

COVID-19 won't stop the Italian Business Community in Singapore.

Last October 8, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (ICCS) presented the 11th edition of the ICCS Business Awards. This year, due to the COVID-19 measures, the traditional event at the iconic Clifford Pier was replaced by a virtual event, which was followed by people in Singapore and in Italy, and celebrated in the Italian press.

ICCS President Alberto Martinelli and H.E. Raffaele Langella, Ambassador of Italy to Singapore had the opportunity to deliver a message to the Italian business community, which is well represented by ICCS with over 200 members in town.

ICCS Business Awards 2020 has three categories: Best Italian MNC in Singapore; Best Italian SME in Singapore and the Woman Entrepreneur Award, which was presented in collaboration with the Italian Women Group in Singapore (IWG).

Cannon Far East came out tops in the Best Italian MNC category in Singapore. The winner is a supplier of polyurethane/thermoforming technology, boiler, water treatment system, composite machines, aluminium die-casting machines, moulds. Their business activities include Sales, technical services and spare parts support of polyurethane foaming machines and plants for insulation, transportation/automotive, laboratory and other applications, as well as the epoxy resin infusion system for wind blades.

In 2005, Cannon Far East established a manufacturing base in Zhongshan, Guangzhou province, China - Zhongshan Shinnon Machinery Co. Ltd. Shinnon has since then delivered vast quantities of plant and simple PU machinery to the Chinese market, further strengthening the presence of Cannon in China.

For the SME category, Celli Asia Pte Ltd emerged the winner. Celli revolutionised the beverage sector by creating new standards in quality and aesthetic design. For over forty years, the company has been a leader in the development of the ever-changing and dynamic beverage sector. Today, Celli is not only the Italian market leader, but it is also a very established international brand, embodying quality and unique design in all its products. The beverage refrigeration system, towers and fonts, taps, and all other dispensing equipment related to beer, soft drinks, coffee and water are designed, manufactured, and tested in the historic headquarters of Rimini.

The Woman Entrepreneur Award was given to Francesca Scarpa, Director of Da Paolo Group. In a span of 10 years, Francesca Scarpa turned the family-owned Da Paolo Trattoria into a trusted brand for authentic, top quality Italian experiences. With a total of nine establishments, Francesca Scarpa was an eminent driving force behind the expansion of the company, growing it into a dynamic portfolio of innovative and sought-after brands including Da Paolo Gastronomia, Da Paolo Pizza Bar, Da Paolo Pasta Bar, Da Paolo Dempsey and Panini Italiani by Da Paolo.

Moderated by Paolo Misurale, a partner at Bain & Company SEA and a board member of ICCS, the event afforded the opportunity to know more about the winners, and to understand the strategy of companies and young

entrepreneurs. Additionally, it affirmed the commitment of the Italian business community to recognising Singapore as the strategic hub of the Asia-Pacific region.

During the COVID-19 crisis, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Singapore has continued to pursue its mission to support the interest of its members, strengthen business alliances between Singaporean and Italian companies, and help Italian companies ease into the SEA market.

ICCS President Alberto Martinelli said, "We are working very closely with the Italian Embassy in Singapore and the local government agencies, and in the past months, we helped some of our members obtain the approval to re-enter Singapore. Currently, we are working on getting the approval for essential business travel. The proactive approach of the Singaporean institutions confirmed once again the role of Singapore as a strategic hub of the APAC region."

Amid the pandemic, the ICCS team was able to react fast and restructure its business services for Italian companies. Thanks to the collaboration with the most important e-commerce platforms in Singapore, namely Lazada, RedMart, Shopee and the e-commerce arm of NTUC FairPrice, ICCS team is able to help more than 20 Italian companies to export their products and services to Singapore in the Italian Gallery Singapore project.

Managing Director of ICCS Giacomo Marabiso said, "I'm very proud of the work of the ICCS team. It is not easy to face the problem and react in such a short time. When we started to realise the seriousness of the COVID-19 crisis, in just one month, the team was able to identify all the partners for the project, to promote the project in Italy, and after two months we started to sell the first products in Singapore."

The ICCS committees have been active in ICCS membership activities, counting Finance, Design, Legal, Pharma and Shipping among them. The Shipping Committee led by Timothy Cosulich, Group CEO of Fratelli Cosulich, will host an important event where he will interview the Mayor of Genova, Marco Bucci. The event will take place on Tuesday, October 27, 5pm.

Mr. Timothy Cosulich said, "As an Italian family business operating in Singapore since the 1980's, we are honoured to be part of the growth path that the Lion City has undergone. Today we continue to heavily invest in assets and local talent, and we look forward to new challenges in the region. In this context, and with a solid Italian and Genovese community in Singapore, it will be a pleasure to chat with the Mayor of Genoa Marco Bucci, on how we can further develop the collaboration between Singapore and Genoa."

The virtual meeting with Mr. Marco Bucci is an important event for ICCS and the Italian Business Community in Singapore. After the tragedy of Ponte Morandi, the city of Genoa has shored up its ability to react fast.

As Prime Minister Conte said, "Genoa is a model for Italy, and it teaches us that the greatest act of love is when we commit to restarting together. Genoa radiates a light that gives hope to the whole of Italy."