

Danielle Bibas CEO, Pierre Fabre Brazil



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Danielle Bibas leads Pierre Fabre’s operations in Brazil, overseeing three key dermo-cosmetic brands – Avène, Darrow, and Ducray – in the world’s third-largest beauty market. Since assuming the role in January 2025, she has focused on navigating the rapidly transforming skincare landscape, balancing traditional physician relationships with emerging digital channels, whilst leveraging Brazil’s innovation centre to develop solutions for sun protection, oily skin, and diverse skin tones across Latin America.

You have built a rich career across FMCG, beauty, and aesthetics with organisations such as Avon and Procter & Gamble. What drew you to Pierre Fabre, and what have been your primary priorities during your first year leading the Brazilian operation?

I commenced my tenure in January of this year, so I shall soon complete one year with the organisation. What inspired me to join Pierre Fabre was the company’s exceptionally compelling purpose. Pierre Fabre genuinely speaks to caring for and supporting individuals as people. This is not merely aspirational rhetoric – it manifests authentically in our actions. The Pierre Fabre Foundation’s initiatives around the world, particularly in African nations and Southeast Asia, create genuine pride in the organisation’s global impact. The products themselves demonstrate remarkable quality and efficacy. I had prior familiarity with the Avène brand and had used it personally, so this represented an exciting opportunity.

My priorities in Brazil have centred on navigating a significant transformation – both at global and local levels. The skincare market underwent considerable disruption during the pandemic,

experiencing exponential growth with numerous new brands entering the category. The market is currently recalibrating, and we are adjusting our business levers and key pillars around the go-to-market strategy. This encompasses the medicalisation aspect – our relationships with dermatologists and the broader medical community who recommend our products – as well as investing strategically in media and influencers, who have become a substantially larger component of our marketing investment. These voices have emerged as influential constituencies affecting final purchase decisions.

Historically, the dermo-cosmetics category behaved much like the pharmaceutical industry – physician prescriptions drove the primary investment, coupled with visibility at the pharmacy retail level. This paradigm has shifted significantly over recent years. The influence of media spend, digital influencers, and e-commerce as a channel has grown exponentially. This category now occupies an intriguing space between mass consumer goods and mass beauty on one side, and pharmaceuticals on the other – incorporating elements of both.

Brazil is a powerhouse in beauty and aesthetics. How is Pierre Fabre leveraging this unique environment to reinforce its dermo-cosmetic leadership, and what sets your approach apart from both global and local competitors?

Brazil represents the third-largest beauty market globally and possesses one of the world’s highest concentrations of dermatologists. Brazilians maintain an intense focus on beauty and appearance. We experience summer conditions ten months annually, with bodies on display at beaches – markedly different from Europe or the US, where winter weather necessitates coverage for extended periods. Beauty represents an exceptionally dynamic market in Brazil.

Pierre Fabre brings not only comprehensive scientific research, clinical studies, and scientifically-rooted innovation to our products, but we also achieve critical balance through Darrow – a brand with Brazilian origins that Pierre Fabre acquired approximately two decades ago. Our manufacturing plant in Brazil was the original Darrow facility, and we now maintain an innovation centre here as well.

Pierre Fabre operates three innovation centres globally: a major centre in France, complemented by facilities in Brazil and China. The Brazilian Innovation Centre focuses specifically on sun protection technology, for evident reasons given high usage patterns, and on oily skin. Throughout Latin America, oily skin prevalence significantly exceeds dry skin conditions. The –cosmeticity– of products must differ considerably to be not only efficacious but appropriate from a texture perspective – the proper feel and tone for oily skin in humid climates.

More recently, we have expanded our focus to encompass the diversity of skin tones. Brazil is renowned for possessing the world’s greatest variety of skin tones, resulting from extensive cultural mixing – Germans, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish populations integrating with African communities over generations.

You oversee three distinct brands – Avène, Ducray, and the Brazilian heritage brand Darrow. How do you balance the scientific identity of the French brands with the local relevance and emotional equity of Darrow?

These are distinct brands with differentiated personalities and tones of voice. Avène represents our largest and most significant brand globally – the quintessential French skincare brand. It is

formulated for sensitive skin, with science based on the properties of Avène thermal water, which possesses unique soothing characteristics. Every Avène product contains this thermal water.

Darrow operates in many of the same segments as Avène – we offer acne ranges, sun care ranges, and treatment ranges – but Darrow specifically targets oily skin and younger demographics. This is fundamental portfolio management. Darrow positions itself as a younger, more contemporary brand.

Ducray focuses primarily on hair and scalp treatment, addressing anti-dandruff concerns as well as hair loss with specialised treatments and products.

Darrow leads the oily-skin segment in Brazil and is now expanding across Latin America. What is your strategy for scaling the brand both domestically and regionally?

We currently distribute Darrow in Mexico, Chile and the Dominican Republic, with plans to commence sales shortly in other countries. We have definitive plans to continue expanding Darrow across the region because of its strong relevance. When we examine Latin America holistically – oily skin, darker skin tones – the brand demonstrates exceptional applicability. Darrow offers phenomenal products and leads the Brazilian acne treatment market, with potential for expansion to other global markets.

Pierre Fabre Brazil has established ambitious objectives, such as climbing in the global Pierre Fabre ranking and achieving substantial growth by 2026. What will be the top priorities to sustain this momentum?

The specific doubling target by next year has been reviewed following various organisational developments. The critical point is that Brazil now forms part of a “must-win countries” group. Brazil represents an exceptionally dynamic market with numerous new entrants annually and significant growth. This year, the market is forecasted to grow approximately seven percent in value terms – quite a substantial figure.

We are committed to continued business growth over the coming years. The target we ultimately aim to achieve in the next several years is substantial scale. For the present, we shall concentrate on these three brands. Pierre Fabre maintains other brands outside Brazil, but our focus remains primarily on Avène and Darrow, complemented by Ducray. We intend to ensure genuine strength in the segments where we currently operate.

Brazil is home to one of Pierre Fabre’s few manufacturing sites outside France, as well as a dedicated innovation centre. How does this local footprint enable you to tailor solutions to Brazilian needs, and what new areas of innovation are you exploring?

The majority of our production facilities remain in France, with Tunisia and Brazil as our non-French locations. The company is currently re-examining our long-term logistics footprint to determine the optimal configuration for the future.

Regarding resource allocation, we deliberately avoid duplication. Each innovation centre focuses on regionally distinctive requirements. For example, our China Innovation Centre invests heavily in

whitening technology, as whitening represents an enormously relevant segment within facial care treatments in Asia.

In Brazil, we source from France what is appropriate from a research and development perspective, but we actually produce the majority of products sold in Brazil locally – in Maric , Rio de Janeiro. We adopt formulations developed externally but manufacture locally. The innovation centre here concentrates development on sun care, technology for oily skin, and products for diverse skin tones.

In Brazil, your focus remains exclusively on dermo-cosmetics. How do you view the future of the medical portfolio locally, given the company’s evolution in recent years?

We exited the medical business several years ago in Brazil. Our current focus remains exclusively on dermo-cosmetics.

E-commerce and digital engagement are expanding rapidly within Pierre Fabre. How are you harnessing these tools in Brazil to strengthen relationships with dermatologists, pharmacy partners, and consumers?

These represent distinct elements. From a sales channel perspective, Brazil ranks among the top five markets globally within Pierre Fabre for online business percentage. Here we generate over 30% of our business online, which encompasses both pharmacy online operations – physical pharmacies with digital channels – as well as pure-play digital retailers like Amazon or Mercado Libre in Latin America. This channel is experiencing rapid growth and driving our business performance. It represents a key growth vector and organisational priority.

From a communications and marketing perspective, the digital sphere has become paramount. We are investing in digital social channels from a physician’s standpoint. For instance, we operate what we call the “derma-influencer programme,” – engaging doctors who create content – filming recommendations on appropriate products for specific pathologies or skin types – which we distribute through social media. Simultaneously, we maintain influencer marketing initiatives with dedicated skincare influencers. These two streams constitute substantial components of our marketing plans.

Sustainability is central to Pierre Fabre’s identity. How is this commitment expressed in Brazil?

Local sourcing represents one of our most significant initiatives here. The company maintains numerous clean formulas – Pierre Fabre demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to safe formulations. For Av ne, for example, we maintain coral-safe certification, formulas that do not harm ocean ecosystems or coral reefs. Safe formulation constitutes a fundamental element of our operations.

Local sourcing in Brazil helps reduce our carbon footprint. We have not yet achieved net zero status, but we maintain definitive plans to reach that milestone. This forms part of our environmental, social, and governance targets.

Pierre Fabre is renowned for its people-first culture. How are you nurturing talent, promoting diversity, and positioning the company as an employer of choice in Brazil's competitive beauty and healthcare sector?

People represent a critical priority for us. Caring constitutes one of the company's core values - treating people with utmost respect. Regarding diversity, we maintain robust metrics. Over 60% of our Brazilian workforce is female. Women comprise more than 50% of our executive committee in Brazil, and this figure will increase next year. These targets receive ongoing attention.

Our focus in Brazil over the coming years - shared with Pierre Fabre and many organisations - will be increasing Black representation in managerial and senior positions. 56% of Brazil's population is Black or Brown, yet when examining most companies, whilst you may find significant percentages of Black employees, they are predominantly concentrated in non-managerial or non-leadership positions. This represents a priority focus area for us.

Looking ahead, what is your vision for Pierre Fabre in Brazil over the next five years, and where do you see the greatest opportunities for breakthrough growth?

The company maintains highly ambitious objectives, both globally and in Brazil, with very significant growth trajectories. We are potentially exploring new segments beyond our current portfolio. I hope to remain with the company throughout this journey. I am genuinely pleased to have joined the organisation, and I aspire to bring substantial, steady, and ambitious growth to the Brazilian operation. We rank among the global leaders in dermo-cosmetics, introducing new science, new treatments, and new solutions for skin conditions and pathologies. The skin is the body's largest organ, so it should receive commensurate care.

What would you like to convey as your final message for our global readers?

Please use sun protection every day. For individuals concerned with maintaining a youthful appearance and preventing skin ageing, sun protection represents the single most effective anti-ageing intervention you can implement.

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