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The Italian Job

NICOLO FABBRIZIO BRINGS HIS SPECIAL SAUCE TO
CPA FIRM GERSON PRESTON

BY DREW LIMSKY



In 2016 Fabbrizio met Gerson Preston’s managing director, Steven F. Klein, and the two clicked; the following year the firm snapped up the genial Genoese. Early in 2025 Fabbrizio became a partner, providing consulting assistance with tax planning, compliance, strategy, and establishing U.S. structures for Italian companies. As he sees it, clients are drawn to him because he’s “the Italian in an American firm,” which trumps Italian CPAs and wins Italian clients. “Being an American firm is a marketing story that clients like,” he says. “The added value is being able to bridge the gap that represents such a challenge for foreigners, Italians in particular.”

“Nico brings a valuable background,” says Gerson Preston partner Alan A. Lips, “and he hit the ground running from day one, with a constant flow of Italian-based clients searching for sophisticated U.S. tax consulting and compliance support.” Moving between the cruise industry, yachting, hospitality, and real estate, Fabbrizio facilitates the entry of Italian (and other international) businesses, and their expansion once here.

Though he is adroit in the high-flying world of public companies – his tenure at PwC focused on Carnival and its Italian brand Costa Cruises – Fabbrizio made the move to Gerson Preston so he could also manage “human-sized companies.” Miami Beach’s Italian restaurant Via Emilia, known for the handmade pasta of client Chef Wendy Cacciatori, is a good example of the type of boutique business he finds appealing.

Still, Fabbrizio feels most comfortable with the maritime industry, something his Genoa hometown and Miami have in common. “I’ve been exposed to the maritime industry all my life,” he says, “from working at the Genoa boat shows every year during my years in college, to having many friends in the industry as ship owners, ship brokers, yacht brokers, to working for clients now.”

At sea or on land, however, for the global business world “culture and language have become two very relevant factors,” says Fabbrizio. The lesson for service-based Miami firms: Recruit someone who speaks a different language, both literally and figuratively. ●

ECONOMIST & ACCOUNTANT NICOLO FABBRIZIO (LEFT) FINDS TIME TO HELP BOUTIQUE BUSINESSES LIKE RESTAURANT VIA EMILIA. BELOW: OWNERS VALENTINA IMBRENDA AND CHEF WENDY CACCIATORI

When Nicolo Fabbrizio joined the South Florida CPA firm of Gerson, Preston, Klein, Lips, Eisenberg & Gelber, he was well aware it was a go-to firm for foreign businesses that needed help navigating local, state, and federal tax regulations. The 65-year-old firm was equally aware that Fabbrizio’s background and expertise would let him play a singular role within Miami’s Italian expat community – and therefore, a valued role within Gerson Preston.

Fabbrizio was born and raised in Genoa, the port city of more than half a million people that’s been a historic center for global trade and deal making. The city divides the two wings of the Italian Riviera – Riviera di Ponente (“coast of the setting sun”) to the west, and Riviera di Levante (“coast of the rising sun”) to the east— an optimal breeding ground for someone with a passion for sea trade and the multinational movement of goods and services.

“During the Middle Ages, Genoa was a powerful naval and commercial force in the Mediterranean,” says Fabbrizio. “This tradition contributed to the city’s development and is part of Genoa’s DNA.”

After attaining his laurea in economia (equivalent to a master’s in economics) from the University of Genoa in 2004, Fabbrizio remained in Italy, joining the powerhouse accounting firm Price-waterhouseCoopers the next year. In 2009, he relocated to Miami to become an assurance manager with the firm, becoming an expert in international tax matters, particularly for Italian investors and business owners seeking to expand into the U.S.

