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But the story actually goes back further. Tal had cut her teeth in high-profile management roles in the fashion industry before taking a career hiatus to have her three children, now 12, 15, and 17. Rather than return to the corporate world, she took an entrepreneurial gamble, opening U, a small local hair salon, with a close friend. "It was such a learning curve," says Tal of running a small business, "but it struck me that there was this incredible relationship of trust between a stylist and a client, that this was the perfect place to sell products."

It was just a matter of time before the right idea fell into her lap. "I was searching," admits Tal, adding that her intuition is what motivates the majority of her decisions. "When I had that treatment I knew instinctively that this would work, that I had to bring it home. Everyone told me all the reasons why it was a flawed plan, that it was too crowded a market. Even my husband took months to persuade (he's the Hebrew speaker, so I needed him to push the deal through), but I can be a hard-headed woman when my gut tells me something is right."

Having grown her team from less than 10 to about 300 in six years, Tal says that internal structural issues have been the biggest concern.

"The worldwide nature of our business means that we have people spread across the globe. So bringing everyone together is a challenge." She's clearly succeeding. There's an industrious, family atmosphere in her third-floor marketing headquarters a short stroll from Central Park. Drawings by her 12-year-old daughter, Ariel, pronounce, "This is the best office ever!" Scented candles, which test their fragrances, create a soothing atmosphere in her corner office, and the whole place has been given a glamorous revamp courtesy of Daun Curry, the interior designer who

remodeled Tal's Upper East Side apartment when she first moved from Canada to Manhattan two years ago.

"We wanted to have a beautiful office," says Tal. So Curry set about creating a "modern palace" befitting the brand's runaway success: filling cabinets with vibrant Blenko glass bottles; creating a voluminous Swarovski crystal-laced chandelier with 4,000 feet of jewelry chains; and lining floors with a mix of Calcutta gold marble and wide rustic wooden planks.

Of her five- and 10-year plans, Tal shrugs laughing. "I honestly don't really know!" Just like a trusted hairstylist—she's waiting to hear what her customers ask for. **G**

Tal's office is minimalist and uncluttered.



Benko glass bottles add pops of color.



The bespoke cabinets were inspired by the stained glass pieces of Frank Lloyd Wright.



Tal discusses the brand's new campaign with a glass artist.

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

### \*on the secret of her success

"We were lucky to have my ex-husband's business sense and my sense of aesthetics and positive energy. But at the end of the day I just had the right product."

### \*on staying focused

"I think women have a powerful intuitive ability. A lot of people were discouraging, but I was sure we were on the right path."

### \*on inspiration

"The Mediterranean is the root of my ideas—the colors of the ocean, the clothes people wear, the fragrances in the air all inspire my vision for the brand."

### \*on the tipping point

"It was the 2006 trade show [at New York's Javits Center]. We had the most beautiful, minimalist area and only one product, the Moroccan oil Treatment, but we really caught people's attention. Everything spiraled from there."

ing is right."

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Ursula Orsena, Carmen Tal,  
and Antonio Corral-Calero



Regis Haberkorn



Zohar Paz



Maureen Lippe



Leah Wyar and Holly Sibert

## moroccanoil body line launch

The luxurious new MoroccanOil Body line debuted at the Trump SoHo with an intimate cocktail reception. The collection features decadent lotions, body buffs, and oils, all of which were inspired by the allure of the Mediterranean. Guests including MoroccanOil cofounder **Carmen Tal**, creative director **Antonio Corral-Calero**, and industry tastemakers enjoyed product demonstrations while sipping Champagne and enjoying the majestic New York City skyline.

Kristin Pehush



Kristin Pehush  
and Daun Curry



David Krzyzow and  
Emily Lohman



Lauren Haskins  
and Jerome Berard

MoroccanOil's new  
luxury body products





# GOTHAM

## Summer 2012

59 Skincare is the next frontier for MoroccanOil founder Carmen Tal.



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Far from the Broadway stage, actress Kathleen Turner is a dedicated volunteer with Citymeals-on-Wheels.



# Superlatives

PEOPLE, CULTURE, STYLE

CORNER OFFICE

## oil magnate

EARNING RAVE REVIEWS FOR HER NEW-SKINCARE RANGE, MOROCCANOIL FOUNDER CARMEN TAL HAS CEMENTED HERSELF AS ONE OF THE NEW GENERATION OF COSMETICS POWER PLAYERS.

BY MISHKA BOGGS PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARA GOODFRIEND

Israeli-born Carmen Tal's journey from Montreal salon owner to the head of a multimillion-dollar global beauty has been nothing short of stratospheric. Six years ago she launched a single hair treatment, and now a glut of new products are on her immediate horizon, including a line of 12 luxury body care products debuting in 2012.

Her story starts in the inauspicious setting of a now shuttered Tel Aviv hair salon. Having had a disastrous color treatment—“my highlights were orange, and in order to fix them the hairdresser used a permanent black dye; the condition was shot”—but unwilling to have her hair chopped short, Tal opted for an argan oil treatment. The instantaneous results converted Tal, and less than a year later, in partnership with her now ex-husband (who

is still the financial whiz of the company), they bought the fledgling beauty company that imported argan oil from Morocco.

The premise was simple: coloring this under-the-radar ingredient a by-product of the argan nut, which is known as a potent antioxidant, rich in essential fatty acids, to the U.S. Keeping things streamlined, Tal started her brand with just one product, *MoroccanOil Treatment*, an argan oil-infused hair lotion that quickly became salon buzz and, eventually, shiny locks.

Today Tal concedes there are few limits to her ambitions. “But we don’t launch things because everyone else is doing it,” she states. “We respond to what our customers want.” The company’s move into luxury body care, says Tal, is the result of wagging from brand loyalty rather than market research.

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