

AVANTI:

An American Dream

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Avanti Cigar Company strives to provide the market with premium products at affordable prices that maintain the company's Italian roots.

BY ANTOINE REID

Avanti Cigar Company's history dates back more than 100 years to when the founders of the company wanted to capitalize on their love for Italian cigars. Dominic, Anthony and Frank Suraci—three brothers who emigrated from Calabria, Italy, to New York—started their own hand-rolled cigar company, the Suraci Brother Co., in 1912 with the intent to target New York's growing Italian-American population.

By 1925, business was going so well that the Suraci brothers were able to purchase a competing family's factory and products, giving them a primary brand: Parodi. After World War II, they bought out another competitor, Long Island's DeNobili Cigar Company. In 1963, the purchase of Petri Cigar gave the company firm control over the Italian-style cigar market in the U.S. In the 1970s, the company began to manufacture cigars featuring fermented Kentucky tobacco and an anisette-flavored tip. This cigar became the company's most highly rated and best-selling brand, leading to reorganization of Parodi Cigar Group and it ultimately becoming the Avanti Cigar Company.

In 2015, Avanti Cigar Company was purchased by Manifatture Sigaro Toscano, the company that produces the historical Italian product the TOSCANO cigar that inspired the Suraci brothers during the company's founding in the early 1900s.



PREMIUM
CIGARS





AMERICAN-MADE CIGARS

Though Avanti's cigars were inspired by Italian brands in the past, its products today are all made in the U.S. using Kentucky tobacco. Avanti is the only U.S. producer of dark fire-cured cigars, which are developed using a process that involves exposing the tobacco to the smoke of oak and hickory logs, with a compliment of beech wood, smoldering on a barn's floor. This process produces cigars that are intense and full-bodied, and that have a unique aroma that sets them apart from other cigars on the market.

Though Avanti Cigar Company uses machines in the cigar manufacturing process, human touch is still crucial in the production of each cigar. During the growing process, only the best tobacco leaves are hand-picked for use in the cigars. Under the leadership of a master blender, tobacco from at least three different crop years is used in order to achieve an ideal blend. The machines used all simulate the movement of cigar makers by slowly rolling the wrapper and filler in order to maintain the quality of the tobacco. Avanti's employees play an important role overseeing the process from the drying phase through when the cigars are packaged for consumers.

BROAD RETAIL SUPPORT

For those at Avanti Cigar Company, the key to selling their products comes down to providing the market with a premium product at an affordable price. When asked how Avanti supports its retail partners, Luciano Simeone, chief operating officer at Avanti Cigar Company, responded that working daily to improve the quality of their products that end up in stores is the most important support the company can provide. From there, increasing the visibility of the company and its products in cigar stores, offering good deals on its products and promoting Avanti through social media all helps.

Avanti works with brick-and-mortar and online retailers, both considered by the company to be important to its marketing strategy. Brick-and-mortar retailers are viewed by Avanti as ambassadors for the company, speaking and interacting directly with potential consumers. With the increase of online retail and a new generation of tech-savvy smokers, online retailers are viewed as an important partner due to their wider reach.

For those retailers who are new to the Avanti brand, Simeone has a few suggestions for popular products to get started with. "Parodi Ammezzati and Parodi Kings are iconic mainstays for cigar lovers," he says. "I also would recommend Avanti Cordial, our first flavored cigar that was introduced in 1970, and DeNobili Longs, classic long cigars that provide a sophisticated, sustained smoke."

A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Though Avanti Cigar Company faces the same challenges as any other manufacturer when it comes to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's regulations, it's in a good position going forward, as 90 percent of its SKUs could potentially meet the requirements to be grandfathered. This could admittedly give the company a very competitive advantage that could extend its long history. The company is prepared to operate in a much more restrictive market and feels that its parent company will help it navigate through the new regulations and changes.

Avanti is remaining tight-lipped on new releases but urges retailers to check out its release from last year, the Parodi Speciale. "Last year we launched a new cigar, the Parodi Speciale," explains Simeone. "It has a top-grade wrapper and underwent a special fermentation process that provides the cigar with a well-rounded and harmonic taste. We've also added two aromas to the Avanti family: vanilla and licorice." **TB**



PARODI CIGAR CO., SCRANTON, PA.

GENERATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURS

AVANTI CIGAR COMPANY CAN attribute its longevity and evolution to a series of forward-thinking entrepreneurs who each brought something valuable to the business. It began with the founding of the company in 1912 by Dominic, Anthony and Frank Suraci, who took their passion for cigars and turned it into a business.

In the early 1940s, Frank Suraci, Jr. introduced much-needed improvements to the machine-making process, allowing the company to produce more cigars that maintained the quality of hand-rolled cigars and Antony Suraci's son-in-law Bob Keating made improvements to the company's sales and marketing efforts. A decade later, Tony Jr. became the point of reference for purchase and fermentation of Dark Fired Tobacco and led the company for some years. By the 1990s, his son, Dominic Keating, became the president and face of the company for many years.



TRADITION & QUALITY

**KENTUCKY FIRE-CURED CIGARS
MADE IN THE UNITED STATES.**



OUR SIGNATURE PROCESS

SELECTION

Kentucky Tobacco is selected by leveraging on an essential expertise.

CARE OF FIRE

Fire-cured using oak and beech woods and a unique drying process.

FERMENTATION

Our Tobacco is fermented by using only water for several days.

AROMA

Every cigar gains an intense aroma, with full and strong character.

EXPERIENCE

Our cigars ensure an intense and satisfying smoking experience.



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