

Press Release

Ernst&Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award

NICCOLÒ BRANCA AMONG THE THREE WINNING ENTREPRENEURS IN THE FINANCE CATEGORY

Milan, 19 November 2009 - Niccolò Branca, Chairman and CEO of Branca International S.p.A., the fully Italian-owned holding company of the Branca family that manages businesses in the spirits and real estate sectors, is among the three winning entrepreneurs in the Finance category of the Ernst&Young Award, which is celebrating its thirteenth year.

The award ceremony took place today at the Mezzanotte Office Building, headquarters of the Italian Stock Exchange in Milan.

Niccolò Branca was chosen and awarded this prestigious recognition for standing out for his far-sighted strategic vision in 2008, a year characterised by the serious international financial and economic crisis. His vision led him to launch bold business plans, reaffirming the confidence in his brands, maintaining investments in marketing, communications, promotions, innovation and product quality in the principal markets of Italy, Argentina, the United States, Northern Europe, Germany and Austria, and adopting prudent financial policies. As a result of the aforementioned initiatives, Branca International S.p.A. achieved positive financial results, with turnover of Euro 153.438 million with no indebtedness, despite the difficult macroeconomic scenario.

Branca International has essentially maintained market share for its brands in various markets and expanded sales outside the EU, mainly in Argentina, which largely absorbed the slowdown in some European markets. In addition, the company has achieved significant operating improvements. Branca International's performance demonstrates a sound industrial and financial group, properly structured to tackle global markets, which adopted, at the behest of Chairman and CEO Niccolò Branca, growth strategies as well as dynamic, reactive, and rapid change strategies, along with prudent financial policies aimed at mitigating risk and anticipating market trends.

"2008 was a year in which it was necessary to decisively face changes that, due to their complexity, signified not just a temporary fact but a constant for the future," Niccolò Branca stated at the award ceremony. "I tried to meet these challenges with creativity, adopting innovative, rapid and continuous solutions, trusting in the quality of the Branca brands, which go beyond trends, with the knowledge that even in difficult times there are opportunities that can be seized. I reaffirmed investments and directed the company with an accurate and cautious financial management, which has characterised the Group for many years. Today's award, for which I am very flattered, recognises the ability of an Italian family business able to react with vision, speed and financial resources in an erratic environment that will continue to demand innovation, dynamism and flexibility. I would like to share the award with my family, with the directors, and all the team members, Italian and Argentinian, that work together with me with

trust and great professionalism, to meet the continued challenges that a company like ours must always face.”

Entrepreneurial excellence marked by professional commitment, passion, a respect for values and traditions, ethics, a balance between growth and financial stability, are just some of the traits of the strategic orientation of management of Niccolò Branca, who has helmed the family business since 1999, and who, in the last three years has attained important recognitions such as: in 2008, the Ernst&Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the Global category, 2007 Results Award, promoted by Bain&Co, Il Sole 24 Ore, Company Accounts Data Service and Bocconi University as the Italian company with the best performance in creating economic value supported by strong and innovative strategies, and has important exports of “Made in Italy” products, the title of Honorary Professor of the Buenos Aires University of Salvador (June 2007) for entrepreneurial activities and managerial contribution in Argentina.

Niccolò Branca has distinguished himself for his entrepreneurial skills and for his passion in guiding the Italian Fratelli Branca Distillerie S.r.l. and the Argentinian F.lli Branca Destilerias S.A. to become continuously stronger and to expand in international markets. Branca Group is today present in more than 160 countries.

Niccolò Branca, previously Director of Sales and Communication for Fratelli Branca Distillerie, and, between 1990 and 1998, was one of the founders and Chairman of a finance company which then became Banca Ifigest S.p.A. and editor of the “Sagezza, Scienza e Tecnica (Knowledge, Science and Engineering)” series of the Nardini publishing company. *He is currently Chairman and CEO of the holding company Branca International S.p.A., and Chairman of Fratelli Branca Distillerie S.r.l. and Fratelli Branca Destilerias S.A.*

Branca Group began its business activities in 1845 with the Bernardo Branca’s creation of the bitter which became famous around the world, Fernet-Branca.

In 1982, the Group acquired 50% of the “Carpano” brand, which was then entirely acquired in 2001. The “Villa Branca” brand was acquired in 1985, “Candolini” in 1987 and “Caffe Borghetti” in 2001. The two production facilities are located in Italy and Argentina. In 2001, the Group holding company came into operation, Branca International S.p.A., and in the same year Niccolò Branca opened the Tortuguitas facility in Buenos Aires. In 2002, Branca International S.p.A. started operations in the real estate sector in Italy and abroad. The holding company owns Branca Real Estate S.r.l. In 2005 Branca International S.p.A. began reorganising the corporate structure, reconverting unused production units, separating the production and sales activities and the real estate business into two separate companies and diversifying Group investments.

Branca International S.p.A.

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