

Mafia Mamma is a 2023 American action comedy film directed by Catherine Hardwicke, from a screenplay by Michael J. Feldman and Debbie Jhoon, and based on an original story by Amanda Sthers. It stars Toni Collette as an American woman who travels to Italy following the death of her grandfather, whom she discovers was a mafia Don. Monica Bellucci, Eduardo Scarpetta and Sophia Nomvete also star.

Filming began in Rome in May 2022. The film was released theatrically in the United States by Bleecker Street on April 14, 2023, and grossed \$7 million worldwide.

Plot

Kristin, a writer and sales expert for a cosmetics company, is in the throes of a midlife crisis: her only son has just left for college, she catches her husband having sex with a younger woman in the basement of their home, and her bosses at the company treat her with contempt. She receives a call from a lawyer named Bianca in Lazio, learning that her only living relative, her grandfather, has died and that she must attend his funeral and be present at the reading of his will.

Jenny, Kristin's friend, convinces her that attending the funeral will give her a chance to start over. Upon landing in Rome, Kristin runs into a local, Lorenzo, and his aunt Esmeralda. Kristin is attracted to Lorenzo and gives him her number before being picked up by Bianca's associates, Dante and Aldo. The funeral proceeds smoothly until armed men stage an ambush, and the coffin is destroyed by bullets. Aldo and Dante, following Bianca's instructions, get Kristin to safety.

At the reading, Bianca reveals that she is in fact the *consigliere* of the Balbano family, a powerful branch of the Sicilian Mafia; Kristin learns that her grandfather was the boss of the family, and that despite disapproving of his son having a child with an American woman, he wishes to honor tradition and have Kristin succeed him. A hysterical Kristin demands to leave, but Bianca calms her, and she is persuaded to take on the role.

Kristin's first act as boss is to meet with Don Carlo, boss of the rival Romano family, and settle a dispute between the two gangs over the murder of both her grandfather and the previous Romano

Mafia Mamma



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<u>Catherine Hardwicke</u>
Screenplay by	<u>Michael J. Feldman</u> <u>Debbie Jhoon</u>
Story by	<u>Amanda Sthers</u>
Produced by	<u>Amanda Sthers</u> <u>Toni Collette</u> <u>Christopher Simon</u>
Starring	<u>Toni Collette</u> <u>Monica Bellucci</u> <u>Sophia Nomvete</u> <u>Eduardo Scarpetta</u>
Cinematography	<u>Patrick Murguia</u>
Edited by	<u>Waldemar Centeno</u>
Music by	<u>Alex Heffes</u>

don. Carlo manages to seduce Kristin and lures her into his hotel room, where he slips a dose of poison into her limoncello. As Kristin prefers the glass with less Limoncelle, she switches the glasses, and Don Carlo drinks his own poison and chokes to death. The Romanos promote Carlo's cousin, "Mammone", to succeed him.

Fabrizio, Kristin's caporegime, disagrees with her plans to diversify the Balbano family's criminal operations by setting up "legal" businesses that include reopening her grandfather's famous winery. Lorenzo and Kristin grow closer, but the relationship is frustrated by an inability for either of them to commit to each other. A hitman sent by Don Mammone interrupts Kristin in the middle of a Zoom conference with her bosses; she manages to stab him to death with her heel, only to then learn that the company has decided to fire her.

A despondent Kristin goes to Lorenzo's house, and they sleep together. The next day, she meets with Don Mammone, who agrees to forswear any further acts of vengeance against her and restore the peace between their families. Kristin finally accepts her situation and begins to take a more active involvement in the family, while also spending more time with Lorenzo. Their relationship is tested when her husband suddenly turns up in Lazio, claiming to be broke and in need of her help. Kristin refuses to do so and sends him away. She also lies to her son about Lorenzo, claiming he is only a friend, and causing him to question whether she truly loves him.

Kristin arranges a meeting with the Romanos to announce that she is retiring from the Mafia and giving her role as boss to Bianca. Don Mammone is enraged, and an armed standoff ensues before police officers led by Lorenzo and Esmeralda (who are secretly undercover detectives) raid the meeting place and take everyone into custody. Kristin hires Jenny to represent her in court, and because many of the locals have benefitted from her family's largess, they testify in her favor. She is cleared of all charges and meets with Lorenzo, who explains that his real name is Rudy. Kristin forgives him for deceiving her but decides to devote herself entirely to the family.

Bianca is seemingly murdered, and Kristin finds both her husband and her son held at gunpoint by Fabrizio, who turns out to be a traitor in league with the Romanos. He is about to murder Kristin when Bianca catches him off guard, and Kristin drops him to his death inside a grape crusher. She sends his finger as a warning to Don Mammone. Sometime later, Kristin's son is about to return home. As he departs, he sees his mother formally receiving guests in her capacity as head of the Balbano family.

Production companies	<u>Ingenious Media</u> LipSync Cornerstone Idea(L) Vocab Films New Sparta Production
Distributed by	<u>Bleecker Street</u>
Release date	April 14, 2023
Running time	101 minutes
Country	United States
Languages	English Italian ^[1]
Box office	\$7 million ^[2]

Cast

- Toni Collette as Kristin
- Monica Bellucci as Bianca
- Sophia Nomvete as Jenny
- Eduardo Scarpetta as Fabrizio
- Alfonso Perugini as Dante
- Francesco Mastroianni as Aldo

- [Giulio Corso](#) as Rudy a.k.a. "Lorenzo"
- [Dora Romano](#) as Maria a.k.a. "Aunt Esmeralda"
- [Giuseppe Zeno](#) as Carlo Romano
- [Vincenzo Pirrotta](#) as "Mammone" Romano
- [Tommy Rodger](#) as Domenick
- [Alessandro Cremona](#) as Bruno
- [Alessandro Bressanello](#) as Don Giuseppe Balbano
- [Tim Daish](#) as Paul

Production

Mafia Mamma was reported to be in pre-production in October 2021, with [Catherine Hardwicke](#) on board as director. [Michael J. Feldman](#) and [Debbie Jhoon](#) wrote the screenplay, based on an original story by [Amanda Sthers](#). [Toni Collette](#), [Monica Bellucci](#), and [Rob Huebel](#) were cast in leading roles but ultimately Huebel did not appear in the film.^[3]

[Principal photography](#) took place in May 2022 on location in [Rome](#), Italy.^{[4][5]}

Release

Mafia Mamma was released theatrically in the United States on April 14, 2023, by [Bleecker Street](#).^[6] The film was released digitally on May 2, 2023, and on DVD and Blu-ray on June 6.^[7]

Reception

Box office

Mafia Mamma grossed \$3.5 million in the United States and Canada, and \$3.5 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$7 million.^[2]

Released alongside *[Renfield](#)*, *[The Pope's Exorcist](#)*, *[Suzume](#)*, and *[Sweetwater](#)*, the film made \$866,940 in its first day and went to debut on \$2 million from 2,002 theatres, finishing eighth at the box office.^[8]

Critical response

On the [review aggregator](#) website [Rotten Tomatoes](#), 22% of 106 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 4.2/10. The website's consensus reads: "Riddled with stereotypes, fatally unfunny, and a total tonal mishmash, *Mafia Mamma* is a criminal waste of Toni Collette."^[9] [Metacritic](#), which uses a [weighted average](#), assigned the film a score of 42 out of 100, based on 23 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[10] Audiences polled by [Cinemascore](#) gave the film an average grade of "B" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled at [PostTrak](#) gave it a 64% positive score, with 44% saying they would definitely recommend it.^{[11][12]}

Jude Dry writing for *[IndieWire](#)* gave the film a B- grade. She thought the plot "leaves much to be desired" and felt Bellucci's italian character was underdeveloped. She ended her review with: Though it's all satisfyingly silly, *Mafia Mamma* never quite find its tone. Hardwicke doesn't seem to know if she's doing Quentin Tarantino or Mel Brooks, and the two styles are so far apart that splitting the difference lands the

movie out at sea".^[13] *Deadline Hollywood*'s Pete Hammond wrote, "In its own way, veteran director Catherine Hardwicke has turned all this into a more mainstream feminist comedy, a vehicle for Collette, who lifts it up a few notches and makes it all passable and likable enough for its 100-minute running time".^[14]


Frank Scheck of *The Hollywood Reporter* criticized the writing of Collette's character saying, "*Mafia Mamma* squanders her considerable talents", but praised Bellucci's character. He ended his review with "If you want to see a truly witty comedy dealing with similar themes, stick with rewatching Jonathan Demme's terrific 1988 film *Married to the Mob*".^[15] Peter Debruge of *Variety* called the film "a fun fish-out-of-water farce with *Godfather* DNA and a clever female-empowerment kick, *Mafia Mamma* makes inspired use of Collette, who's never better than when playing women we oughtn't to have underestimated".^[1]

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External links

- Official website (<https://bleeckerstreetmedia.com/mafia-mamma>) 
 - *Mafia Mamma* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13923456/>) at IMDb
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