



beauty queen

Laura Geller, whose everywoman personality and multitasking cosmetic line made her a household name, talks life, Spackle, and her latest ventures. **BY ELENA SCHMIDT**

AS SHE WALKS INTO QVC'S PRESSROOM, LAURA GELLER smiles, cracks jokes about the need for coffee, and takes a seat. The woman we've watched cheerfully selling her supersized makeup collection to QVC's television audience is congenial, funny, and confident.

When she stepped out on her own in her 30s, Geller created her first namesake studio. She had shifted from applying makeup to developing it, and her burgeoning business included a line of products she prayed would take off. By the time she hit 40, Laura Geller had become one of the best-selling brands on QVC's roster, and her famous Baked collection had become a fan favorite.

Despite her accomplishments, Geller wanted a child. She recalls a conversation she had a decade earlier: "When I was 30, I had a friend in the makeup business who was 40. She told me her only regret was never having a child, and I never forgot what she said." Geller knew there was no time to waste, and today she is the proud mother of a beautiful son and aspiring business partner.

That pioneering spirit translated into the formulation of her überpopular Baked collection. Here, Geller forged a revolutionary path in product development—giving women effective and beautiful makeup they really want and love to use, instead of more than what they really need. It all started when she was rummaging through her drawer at QVC: She discovered a no-name compact filled with what looked like a canvas spattered with six different shades. She diligently researched, and eventually found the Italian manufacturer. "I said, 'Oh my God, it's the best bronzer ever.' He said, 'No, it's not bronzer; it's foundation for women of color,'" she says. But Geller knew the product did not just have to be for evening out skin tones.

Geller traveled straight to the source, eager to demystify the making of this messy must-have. The factory in Italy employs artisans who designed a process of mixing makeup colors that never produce two identical swirls of pigment. It wonderfully results in exactly the right color combinations, allowing women to perfectly blush, bronze, highlight, shadow, or contour. "You can put it on wrong, but no matter what, you'll still look better," she says. "That's how I design every product in my line."

Geller continues to experiment with new formulations and focuses on using quality ingredients, refusing to sacrifice performance on behalf of trends. Her famed Spackle, an under-makeup primer, is a perfect example.

"We have changed that formula at least a half-dozen times—increased the dry-down time, added more white tea extract, made sure that it is oil-free," explains Geller, who's both laser-focused on optimizing existing products and always looking ahead.

The future of her line, as it turns out, looks more Italian than ever. After three years of experimentation, Geller is confident that thermal spring waters from Calabria, Italy will be the game-changing ingredient in her recently launched Baked Elements Foundation. Rich in minerals and antioxidants, Calabria's natural thermal water has actually been ordained by the ministry of Italy for its incredible anti-aging benefits.

"You put it on and you feel like you just poured water into your pores," she beams. Designed for a feather-light feel but with buildable coverage, the creamy powder blends high-quality, micronized pigments with the proprietary Italian thermal spring water, plus nourishing vitamin E, Jojoba oil, and hyaluronic acid. As with all her Baked formulations, the foundation is then baked for 24 hours on terracotta tiles and hand-polished by her trusted Italian artisans.

Now that's what we call a flawless finish. ●