts of RSC Pharma helped us develop our Demeter-certified cosmetics, a natural evolution of our belief: what nourishes from within can also care for the outside.

## What trends are shaping the natural beauty industry today?

**Rosa:** We have seen strong movements toward sustainability and individuality. Some key trends include minimalist skincare with fewer, multifunctional products, skin microbiome support, hormonal skincare that is aligned with the body's rhythms, holistic beauty, and targeting gene expression in ageing. Purity and transparency with ingredients and responsible packaging are also important.

As a Demeter-certified brand, we follow strict standards. We don't chase every trend. Some, like epigenetics or hormonal skincare, don't align with our philosophy, but we keep curious and open-minded.



## What challenges have you faced, and how did you overcome them?

**Rosa:** Upholding Demeter standards is both our strength and our challenge. These certifications evolve constantly, and we have had to reformulate or even pause products, like our biodynamic sunscreen, which we withdrew due to texture concerns, despite its excellent protection. We're working to bring it back, improved.

**Céline:** Having full control of our ingredients, from farm to formula, lets us stay true to our values and ensures authenticity at every step. It's like running a three-star Michelin restaurant: staying at that level is the hard part, but also what motivates us.

**How are consumer expectations around sustainability evolving?**

**Rosa:** Today's consumers, especially Gen Z and Millennials, expect real, transparent sustainability. It's no longer enough to use recycled packaging or green labels. People want to see commitment across the entire product lifecycle: ethical sourcing, minimal waste, smart refill systems, and credible certifications like Demeter, COSMOS, or NATRUE. At La Vialla, we control everything from the soil to the jar. This autonomy lets us guarantee quality and traceability, no surprises, no shortcuts.

**What does winning “Sustainability Pioneer of the Year” mean to you?**

**Céline:** At the Stockholm ceremony, we were nervous, after all, we're farmers at heart! We were genuinely excited, especially because you made it a surprise – we didn't know in advance that we had won, which made the surprise even more meaningful.

This award means a lot to us. Sustainability isn't a trend for us, it's our native language. We don't create a product and then ask, "How can we make it sustainable?" We ask, "Can we make this sustainably?" If not, we don't do it. Knowing the jury and public see and appreciate the work behind our cosmetics, especially when we have upcycled something like olive mill wastewater into powerful skincare, gives us the motivation to keep going.

**Before closing the interview, is there something you would like to add?**

**Céline:** Nature still has so much to teach us. We are now upcycling not only olives but also grape skins and seeds. Olive pits become scrubs, grape pomace exfoliates the skin, and resveratrol enriches our creams. We are only beginning to explore how food and skincare can nourish us.

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Fattoria La Vialla aligns closely with the ENBA's values with their commitment to sustainability and high-quality products. We are proud to feature Fattoria La Vialla as part of the European Natural Beauty Awards community – a brand that embodies the ENBA values of excellence, transparency, and naturality.

To learn more about Fattoria La Vialla:  
<https://www.lavialla.com/en/>