



## Company Name

Leone Beer Company

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## Contact Person

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**Location:** Ascoli Satriano is a very small village in a very rural area of Monti Dauni (Northern Apulia, the mountain part o the region). Ascoli Satriano has 6 thousand of inhabitants and is one of the most densley populated of the area. There are non so many opportunities here, especially for young people. the depopulation rate is high as well as youth emigration.

**WHO WE ARE?** Leone Beer Company is an artisanal microbrewery located in Southern Italy. A project born from its founder during the years spent abroad between Northern Europe and North America.

The term craft describes the new generation of small independent breweries that produce traditional beer. Is defined as "INDEPENDENT" the microbrewery which is legally and economically independent from any other brewery and which uses high quality systems physically distinct from those of any other.

"TRADITIONAL": it means that the raw materials used are natural and selected and that there is no addition of extracts, preservatives or additives. It must not be filtered or pasteurized.

## WHAT WAS **THE TRIGGER** FOR YOUR BUSINESS OR ENTREPRENEURIAL IDEA?



It came about very slowly. I was initially an accountant, and I decided to leave everything and go abroad with a one-way ticket. Initially the idea was to open a Northern European style pub. I decided to move to northern Europe to learn more about the world of beer, and I realised how ignorant I was about it. Then I started to study and got my master brewer's diploma. By attending master classes in breweries I learned techniques and knowledge about the world of beer. From there I moved to Canada, where beer has been popular for 40-50 years, a very young phenomenon compared to northern Europe.

We young people from southern Italy and even more so we young people from the rural areas of southern Italy have no choice but to emigrate. I wanted to change this trend, and decided to return to my homeland to do what I had learned abroad, beer!

Supported by my whole family, I took over a farmhouse in the middle of the countryside, surrounded by wheat fields as far as the eye could see.

After an exhausting year of red tape, I started brewing beer.

## What were the main obstacles or barriers encountered?



During my experiences abroad, particularly in Canada, I was able to observe how products made in Italy are synonymous with quality. We live in an area that would be the envy of many, but which is not rightly valued. The biggest difficulty I encountered was bureaucracy, which slowed down the project considerably. As I said before, it is not easy for a young person living in rural areas to become an entrepreneur.



*The Lion is the symbol that represents us because it is in him that we fully reflect our personality, he inspired us and despite the difficulties we did not give up.*

**Leone Mastrogiacom o**

## Did you do any economic analysis before starting this experience?



The experience in Canada served me well. While in northern Europe the brewing tradition has existed for generations, in Canada it has been famous for 40-50 years. There I was able to understand how people react to this product that is not typical of their tradition and what dynamics have led people to appreciate a niche product like craft beer. Here in the Monti Dauni we have a tradition of wine, craft beer is a very niche product. Surely you have to believe in it before making such an investment and also have a bit of luck. You have to find the right way to educate customers about this new product, tell them about the passion for the area and all the local raw materials used to make our beer.

An important factor we are banking on is that the location of our company, situated in the middle of the countryside with beautiful landscapes, can meet the growing trend of slow and experiential tourism.

## WHERE DID YOU SOURCE THE MAIN SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

(Eg. Grants And Other Support)?



Initially, I did look for various funds, including public ones, but because of the long bureaucratic process and the need to start the business, I had to rely on my own financial resources. Unfortunately, here in Italy the bureaucracy does not help much those who want to start a business, especially young people, who do not have their own resources and if they cannot count on their family it becomes very difficult to invest. Being in a rural area, the difficulty is twice as great because you don't have direct access to the market as in a city.



## How has the rural area of the Monti Dauni influenced your activity? How successful the business has it been?

It has helped a lot, our company is surrounded by wheat fields as far as the eye can see, which makes it easier to tell the story of the product, which is often perceived as unnatural in our area. The customer can come and touch the raw materials and observe the production cycle. If we were in an industrial area, I don't think we would have the same impact. We work on small quantities to have a quality end product. Having large productions is always to the detriment of quality, we prefer to have direct contact with the customer. Nowadays, telling the story of the territory is a strong marketing driver. We only use local raw materials and we have created a beer using Senatore Cappelli, which is a local grain from our area. It has to be said that the lack of infrastructure, such as simply a good internet connection or decent road links, certainly has a negative impact on the company, which is why we have focused on direct sales. We want customers to come here to have a feel and stay for a day to discover the territory.



## WAS SUCCESS A RESULT OF INDIVIDUAL WORK OR COLLABORATION (OR BOTH)?

The idea is the result of a personal experience gained abroad that led me to return to my birthplace to undertake a business activity, but my whole family has supported me morally in this decision by helping me in my work.



## Do you have any plans for the future?

What I'd like to work on is to offer customers the chance to spend more days in the company by organising workshops on how to make beer, offering an alternative experience for families and at the same time allowing me to get to know the product and the area connected to it.