



By Italian Special Occasions
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Preface



Earlier in 2015, Kérastase Brazil entrusted Italian Special Occasions with a remarkable project: the organization of an unforgettable product launch and corporate gala dinner in Florence.

At the end of the congress – which reunited Brazilian hair salons and L'Oréal managers in Tuscany – this was the thank you note sent to Italian Special Occasions by Kérastase brand director Cristina Conforto:

On behalf of Kérastase team and clients, I would like to congratulate and thank you for the wonderful night we had. Everyone was amazed about the different attractions that happened one after another. Also, thank you very much for the surprise I received in my room from St. Maria Novella... I loved it!

And the message from Ana Paula Roza, Director of Human Resources Kerastase Brazil:

"Dear Laura, I would like to thank you for all your kindness with me and my clients. The night was amazing and we had an incredible event with your team. Thank you for helping us to make an unforgettable moment for Kérastase. Thank you for the present you've send us from St. Maria Novella!"

What was the secret behind the planning and organization of this massive event?

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Introduction & Background



About the client

Kérastase represents the finest in luxury care for hair since 1964, setting new standards in professional haircare products distributed through selected salons, where the haircare process is a ritual of beauty and well-being.

The most advanced technology of L'Oréal Advanced Research is behind Kérastase's products, which boast unique, avant-garde formulas with innovative ingredients.

The client's request

The client asked for the creation of a special event involving 150 Brazilian hair salons and L'Oréal managers to launch a new hair line product and to celebrate the brand's endless pursuit of magic and perfection.

A fundamental part in the process of event planning is **listening to the client**, applying a personal approach even in the corporate world. We met with and listened carefully to the client, organizing a FAM trip in Florence to get to know the client better, and vice versa.

The mission

We at Italian Special Occasions set for ourselves the goal of designing, planning and executing an event that would be powerful, memorable and impeccable in the details, in line with our philosophy of [Creative Events](#) & [Seasonality](#).



About the event planning company

Italian Special Occasions specializes in designing authentic, creative events that respect local culture, heritage and seasonality.

There are no packages or itineraries, only custom-made journeys (read more about ["Our Story and Flavors"](#)).

Contextualization and conception of the event



We believe that for a special occasion to be memorable and authentic – whether it is a corporate meeting, wedding, family reunion or foodie trip – it has to **embrace the local territory** where it takes place and it has to stimulate the **Five Senses** of the participants.

Conceiving and applying a theme that relates to the client's request and event's mission is one of our favorite ways to achieve this task. Why? **Storytelling** has been one of man's most fundamental communication methods for almost 30,000 years, since the first cave paintings were discovered.

Our brains become more active when we tell or listen to a story, and they can remember something more easily if the story involves visuals, smells, sounds, touch and tastes.

In the case of this event, we decided to involve the history and heritage of Florence, the chosen venue for the occasion. We developed a theme centered a journey to explore the cultural and artistic importance of the **Florentine Renaissance**, how it led to a new rational and artistic identity with revisited values, ethics and spirituality. This historic journey is **parallel to Kérastase's** experience revolving around innovation, creativity and aesthetics in the past, present and future.

During the Gala Night, guests would explore this theme with their Five Senses: a variety of visual and musical performances would ignite the senses of sight and sound, while the dinner and a visit to the ancient wine cellars would revive the senses of smell, touch and taste.

Selecting the perfect location & the best partners

Finding the right venue for a special occasion is of huge importance. We carefully selected three locations full of charm and history, places that represent the heritage of Florence. After visiting all of them during the FAM trip, the client chose Il Borro – a mesmerizing medieval hamlet complete with ancient buildings, luxury villas, gardens, restaurants, an amphitheater, vineyards and wine cellars.



The origins of the village of Il Borro are lost in the history of Tuscany. Every alley speaks of a time that once was, of flavors and scents that recall the memory of a rare and more authentic Tuscany. Il Borro extends over a seven-hundred-acre estate where, for centuries, the vineyards have produced the famous Chianti wines and the olive trees the purest virgin oils.

In order to create the perfect corporate event, there must be **synergy among the event planning company and its partners** who are involved in the occasion. In the case of Italian Special Occasions, we only work with selected partners who share our vision of Seasonality, of respecting local culture and the environment, of making the traveling client feel like a guest and not like a tourist.

From theory to practice: the Gala Dinner Night

The **parallel Renaissance-Kérastase journey** began with the arrival of the guests at the exclusive location of Il Borro, where actors dressed in costumes from the 1600s welcomed the group. There was an immediate full immersion in the past thanks to the Renaissance setting, the passages played by musicians, the performance by the actors and their interaction with the guests.



After enjoying this part of the journey, which was complemented by Tuscan drinks and appetizers, guests followed the actors and moved from the ancient *borgo* (hamlet) to the main, more modern *piazza* (square). This charming walk **symbolized the transition from the past to the present**. In fact, the hamlet was established more than one thousand years ago, and every corner tells a bit of its ancient history from Roman through medieval times, from the Renaissance to our modern times. Today, the estate has been restored to its former glory while offering a guest experience that seamlessly combines tradition with luxury and modern comforts.



At the piazza, a spectacular ritual **symbolized the projection into the future and the art of innovation**: guests lit up and released sky lanterns that sparkled up the night, completing the scenic views offered by performances taking place in the Italian garden and the illuminated medieval hamlet.



The final part of the journey took place in the amphitheater, where all performances represented the pursuit of magic and perfection by Kérastase.

The exquisite dinner was accompanied by a series of events that developed the theme, **highlighted the brand and launched the product**, including:

- the performance by two acrobats representing the regenerative power and secret behind Kérastase's new *Abyssine* molecule
- the Grand Opera, epitomized by the powerful performance and the lyrics of *Nessun Dorma*, expressing the brand's mission to capture magic and provide miraculous haircare products
- the surprise fashion show symbolizing the creative and innovative elements in *Chronologist*, the Quintessence of Kérastase, the protagonist product of the launch.



The final touch, another memory to take home



A **unique and authentic memento** will imprint special memories that the participants will never forget about your Italian event. We decided to give our client's guests a gift that was tied to the theme of the event and to the [Five Senses](#) approach.

We chose a gift from *Officina Profumo-Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella*, one of the oldest businesses in the world, boasting 402 years of history. Founded by Dominican friars, it started as a pharmacy that used medicinal herbs grown in the monastic gardens. Today it is Florence's most distinguished perfume and herbalist's shop.

Officina di Santa Maria Novella is an example of how many modern cosmetic brands create their innovative products by looking back at the most ancient fragrances. In the case of Kérastase, *Chronologiste* is a new product created from the scientific research of natural materials; a method that is reminiscent of the friars who worked among ancient books and alchemy, producing incessant and innovative creations.

The gift of choice was "Albarello Pot Pourri", which is the only pharmacy jar specifically mentioned in a Santa Maria Novella convent document dated 1508. The jar, containing 200g of pot pourri, is still today made and decorated by hand with natural pigments by master potters in Montelupo Fiorentino.

Conclusions

Analyzing this case study, the secret ingredients behind the perfect corporate event - whether in Italy or elsewhere - are:

- the event planning company must follow a personal approach by carefully listening to and communicating with the client; if possible, this includes organizing a FAM trip to achieve the highest level of transparency and dedication;
- storytelling is a powerful tool that has been around since the beginning of time: conceiving and applying a theme to the event and tying it to the corporate mission of the occasion can impress participants with strong emotions and vivid memories about a brand and its values;
- combining a sensorial approach – whereby participants get to engage their Five Senses with the local territory, traditions and heritage – makes the event even more powerful and memorable;
- selecting the right venue and synergic partners is crucial for organizing an event that is smooth and perfect to the smallest detail;
- add the extra touch by giving a gift to your clients, something that evokes the feelings that will be forever tied to your special occasion.

About the Author



Italian Special Occasions

Designed for you

Hailing from various countries around the globe, we are a group of enthusiastic travel professionals with a combined 25 years of experience working in tourism.

Long ago we discovered that we share a common passion: Italy - its history, culture, gastronomy, winemaking, art and breathtaking nature.

Therefore we decided to create a company focused on tailor-made special events, such as weddings, family & friend gatherings, foodie delights, corporate events.

WITH US NO DETAILS ARE LEFT BEHIND

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