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## OUR REAL VEGAS TRIBE

*The truth is, you're only as good as your support. At Real Vegas, we are immensely grateful and appreciative of all our local readers! Without the contributors listed here, this publication would be next to impossible. This special feature issue is dedicated to our 2025 Women Who Wow. We are honored to have had the opportunity to get to know and learn about these outstanding leaders and their respective businesses and organizations. These are truly innovative and hardworking individuals in our community!*

*This special feature is the result of our collective hard work, dedication, and passion. Every contribution to each issue is a labor of love from the bottom of our hearts. We proudly thank every advertiser, writer, photographer, and contributor in every way. Without you, we couldn't share these stories or provide rich content, including current events and the rich history of Las Vegas, which is extremely important to us.*

*Feel free to submit any editorial pieces for consideration to: [info@realvegasmagazine.com](mailto:info@realvegasmagazine.com). Don't forget to follow and like us on social media and visit our website: [realvegasmagazine.com](http://realvegasmagazine.com). We host many local Real Vegas community events and would love for you to join us! Stay tuned for information on our upcoming events, promoted and shared on social media.*

**THANK YOU** all, we hope you enjoy reading Real Vegas as much as we enjoy creating it!

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Alisha Wiener  
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Ambassador, the Real

# Swetta Kathuria

Swetta Kathuria is a luxury travel and lifestyle influencer based in Las Vegas, known for her ability to capture the essence of opulence and adventure. As the brand ambassador for Real Vegas Magazine, Swetta merges her passion for exploring the finest aspects of Las Vegas with a strong sense of style. Her content invites her audience to experience the best the city has to offer, from hidden gems to five-star resorts, providing an exclusive look into the high-end experiences that make Las Vegas a one-of-a-kind destination.

Swetta's journey into luxury lifestyle influencing began with her love for the city's vibrant nightlife, exquisite dining options, and the endless opportunity to explore new travel destinations. Her goal as a content creator is simple: to inspire others to visit Las Vegas and create unforgettable experiences. Specializing in food, travel, hotels, and exclusive activities, Swetta's content empowers her audience to live lives full of excitement and luxury. Her professional background in business, marketing, and education provides a solid foundation for creating content that resonates deeply with her followers.

Living in Las Vegas, a city known for its extravagance, has deeply influenced Swetta's content creation and brand identity. With a wealth of high-end restaurants, luxurious hotels, and unique experiences, Las Vegas offers endless opportunities for a luxury content creator. Swetta draws inspiration from this dynamic environment, using it as the backdrop to showcase the best of high-end living. Her brand has become synonymous with elegance, sophistication, and exclusivity, making her a trusted voice for those seeking the finer things in life.

Balancing a luxury lifestyle with the demands of content creation and work can be a challenge, but Swetta has mastered it. Through effective time management, advanced content planning, and prioritizing self-care,







she has learned how to enjoy the best of Las Vegas while maintaining a thriving personal brand. This balance between productivity and personal fulfillment allows Swetta to create content that is both authentic and valuable to her audience. Her ability to seamlessly blend work and luxury living not only enriches her life but also enhances the content she shares with her followers.

A key component of Swetta's brand is her focus on cigars, a luxury niche that adds a distinctive touch to her content. Cigars represent a culture of refinement, craftsmanship, and appreciation for the finer things in life, which aligns perfectly with Swetta's lifestyle. Through partnerships with luxury cigar brands, Swetta curates content that showcases the artistry and craftsmanship behind cigars, while also integrating them into broader themes like luxury travel, fine dining, and relaxation. By doing so, she educates her audience while offering exclusive experiences and products.

For Swetta, luxury is more than just material wealth. It's about creating experiences that elevate life's quality. Luxury means investing in moments that bring personal joy and fulfillment, whether through travel, gourmet dining, or spending time with loved ones. It's about enjoying life's precious moments and prioritizing well-being while cherishing the time spent in beautiful surroundings. Swetta believes luxury is defined by the experiences and relationships that truly enhance life.

Swetta Kathuria continues to redefine what it means to experience luxury in Las Vegas. Through her work as a brand ambassador and content creator, she inspires her audience to explore the city's exclusive offerings, indulge in extraordinary experiences, and live life to the fullest. Her dedication to sharing high-end experiences and her unique perspective on luxury make her a leading figure in the luxury lifestyle space.

Follow Swetta on IG: [@swetta24](https://www.instagram.com/swetta24) 



# the NATIVE

# Juice

By Candice Wiener

## NOTABLE OLD SCHOOL FAMILIES THAT HELPED SHAPE LAS VEGAS

Born on April 8th, 1899 in Reno, Nevada, A.E. "Al" Cahlan was a prominent news publisher in Las Vegas.

From the span of 1926-1960, Cahlan turned a 300 weekly circulation publication into a strong daily subscribership of 27,000, which at the time was the largest in the state. The newspaper he owned and created is now known as the Las Vegas Review-Journal. Cahlan published a front-page news column for nearly 40+ years. He was deemed one of the most influential newspapermen in all of Las Vegas's history. Frank Garside was the original owner and publisher, but he entrusted Al Cahlan to take it over as managing partner, to build its exposure and make it more lucrative.

Apparently in 1949, Garside opposed new equipment expenditures and Cahlan found a new co-owner by the name of Don Reynolds. Cahlan remained managing partner, with an agreement in fact that either partner could buy each other out if so desired. Subsequently, in the 1950's the Las Vegas Sun newspaper surfaced, who's publisher, Hank Greenspun, wasn't particularly a fan of Al Cahlan. Greenspun made it a point to regularly combat Cahlan on his front-page column "Where I Stand". Seemingly fit, Greenspun intended to title his column similar to Cahlan's, "From Where I Sit", but apparently the word "from" fell off the column in the production phases. When the Sun was catching up in circulation, Reynolds exercised his right to buy out Cahlan in 1960. There have been some discrepancies that have been reported in the past regarding the sale date and ownership of the paper.

In addition to being co-owner and managing partner of the newspaper, Cahlan became a political kingmaker and a civic progressive, using the newspaper and influence to develop the community. He also represented Clark County in the Nevada Assembly, was the Democratic national committeeman, served as chairman of both the Las Vegas Planning Commission and the Colorado River Commission, was state commander of the American Legion, and helped engineer the deal by which the war industries in Henderson would be bought from the federal government and kept open in private hands.

He passed away in 1968. The Cahlan's had two children who were born in Las Vegas. His daughter, Ruth Marion Cahlan, married Milton M Henderson, and the family subsequently moved to Iowa. They also had a son, John "Frosty" Forest Cahlan, who was an attorney in Las Vegas and then later in Pahrump, Nevada, until his passing. He had three children. "Frosty" Forest Cahlan's son, Mike Cahlan, was our neighbors growing up in Las Vegas, whose wife, Tina Cahlan, became best friends with my mother, Marsha Wiener. Having the pleasure of getting to know this incredible family that



has been dedicated to serving the Las Vegas community for many generations, it was an honor to listen and learn how both of our families were so intrinsically engrained into the Las Vegas community. With Mike and Tina Cahlan having 2 young sons, both about the same age as my youngest late brother, Dustin Wiener, they immediately became the best of friends. I have fond memories of babysitting the 3 boys growing up and occasionally run into them around town every now and again. It's always fascinating to see how they've grown into such kind and handsome young men and I am confident they will continue to carry on the legacy with their young families.

The Cahlan family were pioneers in the media sector for 30+ years and their legacy continues to live on through Al Cahlan's grandchildren and great grandchildren. The Cahlan family has for multiple generations been an asset to our local community, helping to preserve and record Las Vegas and all of Southern Nevada's rich history and dedicating so much to our Las Vegas community. The Cahlan's have supported our Real local community by giving back and educating Las Vegas locals on just what it means to be the Real source of local information and history – the Real influencers of the Vegas valley, both past and present. We hope you enjoy following and learning tidbits of information that have previously only available to some of the smaller local families that helped build and shape our city! Stay tuned for more interesting details encompassed with "The Native Juice".

Real Vegas magazine is THE ONLY local magazine that is brought to you by locals, for locals, and will proudly provide you with relevant content within the pages of each issue. We will continue to interview native Las Vegas families that have generations of born and raised locals. If you have any notable Las Vegas families that you would like to nominate for possible inclusion in an upcoming series article, please email [marketing@realvegasmagazine.com](mailto:marketing@realvegasmagazine.com). We are also very receptive and open to any feedback or suggestions, so please always feel free to reach out to us!







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Pg. 2-3



Pg. 10



Pg. 12-13



Pg. 24

*Real Vegas Magazine Brand Ambassador, the Real Swetta Kathuria.....2-3*

*Winter Makeup and Fashion Trends for 2025: A Fusion of Elegance and Edge.  
..... 10*

*The Winter White Style Guide: How to Rock White Menswear in the Cold Season.....12-13*

*14th Annual Grant A Gift Gala.....24*

*Meet the Real Chef Dan and Brandi Thompson of D'Agostino's Trattoria  
.....26-28*

*From Bulgaria with Love: Durvo Adds New Flavor to Las Vegas Culinary Scene.....30-31*

*Magic Moments by Seth Grabel: Coin Bending.....32*

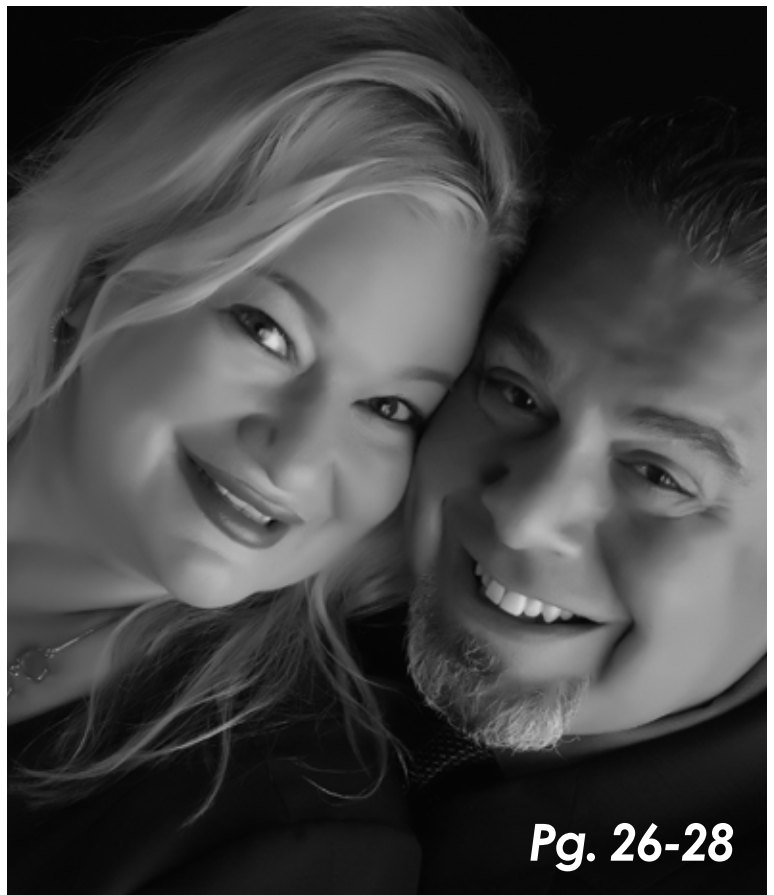
*Nevada Child Seekers | Missing and Exploited Children.....33*

*2025 Women Who Wow.....42-63*

*From Medical Assistant to CEO: The Inspiring Journey of Desiree Collins at Smith Plastic Surgery.....58-59*

*The Real Women Who Wow of UNLV.....62-63*

*TAIL TALK: An Interview with Tracyan Martin, AKA TRACY.....68-69*



Pg. 26-28



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# Happy New Year and Cheers to 2025

## From the Publisher's Desk

The holiday season, Christmastime, and the New Year always bring excitement. People are looking forward to what 2025 will bring, happy to put another eventful year behind us.

2024 was an interesting one. With such a polarized election year, it's refreshing to hopefully have the division behind us and collectively look forward to what 2025 will bring. Winter is always a great time for reflection, and here at Real Vegas, we're incredibly grateful for your continued support. Out with the old, in with the new! We are excited and optimistic about the new year and the upcoming amazing things we are proud to share with you in 2025.

We are honored to announce that we'll be expanding in 2025! There are new and exciting things to look forward to. Many businesses and business owners confided in me last year that they felt stuck in their companies or had hit a plateau, and we understood what they were feeling. We also experienced growth challenges and unnecessary obstacles. As a result, I focused on an aphorism from Proverbs: "As a dog returns to his vomit, so fools repeat their folly."

We found this truth to be particularly real in the fourth quarter of 2024 and made appropriate adjustments. We aim to learn from past mistakes and shed what wasn't working for our business. We're making the necessary changes to focus on continual improvement with every issue we pour our hearts into. Change isn't always easy, but timing is everything. As we took inventory in 2024, we chose to let go of heavy burdens that no longer served our brand effectively.

We're excited to highlight these positive changes in 2025. As the saying goes, "Celebrate endings — for they precede new beginnings."

Cheers to other locals and business owners for all you've learned and achieved in 2024. We wish you a seamless pivot as you adjust and strive for the best, both personally and

professionally, in 2025. We hope to see your lovely faces out and about a little more this year.

Happy New Year, and may 2025 be the most prosperous one yet for locals and business owners alike. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your unwavering loyalty and support for Real Vegas. It means the world to us. Cheers to you!

**“Celebrate  
endings – for they  
precede new  
beginnings”**



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## Winter Makeup and Fashion Trends for 2025

# A Fusion of Elegance and Edge

**A**s the chill of winter approaches, the fashion and beauty world is ready to embrace an eclectic mix of bold, nostalgic, and futuristic trends. For Winter 2025, the emphasis is on individuality, sustainability, and versatile styles that balance warmth with sophistication. Here's a look at what's defining this season's makeup and fashion scene.

## Makeup Trends

### 1. Frosted and Metallic Accents

Winter 2025 brings back the frosted eyeshadow and metallic lip trends reminiscent of the early 2000s, but with a modern twist. Shades of icy blue, silver, and rose gold dominate, adding a dreamy yet striking edge to makeup looks. For lips, metallic glosses in berry, plum, and champagne hues offer a bold statement.



### 2. Dewy Winter Skin

Healthy, glowing skin remains a top priority. The trend of skiminalism continues, with makeup routines favoring sheer foundations, luminous primers, and creamy highlighters. Dewy finishes that mimic the effect of fresh, moisturized skin are in, making hydration an essential part of your beauty regimen.

### 3. Bold Graphic Liners

Eyeliner takes center stage this winter, with bold, graphic designs becoming the go-to for making a statement. Think geometric shapes, double wings, and contrasting colors like white on black or vibrant neon. These daring styles add an avant-garde edge to any look.

### 4. Fluffy Brows and Natural Lashes

The focus on natural beauty extends to brows and lashes. Fluffy, brushed-up brows are achieved with clear gels or minimal shading. For lashes, the emphasis is on definition and length, with mascaras providing subtle volume or even tinting for a no-makeup-makeup effect.

### 5. Jewel-Toned Palettes

Rich jewel tones like emerald green, sapphire blue, and amethyst purple dominate eyeshadow palettes this winter. These colors are perfect for festive occasions and pair beautifully with neutral lip tones or metallic accents.



## Fashion Trends

### 1. Cozy Maximalism

While minimalism has its charm, Winter 2025 sees the rise of cozy maximalism. Chunky knit sweaters with bold patterns, oversized scarves, and layered textures create a striking yet warm ensemble. Think mismatched prints, vibrant colors, and playful accessories.

### 2. Monochromatic Ensembles

On the other end of the spectrum, monochromatic dressing remains popular. Winter whites, slate grays, and rich burgundies create sleek, sophisticated looks. Head-to-toe ensembles in one shade provide a chic and cohesive aesthetic, perfect for both casual outings and formal events.

### 3. Leather and Faux Fur

Sustainability meets luxury with faux fur coats and leather trousers. These materials are reinvented with eco-conscious techniques, offering a guilt-free way to stay stylish. Longline coats, shearing accents, and structured leather blazers are must-haves.

### 4. Statement Boots

Footwear is bold this season, with knee-high and thigh-high boots in colorful patterns or metallic finishes taking over. Chunky soles and platform designs offer both style and functionality, ideal for navigating icy streets.

### 5. Retro Revival

Nostalgia plays a big role, with '70s and '90s influences making a comeback. Corduroy trousers, flared jeans, and vintage-inspired outerwear mix seamlessly with modern elements. Cropped puffer jackets and wide-brim hats add a trendy twist to retro classics.

## Conclusion

Winter 2025 is all about embracing contrasts: bold vs. subtle, nostalgic vs. futuristic. Makeup is vibrant yet natural, while fashion celebrates individuality and sustainability. Whether you prefer cozy maximalism or sleek monochrome, this season's trends have something for everyone to make a style statement.





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# THE WINTER WHITE Style Guide

## HOW TO ROCK WHITE MENSWEAR IN THE COLD SEASON



Winter is the season for dark and heavy outerwear, right? Not necessarily. If you want to stand out and make a bold yet sophisticated statement, white clothing is a sleek and refreshing alternative. Although many men shy away from wearing white during winter, thinking it's reserved for warmer months, this old-fashioned idea has lost relevance. Here's how to stylishly incorporate white and ivory into your winter wardrobe, how to combine these tones for a clean and modern look, and why it's time to abandon the outdated "no white after Labor Day" rule.

### The Origins of the "No White After Labor Day" Rule

Before diving into winter whites, let's address a longstanding fashion myth: the belief that white clothing is off-limits after Labor Day. The origins of this rule go back to the early 20th century, a time when fashion was a symbol of social status. During the summer months, the wealthy elite would escape to beachside resorts, where they embraced light, airy, white clothing to stay cool. When summer ended, and city life resumed, darker, more formal clothing made from heavier fabrics became the norm.

Labor Day, celebrated on the first Monday in September, marked the end of the summer social season. By that point, wearing white was seen as out of step with seasonal practicality and, more importantly, a way to distinguish the elite from those who couldn't keep up with fast-evolving fashion norms. Fast forward to the present day, and this once-rigid rule has become irrelevant in the modern world of fashion, where personal style and expression take precedence over social class signals.

In today's fashion landscape, men can—and should—feel free to wear white clothing all year long. Winter whites can add sophistication, brightness, and a crisp, clean look to your wardrobe, whether you're dressing for the office, a casual outing, or a special occasion.

### Why White Works in the Winter

White clothing in winter doesn't just make a bold statement; it's also incredibly stylish and versatile. Here's why it works so well:

- 1. Brightens Dreary Days:** As the days grow shorter and gray skies dominate, white and ivory tones can inject brightness into your look. These light shades stand out against winter's typical darker backdrops, making your outfit look fresh and uplifting.
- 2. Reflects Luxury and Elegance:** When done right, white clothing can look even more sophisticated in the winter. Imagine the refined appearance of a white wool overcoat or the polished look of ivory corduroy trousers—these pieces exude understated elegance.
- 3. A Great Canvas for Layering:** Winter fashion is all about layering, and white clothing serves as a perfect base. It pairs well with various neutrals and textures, allowing for limitless outfit combinations.





## How to Wear White Clothing During the Winter

If the idea of wearing white in the cold months still feels daunting, here are some tips to help you pull it off with style.

### 1. Choose Seasonally Appropriate Fabrics

The key to wearing white in winter is to opt for fabrics that are warm and substantial. Lightweight summer materials like linen are best left in the closet until spring, but heavy and luxurious fabrics look and feel seasonally appropriate. Consider these options:

- **White Wool Overcoats:** A tailored white or ivory wool overcoat makes a strong and sophisticated statement. Layer it over a turtleneck or a classic crewneck sweater for an effortlessly polished look.
- **Chunky Knit Sweaters:** A chunky white or ivory cable-knit sweater not only looks great but also keeps you warm. Pair it with dark denim or slim-fit chinos for a balanced, rugged style.
- **Corduroy or Wool Trousers:** White corduroy pants or ivory wool trousers add texture to your outfit while keeping you comfortable and stylish. By sticking to heavier fabrics, you'll be warm and well-dressed, proving that white can work perfectly in winter weather.

### 2. Mixing White and Ivory for Depth

Wearing an all-white outfit can feel stark, but incorporating shades of ivory and off-white creates a softer, more sophisticated look. Mixing these tones adds visual depth and interest to your ensemble. Here's how to do it right:

- **White and Ivory Outerwear:** Pair an ivory turtleneck or sweater with a bright white overcoat. This combination creates subtle contrast while still looking cohesive.
- **Layering with Neutrals:** For a sleek yet relaxed look, wear a white shirt under an ivory crewneck sweater, and finish with a taupe or camel coat. The neutral tones complement each other beautifully and make for a refined winter outfit.
- **Contrasting Accessories:** If your outfit leans heavily into whites and ivories, consider grounding it with accessories in darker neutral tones, such as a dark brown belt, black boots, or a deep gray scarf.



## Outfit Ideas for Winter Whites

Need some inspiration? Here are several outfit ideas that show how white and ivory can work seamlessly into your winter wardrobe:

### 1. The Business Casual Ensemble

- Start with a white oxford shirt and layer a gray or ivory cashmere sweater over it.
- Pair these with tailored ivory wool trousers and complete the look with a camel overcoat.
- Add a pair of brown leather loafers or boots and a leather belt for a professional yet approachable outfit.

### 2. The Weekend Look

- A chunky white turtleneck sweater with slim-fit, dark-wash jeans makes for a sharp yet relaxed weekend outfit.
  - Layer on a white or ivory puffer jacket and opt for suede desert boots in taupe or light brown.
- Accessorize with a knitted beanie in a neutral shade to pull the look together.

### 3. The Evening Out Style

- An ivory crewneck sweater paired with crisp white chinos creates a striking evening look.
- Throw on a sleek black or navy peacoat for contrast, and finish with polished black leather Chelsea boots.
- For added sophistication, wear a minimalist watch with a black leather strap.

### 4. The Rugged Winter Outfit

- Wear a white thermal long-sleeve shirt under a heavy ivory flannel shirt, left unbuttoned for a relaxed vibe.
- Match this with white or off-white slim-fit corduroy pants and tan hiking boots.
- Top it off with a shearling-lined denim jacket for a warm, layered look.

## Accessorizing Winter Whites

Accessories are an excellent way to enhance your winter white outfits while adding practicality and style:

- **Scarves:** An oversized scarf in a contrasting color, like charcoal gray or navy, adds warmth and a touch of sophistication.
- **Hats:** A wool beanie in a neutral or dark tone can frame your face while keeping you cozy.
- **Gloves and Belts:** Leather gloves and belts in rich brown or black shades provide a stylish contrast to a white or ivory outfit.

## Breaking the Fashion Rules: Embrace Winter Whites

The myth that white shouldn't be worn after Labor Day is just that—a myth. Fashion is about self-expression and experimenting with styles that suit your personality and environment. Winter whites have the power to elevate your look and bring light to the darker months, so don't be afraid to embrace them.

So go ahead, break the rules, and let white make a statement in your winter wardrobe. With the right fabrics, layering techniques, and thoughtful accessories, you'll be well-prepared to turn heads and redefine winter menswear.

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The background of the image is a dark, low-angle photograph of the New York Stock Exchange building. The classical architecture features a series of tall, fluted columns supporting a heavy entablature. At the top, a triangular pediment is filled with intricate marble sculptures. The words "NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE" are carved into the frieze above the columns. An American flag is visible in the lower center, partially obscured by the columns. The overall tone is somber and professional.

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## Grant A Gift Autism Foundation Announces New Henderson Satellite Location to Meet Rising Demand at 14th Annual Grant A Gift Gala

Grant A Gift Autism Foundation - Ackerman Center hosted its 14th annual Grant A Gift Gala on the field of Allegiant Stadium on Wednesday, Nov. 13, drawing an incredible 870 guests. The highlight of the evening was foundation president Brian Hager's announcement of a new satellite location in Henderson, set to open in 2025, which will enable the foundation to double its capacity and serve even more families across Southern Nevada. Before launching the live auction, Hager set an ambitious goal of raising \$500,000 to support the new location's buildout and initial operations.

The night was filled with entertainment, fine dining, and a series of unforgettable auction moments. Las Vegas Raiders owner, Mark Davis, who sat beside Sandra Douglass Morgan, made waves by bidding \$190,000 on a sleek 2024 Porsche Macan Electric. After winning, Davis realized the vehicle was electric and humorously announced he doesn't drive electric vehicles and instead would donate the \$190,000 directly to the nonprofit, allowing the second-highest bidder to take home the car with their \$180,000 bid.

Another unforgettable highlight came during a lively bidding war for a six-month-old golden doodle puppy. Grant A Gift board chair, Gary Ackerman, owner of Gaudin Motor Co., won the bid with \$40,000. In a heartwarming twist, Ackerman turned to surprise one of his employees, who had been lovingly caring for the puppy in the days leading up to the event and had grown deeply attached. Overcome with emotion, she burst into tears of joy as Ackerman gifted her the puppy on the spot, a gesture that moved the entire room and underscored the evening's spirit of generosity and compassion.

Dressed to the theme of "Metallic Mosaic Elegance," attendees enjoyed an elegant dinner with premium wines and entertainment. Honorees of the evening included Jenny and Gerry Shear of the

Shear Family Foundation and Barbara Buckley of the Legal Aid Center of Nevada, each recognized with the Community Ambassador Award for their enduring support of the foundation.

In total, the event raised \$2 million, advancing Grant A Gift Autism Foundation's mission to support their new location and provide essential services including early diagnostics, family-centered clinical care, vocational programs, and scholarships to bridge insurance gaps for families navigating autism and other neurodevelopmental challenges.



### Photo captions

1. L to R) Brian Hager - President of Grant A Gift and Emily Hayes - Director of Marketing and Events
2. Gary Ackerman bids and secures golden doodle puppy for \$40k
3. Mark Davis announcing \$190k donation after winning 2024 Porsche Macan Electric
4. Grant A Gift gala attendees sparkle to the Metallic Mosaic Excellence theme

Event Images by Alt F Photography





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# REAL EATS

BY CHEF VIC

It's never too late  
to find your love.

## Meet the Real Chef Dan and Brandi Thompson of D'Agostino's Trattoria



This time around we get the privilege of visiting the dynamic duo Chef Dan and Brandi Thompson who are the chef, owner/operators and the creators of D'Agostino's Trattoria located on Buffalo and Flamingo on the Southwest corner. I should give the address now because halfway through this you might be on your way there after you read what I'm writing. I got to break holiday bread this time with my good friends the RVM boss lady Candice herself and my good brother Travis.

This one hit home extra as it is within my own personal culture of what I have experienced from the cooking love of my family evolving into my career and passion joining forces to become one. And the fact that I can get this cuisine in West Las Vegas- is a dream to me because there are very few

restaurants that generate this specific type of home-style classic Italian American cuisine. But of course, a shout out to all our other origins of Italian restaurants out there doing it right!

I will say the truth is- it's difficult to find some of these authentic classics. With specializing in filled pastas an authentic classic dish like scallopini, those who desire those dishes have an expectation. I can tell you now this restaurant exceeds that expectation. We will get to the food and our most wonderful experience shortly, but first, I want to give you a little back story on chef Dan's journey and how he has gotten to where he is at today.

With knowing Dan for a while and having the honor of filming them several years ago during the pandemic, we got to know him and Brandi much more during this meal and learned some respectful back story information on what they/Dan had to go through to be able to perform the level they do today. You would think the way he cooks he was born doing this and technically he was, but allow me to provide some additional insight:

Beside Dan coming from a loving family with legendary home cooks giving extra love from mom and grandma building him a stool so he could be tall enough to see what they were preparing on the kitchen counter. As that showed him the culinary skills early in life going on around him in his home as he





was growing up, it was by default for him, and it was embedded in him at a very young age. As time goes on, one needs to focus on work survival, making ends meet and we must take what's known sometimes as a "job" as opposed to a "career".

Jumping into the work world at the young age of 15, Dan started out as a men's suit formal wear tailor. An attention to detail job for sure, but probably the furthest place from the kitchen. With working non kitchen jobs throughout the years doing what he had to do to make ends meet, he was finally able in his 30's to reconnect with his passion. He was determined to the point where he accepted a dishwasher position just to be able to get back in the kitchen environment. Getting involved with catering companies, between washing dishes, he was taking on culinary duties learning what he could, and taking on the chef's work and tasks absorbing the knowledge slowly but surely getting him ready for what you see today. Dan first enrolled himself in CSN culinary. With the great teachers and observers that they are, they saw the bright light in Dan which allowed him to earn leadership positions making menus and taking on sous chef duties. At the age of 35, he enrolled himself in Cordon Bleu. At this point it's safe to say that Dan is back on track in the culinary industry.

At this point Dan was blessed with the true seasoning from these academies that he has aligned himself with. Knowing this industry, the other side of it now is once you are seasoned from the schools, where do you work? Who will give you a chance? Does one have enough experience to work in a reputable establishment under a good chef? And will that chef take a chance on you in the growth of your career?

Dan was determined to work in a primer kitchen under a true chef that has worked under some of the original chefs that started this industry from Europe. Dan needed this type of environment to combine with his technical skills from CSN/CB to aid him in catching up on the industrial side of things be influenced by someone who has done it themselves. I must give a special mention to Chef William Pfersching of Red Rock Country Club. He was a fabulous mentor to Dan and a true chef that's been through it all in the culinary industry and classically trained by some of the best in the world. I got to know William as we are working on something great (stay tuned), I understand exactly what Dan means. Thank you, Chef William, for helping all the people you have. I know the determination you had earlier in your career and the top chefs gave you the shot- so full circle all the way.

Chef William did not just hand it to Dan. A position was created to run the pool kitchen. Dan graciously accepted because he



wanted in Red Rock Country Club. At this point it's all coming together because Dan finally earned his steady salary position and got to absolutely rock the members only dining room like a true professional. Eventually moving on to Sienna Golf Club, Dan took his knowledge, grabbed the sous chef position, then became the executive chef that he was seeking to be. Way to go my friend!

Eventually when you start getting good at this and you had previous passions embedded in your soul from your family at an early age, what winds up happening is the two now meet and the passion with the career become one. Dan has found himself working for high class establishments like Red Rock, The Ridges, Cannon Gate and is now at the point where he feels it's time to take the chance and create that opportunity to spread their wings and take over their own establishment. It was a big decision that he and Brandi had to make. After working at these top establishments, I have mentioned you can officially do anything. And that's exactly what they did. The decision was made to take over this space of a restaurant that was lying dormant for a while. This gave them the opportunity to completely refuel the passion in full control and continue to write their personal story and fulfill their personal destiny and have what is known today as D'Agostino's Trattoria.

Now to move on- I did this one a bit different! I gave you the full story first, now let's talk about the food since you know our dear friends that much more. That's if you're not on your way there already!  
CUISINE – (let's eat) – Chefs freestyle – No menus needed.  
"You know we love when this happens."

First and foremost, we had the absolute honor and privilege being taken care of by Brandi herself! And had Caroline backing her up. Here comes the wine. At this point the bread and wine are on another level. We started







off with rustic bread and butter. Of course, we have to give a shout out to Gio at Monzu for providing the most rustic top tier breads. Speaking of chefs on another level.

First course- Cream of Portobello Mushroom Soup with Sherry and Toast Points. Let's dunk some of that rustic bread in there as well. And now It will be difficult to eat another mushroom soup after this- that's all I can say.

Second course- Is what's known as a Modified Caprese Salad from the secret menu that consisted of homemade red roasted peppers and fresh burrata cheese. I would say that was modified on another level. We loved it. Didn't think a salad could be as adventurous until now.

Third course- Handmade Wild Mushroom Ravioli with Parmesan Jus. Yes, you heard me right, he made a parmesan jus and stuffed to the max with a smooth and silky texture. Paired perfectly with the wine.

Fourth course- Handmade Jumbo Lump Crab and Lobster with Three Cheese Blend Ravioli and a Pink Vodka Sauce. Would you like me to say that again? I can bet you Travis is almost back on his way in for that specific dish.

Fifth Course- Braised Beef Short Rib Cannelloni. Slowly braised short rib with Dan's three cheese blend, rolled in a thin egg pasta shell, baked mozzarella, and a cabernet sauvignon veal stock. Wowwwww! Just wow!  
Remember this is Italian! So, we are now having dinner...!

The dinner course was a beautiful Veal Scallopini with freshly made Veal Demi and Crispy Prosciutto. I haven't eaten it in a while because there's a certain way, I prefer it. And this was it right here. Just like in New York City, and the way we would get it going into your top-notch Little Italy establishment in NYC. We have enjoyed this meal to the fullest and we definitely saved room for some dessert. At this point we are all in!

Yes, Brandi- Since you are recommending dessert, we will say yes to anything because everything was more than perfect. And she now has returned with some of their homemade desserts and top tier coffee/espresso. Between the deliciously composed cheesecake, the handmade tiramisu, and coffee ice cream with little waffle

cookie; I have to say, the feeling of being blessed is an understatement as we've had one of the greatest meals ever, we got to know Dan and Brandi even more receiving the story of the journey of what they went through to create this amazing establishment that is followed by a wonderful clientele that all stuck together during the pandemic with online cooking knowledge classes and contests to keep people going.

I want to say right now that everything I have told you here speaks for itself, and I am just the narrator bringing awareness to these wonderful people and their dream coming true. Anyone who is seeking this type of cuisine will be in love. Someone like me is getting touched in the soul right now because this food is where I came from, and I get the privilege of eating it tonight in this wonderful establishment that these amazing people created by believing in themselves and going with their dreams.

Being a part of the Knights of Columbus, they also support some of your wonderful charities out there as I ran into them at the Adelson Hospice Gala a few weeks back, and they had amazing food there as well giving the love and support to the local community.

Visit our good friends Dan and Brandy at D'Agostino's Trattoria 4155 S Buffalo, Suite 115, Las Vegas, NV, 89147 (on the Southwest corner)

Dan and Brandi, we say again, thank you for sharing this heartwarming journey and thank you for all you do. Of course, it makes sense why your clientele is more like a family!

We will see all your fabulous people that support our local restaurants and RVM magazine in 2025, and we have some great stuff coming your way.

Wishing a blessed New Year to all – Much love from Chef VV and the RVM Fam!





# VICTORIA ELLIS:

## From Local Talent to Hollywood's Next Breakout Star

Las Vegas has long been known for its glitz, glamour, and the dreams it inspires—but for Victoria Ellis, the city became the launchpad for a promising career in film. From her roots in San Diego to the bright lights of the silver screen, Victoria's journey is one of talent, determination, and a deep passion for storytelling.

Victoria moved to Las Vegas at the age of four and quickly embraced the city as her home. A graduate of Mojave High School, she first discovered her love for acting in the school's theatre department. Performing in several plays and even gracing the stage at the prestigious Smith Center, she realized early on that the stage—and eventually the screen—was where she belonged. It was during these formative years that Victoria truly "caught the acting bug" and began to envision a future as a professional actress.

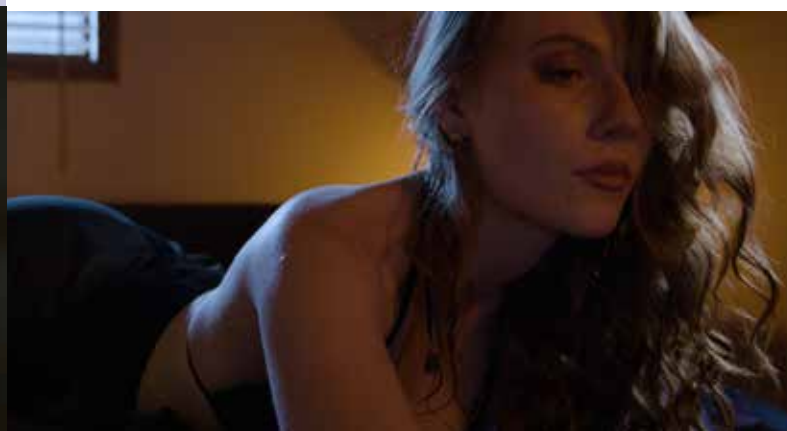
But acting wasn't Victoria's only talent. While pursuing her craft, she also excelled as an athlete, competing as a pole-vaulter, and balancing her artistic ambitions with academic excellence. Graduating with honors, Victoria demonstrated the tenacity and focus that would later propel her career forward.

As she worked toward her dream, Victoria spent time at Speed Vegas, where she shared the thrill of the raceway with tourists and locals alike. However, her big break came in 2022 when she secured the role of Vicki in the feature horror film 'Goon of the Lagoon'. Directed by the acclaimed Gino Payne, known for his work on iconic series like 'Game of Thrones' and 'The Walking Dead', the film presented Victoria with the opportunity of a lifetime. After joining the cast in 2024 for filming, Victoria brought her talent and dedication to the set, helping craft a film that is already generating buzz. Set to release in 2025 with international distribution from OneTwoThree Media and Guerilla Rep Entertainment, \*Goon of the



Lagoon\* is poised to make waves in the horror genre. Represented by the renowned Ben Yennie, the film's pedigree and unique storyline offer an ideal platform for Victoria to showcase her skills to a global audience.

As Victoria's star rises, Las Vegas can take pride in nurturing such a remarkable talent. From her days performing at the Smith Center to her pole-vaulting feats and now her debut on the big screen, Victoria Ellis is a testament to the power of perseverance and passion. Keep an eye out—because this hometown hero is just getting started.





# Vegan In Vegas

By Charles Karel Bouley

## From Bulgaria with Love Durvo Adds New Flavor to Las Vegas Culinary Scene

The economy for many is not doing well, no matter what numbers, polls, or politicians say: the fact is eating out or eating at home, eating in general, costs more now. This corporate greed is hiking up prices in all aspects of the food industry, especially restaurants. And thus, many have closed their doors. This is particularly true in the Vegan space, once thriving in Las Vegas, now as more restaurants offer Vegan options, exclusively vegan spots are diminishing in some ways.



Yet, Rayna and Chef Hanny (pronounced Honey), have opened an exciting new eatery on Decatur and Hacienda (5255 S. Decatur #107, Las Vegas, NV 89118 725-3020-9970) named Durvo (Bulgarian for Tree). Rayna has been in Las Vegas for over five years and has worked in many vegan spaces; and prior she ran a restaurant in Bulgaria. Chef Hanny is in the back, creating new and unique flavors for this inconspicuous gastric haven.

The menu skews more moderate-to-fine dining and the dark wood interior complete with a bar area (liquor license in process) and elevated booth seating immerse the diners in ambiance, thus removing the "strip mall" feel and making it feel like a stand-alone destination.

Many items on the menu will be seasonal, so items are subject to change. When I went for my birthday Nov. 7 Appetizers included Quatro Taco, two barbacoa, one plantain with Mole Sauce and one mixed bean and mushroom with Verde sauce taco; Spinach/Artichoke dip, a fan favorite, which is spinach, artichoke hearts, white beans served with crispy bread bites...it's THAT dip that we've all known and loved for some time, done vegan. Other appetizers include the Artichoke with Saffron Aioli and Avo mousse, which is whole artichoke hearts breaded and fried with a side of saffron aioli and avocado mousse. It's pretty and quite delicious. There's the Crispy Ocean Crab Cakes made from jackfruit and a Cilantro Ranch Salad in a fried tortilla bowl, and you can add in vegan salmon fillet that rivals anything caught in the wild.

I was expecting the Artichoke with Saffron to be heavier, given that it's fried and breaded, but it was delightfully light, bursting with flavor and when coupled with the Saffron Aioli it was five-star.

Entrees range from traditional entries like pasta to a full vegan steak dinner. The Pistachio Pesto Rigatoni Pasta with Crispy Tofu was some of the best pasta in Las Vegas. Pistachio pesto butter sauce poured over rigatoni then sprinkled with parmesan, all vegan, and all beyond delicious. If you don't want the Crispy Tofu, add the salmon fillet.

They have a buffalo slaw burger which is a patty of beans and beets that's tastier than it should be, I mean, how do you do that to beets and beans? It's







smothered in Buffalo slaw and served with either homemade chips or truffle chips and truly satisfies the burger fix.

There's also the Pomodoro Bowtie Pasta, which is Pomodoro sauce made with fresh tomatoes, garlic, basil, and cashew ricotta cheese on the top. It is a traditional taste of Italy, simple and full of garlicky goodness. If you'd like something more exotic, have the Indian Curry. It's a unique blend of curry spices paired with coconut milk curry sauce and served with tofu cubes and white rice. Remember, curry is a generic term for five or more spices blended so the Chef has a few she's keeping secret.

The two big meals on the menu are the Ocean Bay Filet which is marinated hearts of palm and young green jackfruit in a salty brine, and you won't know it's not fish. It's served with coli-mashed potatoes a treat unto



themselves. And then there's the Steak and Potatoes which is a piece of tender steak (I believe it's a Chunk steak, one of the best products out) over garlic mashed potatoes with a ladleful of dark mushroom demi-glace. This will give you a very savory, hearty feel, reminiscent of its non-vegan namesake. It's as close to real meat and potatoes as I want to get, and with a dish this filling and good, there's no need to ever eat it any other way.

For my birthday dessert I had Three Layers of Love, and trust me, by the time I got to the bottom of the three-tier martini-glass delight I felt all the love. The top tier is Matcha mousse, the middle is Mango ganache, and the bottom is walnut ice cream. Three very unique flavors blended as one, and they work. The Mango ganache acts like it's belonged sandwiched between walnut ice cream and matcha mousse all along.

Prices range from \$15 to \$27 with most appetizers and entrees below \$20.

I'll be visiting Durvo often, for the great food, service and because I want to see it thrive. Rayna and Chef Hanny have a dream to bring flavorful vegan food to the Las Vegas and they're off to a great start.

OPTIONS: 9 Thai Kitchen at Desert Inn and Durango (8470 W Desert Inn Rd) is under new owners and now has both lunch specials AND vegan lunch specials as well as many other vegan options. I had Mongolian tofu there recently, with soup, egg roll and rice, and it was fabulous and under \$15. The menu has many Vegan options and the new owner's mom is the one in the kitchen whipping it all up! Not exclusively a vegan restaurant, it's nice to see 9 Thai Kitchen offer more than five vegan options on their new menu.



To read more about these and other restaurants go to [veganinvegas.com](http://veganinvegas.com) and listen for reviews on **The Karel Cast** wherever you get your podcasts. Reviews are often featured at [youtube.com/reallykarel](http://youtube.com/reallykarel) so subscribe as well as [realvegasmagazine.com](http://realvegasmagazine.com) Send comments to [comments@veganinvegas.com](mailto:comments@veganinvegas.com)



# MAGIC MOMENTS BY SETH GRABEL

## COIN BENDING

with Magician Seth Grabel

SETH GRABEL



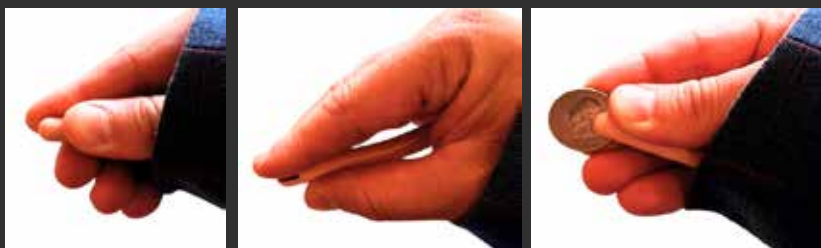
1. Pin the elastic cord on the inside of your jacket sleeve so that the metal bender gimmick is easily reached by your hands. Make sure to have gimmick lay just above the cuff so spectators cannot see the gimmick.



2. When performing the trick, you must ask for a quarter, then have the spectator sign their quarter. Hold the quarter in your hands and secretly put the quarter between the notches on the gimmick.



3. Holding both gimmicks in either hand, bend the quarter with the gimmick applying pressure to both sides of the quarter. Make sure that the quarter is securely fit into the gimmick on both sides. To bend apply pressure on both ends with your thumbs.



4. After bending the quarter, let the gimmicks fly up your sleeve to be concealed and place the quarter in one hand, close the hand over the quarter.



At this point all the "magic" has been done, and it's up to you to play with your audience and have fun telling them that you bent the quarter with your mind, super strong strength, or anything else you can think of.

This is a really great trick, and if done correctly, you will blow your spectators minds.



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# Nevada Child Seekers

In Nevada the Issue of Missing and Exploited Children is all too Real Nevada Child Seekers Shines a Beacon of Hope for our Community

When a child goes missing, it can feel like the world stops. Fear, panic, and an overwhelming sense of helplessness wash over families. In Nevada, there is one organization that shines a beacon of hope in these darkest of times: Nevada Child Seekers. For nearly 40 years, this nonprofit has been the lifeline for parents, tirelessly working to bring missing children back home safely.

Nevada Child Seekers is not just an organization; it's a family made up of passionate individuals who have dedicated their lives to a singular mission—to protect and recover missing children. In a state where the issue of missing and exploited children is all too real, this agency stands as one of the strongest and most unwavering voices for these children and their families. It is impossible to overstate the weight of this responsibility, yet Nevada Child Seekers carries it with remarkable resolve and grace.

What sets Nevada Child Seekers apart is not only the magnitude of their cause but the depth of their commitment, often achieved by just three full-time staff members. It's astounding to think that with such a small team, they are able to do the critical work of keeping the public informed when a child goes missing. They are the ones who sound the statewide alerts, mobilize social media, and notify every media and transit authority in the region. The effort they put forth is nothing short of heroic, and it's this tenacious spirit that makes them a pillar of hope for families in crisis.

How do they do it? It all comes down to an unrelenting drive to protect children before they fall victim to the dangers that lurk in the streets—exploitation, trafficking, and violence. Nevada Child Seekers understands that every second counts, and they waste no time in springing into action. Their expertise, built over nearly four decades, allows them to navigate the complexities of missing child cases with both urgency and precision. They stand with families in their most vulnerable moments, offering not only practical assistance but emotional support, letting parents know they are not alone in their search.

But Nevada Child Seekers doesn't do it alone. Their success is powered by a community that believes in their mission—volunteers who show up, donors who support their efforts, and partners who share in the responsibility of protecting Nevada's children. Together, they form a network of hope that extends far beyond the agency's office walls. The work of Nevada Child Seekers is a collective one, proving that when a community comes together, even the most daunting challenges can be overcome.

In a world that can often seem indifferent to tragedy, Nevada Child Seekers stands as an inspiration, reminding us all of the power of compassion, dedication, and hope. Their work saves lives, and for the families they help, that makes all the difference.





**REAL VEGAS**

*Congratulations to our*  
**2025 WINTER LUXE HOME**  
COMPANIES OF LAS VEGAS!



We asked, and locals answered. Please allow us to introduce to you the 2025 Winter Luxe Home Companies of Las Vegas! These professional companies are here working hard in our community year-round to help you ensure your home can be as LUXE as possible

If you are an owner of a local LUXE Home or Garden Company, or if you would strongly recommend a LUXE Home & Garden company you would like to see featured in the Luxe Home section, go to: [realvegasmagazine.com/nominate](http://realvegasmagazine.com/nominate) and nominate them and tell us what makes them the BEST & LUXE!





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 Sunburst Shutters & Window  
 Fashions Las Vegas  
 sunburstshutters.com  
 702-367-1600



DAVID WENG  
**CEO**  
 Cabinets Now  
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ELENA LEDOUX  
**SERIAL ENTREPRENEUR/CO-FOUNDER**  
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RENEWAL BY ANDERSON

THE WINDOW & DOOR STORE



Allow us to Reintroduce  
Global Businessman  
and Business Leader

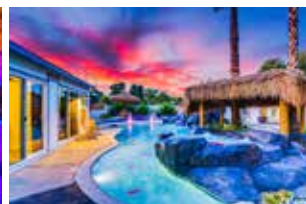
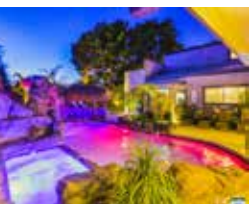
# Gary Wu

Gary Wu has emerged a Strategic Leader in numerous industries across the world from China to the US, a true Global Businessman. With a background in the competitive international automotive industry, multifaceted Gary has since emerged as the acclaimed Founder & CEO of TotalMax Homes LLC where he provides the best in full-service luxury accommodation and concierge services.

Individually, Gary recently received the 'Top 50 Business Leaders of Las Vegas' and was the recipient of the Global Outstanding Leadership Award (2024). He continues to be the Chairman of Shaanxi U.S.A Corporation SILVER PANDA (Fortune 452 of Fortune 500)

and Hangzhou SureAuto. In addition, he's been honored to have been Keynote Speaker and Guest Professor at leading universities such as Yale, Wharton, and Beijing University.

Gary has been quoted reflecting that, "My experiential learning journey has been defined by the value of stepping outside my comfort zone. I've realized that growth occurs when we push ourselves beyond familiar boundaries and embrace new experiences."





Born in Beijing, China, Gary relocated to the United States with his family while in junior high school. He graduated from Arizona State University, followed by EMBA from Rutgers University, Brunswick, finishing 1st in class.

However, he was determined to return to China as he realized the increasing opportunities in East Asia. In the decade between 1997-2007, Gary fulfilled that ambition, moving up the ranks to become the Volvo China CEO and Asian EVP.

His success in creating brand awareness and increasing brand ranking of Volvo commercial vehicles led him to emerge as an "intellectual and spiritual leader" of China's commercial vehicle sector and a pioneer pushing reform of China's logistics industry. During this time, Gary also established the 1st standard second-hand car company, SureAuto, with the Founder of CarMax. After returning to the United States, Gary turned his attention to his next challenge, Las Vegas, Nevada, and established TotalMax Homes LLC in 2011.

According to data, Las Vegas is no longer principally a Gambling City. It has transformed and the top Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is now "MICE", an acronym for 'Meetings, Incentive Conferences, Exhibitions.' It has continued to expand and evolve into an international corporate, family and resort destination.

TotalMax Homes provides the best Las Vegas Total Solution Packages for all clients. It introduced a series of exclusive 'Las Hawaii' mansions in Las Vegas, and has 'Super Luxury Beachy Mansions' in Newport Beach, CA under development. These mansions are a testament to Gary's vision of combining luxury accommodations with Total Solution in all full-service modules. Additional concierge services include a selection of menus for all meals with standard prices, cleaning, yoga, spa & beauty care, and entertainment modules such as ballet, violin solo modern, air silk show, dealers, bartenders, magic acts, singers, mermaids, DJs, etc. TotalMax Homes provides the ultimate in luxury accommodations and concierge services.

Today, Gary is recognized as a leading pioneer in the Short-Term Rental (STR), Medium-Term Rental (MTR), and Long-Term Rental (LTR) sectors, thanks to his innovative solutions. "We are committed to

ensuring that every facet of our clients' Vegas experiences is high quality and ultra-fine. Despite our high luxury and large capacity offers, we strive for and achieve the best experience for our targeted clients with regards to value and cost per person. Our targets have been set high and right, so that we continuously improve, achieve, and attain higher value offers for our clients in the present and the future, through our total solution value chain."

Gary combines industry knowledge, networking skills, and perseverance to achieve his entrepreneurial goals. Speaking about his passion, he says, "I'm driven by a desire to innovate and create strategies that give individuals and businesses a competitive edge in the market. I believe in the power of creativity, strategic thinking, and relentless determination to achieve success in the real estate market and entrepreneurship."

A proclaimed Thought Leader, Gary inspires youth across the world. Below are some of Gary's theories and achievements:

- A Scholar who integrates Eastern & Western culture and economic theory, and also understands how MNCs can succeed in China.
- Awarded 'China New Era Thinker,' 7th place, 2007.
- Theorized 'Big Baby' theory and philosophy system of Total Success theory.
- Theorized 'Opportunity is enemy'
- Theorized 'Truck is not a car, it's a machine for making money'.
- Theorized 'Only profitable customers can become satisfied customers 1+1=7'.
- Theorized 'When Channel is ready, the water will be there'.
- Theorized 'Logistics Value Equation,' well accepted in the logistics industry.
- Theorized 'Healthy Man theory' of developing China's logistics, praised in the logistics industry.

**702.592.6888**

**TOTALMAXHOME.COM**

**D&D MANSION: 6425 Darby Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89146**





# CABINETS NOW



**C**abinets Now is a Las Vegas kitchen cabinet company, specializing in cabinetry, prefabricated granite countertops and laminate flooring. Our experienced kitchen cabinet employees can help you with all your cabinetry needs in your Las Vegas Home.

We understand and appreciate the needs of our customers and will communicate openly with them to ensure their kitchen cabinet needs are met. At Cabinets Now, we offer a wide variety of hardware for your new Las Vegas kitchen, bath cabinets with such name brands as Top Knob, Jeffrey Alexander and MSI Surface.

Our team of professionals is knowledgeable in prefabricated granite counter tops. Our affordable kitchen cabinets are designed to bring elegance to your home without the hefty price tag. Take advantage of our sales in the Las Vegas area on laminate flooring as well!

All the jobs we do are important to us and our kitchen cabinet and prefab granite countertop for customers in Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and Henderson. Cabinets Now is much more than a Las Vegas kitchen cabinet company. We do laminate flooring, waterproof vinyl flooring, prefabricated granite countertops, sinks, faucets,





door casings, baseboards, crown molding and so much more. We offer an in-home estimate and measuring available for your Las Vegas kitchen remodeling needs. We have always adhered to the requirements of low price and high quality.

We are also a Better Business Bureau company, and have always been the best choice for Customers who want professional quality and service. We have a nice showroom and big warehouse where customers can buy right now and pick up immediately, allowing customers to easily finish the job.

Visit us online, or better yet, come into our fantastic showroom and have a look around!



# GRANITE COUNTER TOPS QUARTZ COUNTER TOPS

## LIST OF SERVICES

### **Kitchen Cabinets**

Check out the kitchen cabinets, Las Vegas!  
We have a variety in our showroom for name brand manufacturers.

### **Prefabricated Granite & Quartz Countertops**

Are you in the market for new kitchen counter tops? See what we have to offer!

### **Flooring**

Cabinets Now Las Vegas has a variety of colors and styles in laminate and waterproof vinyl flooring for your home. Check out our showroom today!

### **Hardware**

Need some door casings or molding? Cabinets Now has all you need to complete a home renovation today!

### **Sinks & Faucets**

Our showroom is stocked with kitchen sinks and kitchen faucets. If you need things for your bathroom, we also have bathroom sinks in stock.



**702.220.6688**

**CABINETSNOWVEGAS.COM**

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# Designer Kitchens & Baths Las Vegas



## Aaron Vry- Owner

Aaron Vry is a published, award winning kitchen and bath designer that has been involved in the Kitchen and Bath design industry since 1992. He has extensive knowledge in new construction and remodeling. Aaron Vry has been servicing the Las Vegas Valley and surrounding areas since 1994. Aaron Vry has experience in new custom and spec homes, along with insurance remodels, and remodeling many homes in the Las Vegas area. His clients have ranged from the inexperienced first-time home buyer to National Home Builders.

## Designing Kitchens and Remodeling Services in Las Vegas

If you are considering a kitchen project, then Designer Kitchen and Baths has everything you need. Our experience is unmatched by anyone else, and we only use the finest products to do the job right. Our products include a full line of custom and standard cabinets. Our kitchen renovation services in Las Vegas, Nevada also offer many unique stone slabs and counter tops, as well as tile flooring and back splash material.

Here at Designer Kitchens and Baths we know that a kitchen project is much more than just the products used. It is important to us that we have the resources to provide timely service, quality workmanship, and the ability to stay in budget. Our kitchen designer in Las Vegas, NV has the experience and the ability to work with almost any

budget. We do everything we can to make sure that we meet the customers' expectations.

At our kitchen remodeling in Las Vegas, NV, we guarantee that you will be satisfied with every aspect of your kitchen project.

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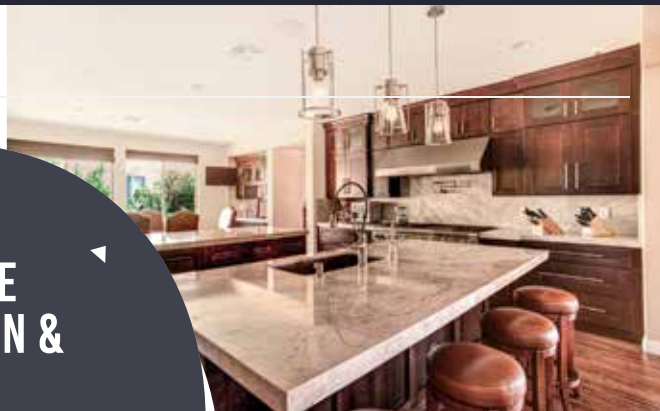
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# The List

Abie Mae Durst  
Alexandra Lourdes  
Alexandria Sidoris  
Alexis Kouser  
Alice Young  
Alisha Kerlin  
Alison Wainwright  
Amanda Kouretas  
Amanda Laub  
Amanda Ralph  
Amy Rosetti  
Analyn Braza  
Andeen Rose  
Angela Gettrost  
Angela Stabile  
Angela Tina  
Angelica McDonnell  
Angelina Scarcelli  
Anita Saldana  
Anna Billings  
April Drummond  
April Parsons  
Arezou Piroozi  
Armina Hansen  
Ashley Hawks  
Ashley Henderson  
Audrey Aker  
Ava Mucikyan  
Ayesha Mehdi  
Barbara Molasky  
Beli Andaluz  
Brandi Thompson  
Brandy White Elk  
Brenda Beltran  
Brooke Neubauer  
Cameron DeAngelo  
Carolyn Goodman  
Carolynn Towbin  
Carrie Carter-Cooper  
Carrie Giverson  
Cassie Mor  
Cathey Kuo  
Celeste Fierro  
Celeste Interrante  
Chef Nicole Brisson  
Chelsea Kade  
Chera Leigh  
Cheryl Whittingham-Irwin  
Christina Chipman  
Christina Vela-Vreeland  
Courtney Orrock  
Cyndy Robbins  
Dani Porter-Lansky  
Daniele Dreitzer  
Darcy Spears  
Darlene Hayes Miller  
Dawn Farahi  
Dawn Gibbons  
Dayna Roselli  
Debbie Roxarzade  
Deborah Clayton  
Denette Braud  
Denise Dixon  
Denise LaForest  
Desiree Collins  
Desiree Sagesse  
Diane Schiller  
Dina Ladah  
DJ Liz Clark  
DJ Sally  
Donna McLean  
Dorothy Portnoy  
Dr. Ati Hakimi  
Dr. Bess Chang  
Dr. Christian Giovanni  
Dr. Christina Madison  
Dr. Deepali Kashyap  
Dr. Elissa Palmer  
Dr. Eva Littman  
Dr. Fauzia Carullo  
Dr. Hayley Brown  
Dr. Heather Addison  
Dr. Kate Zhong  
Dr. M. Ferra Lin-Duffy  
Dr. Margaret Colucci  
Dr. Margaret Terhar  
Dr. Marguerite Brathwaite  
Dr. Nancy Uscher  
Dr. Renae Coffman  
Dr. Souzan El-Eid  
Dr. Suzie Su  
Elena Ledoux  
Elizabeth Blau  
Elizabeth Trosper  
Erika Luren  
Evelyn Frese  
Fawnia Mondey  
Galit Ventura-Rozen  
Gia Schultz  
Gigi Roundtree  
Gina Corena  
Ginger Allen  
Giovanna Paoella  
Hazel Ortega  
Heather Addison  
Heather Harris  
Holly Silvestri  
Inga Davidian  
Jackie Flores  
Jacqueline Bretell  
Jamie Kiger  
Janice Aranas  
Janice Wolfenbarger  
Jennifer Bradley  
Jennifer Braster  
Jennifer Burbank  
Jennifer Izzo  
Jennifer Romas  
Jennifer Ronquillo  
Jennifer Vaughan  
Jerrie Merritt  
Jesika Towbin-Mansour  
Jessica Friedman  
Jessica Saunders  
Jill Lamonte  
Jill Oliver  
Jo Ann Munz  
Julia Grambo  
Julie Adams  
Julie Cane  
Julie Raye  
June Beland  
Kady Casullo  
Kamelia Kohlmeier  
Karen Tang  
Karen Wong  
Karla Perez  
Katie Goldberg  
Kelli Despain  
Kelly Vohnn  
Kema Ogden  
Kendra Daniels  
Kim Chute  
Kim Fonte  
Kim Owens  
Kim Sherwood Schofield  
Kiné Corder  
Kirsten Brandt  
Kitty Heck  
Kiky Hutton  
Kourtney Knapp  
Kristen Harless  
Kristen Mainor  
Kristin Cogburn  
Kristyn Cristalli  
Kristine Williams Anderson  
Laiyla Bass  
Larissa Reis  
Leah Koza  
Leah Martin  
Leah Monroe  
Leila VonSleichter  
Lilly Ruiz  
Lin Jerome  
Linda Perdue  
Lindsay Feldman  
Lisa Imbesi  
Lisa Song Sutton



Lisette Waugh  
Lori Cobo  
Lori Nelson-Kraft  
Louisa Vioussine  
Lydia Ansel  
Madeline Kelley  
Mahsheed Parsons  
Mandy McKeller  
Marcella Williams  
Margo Chernysheva  
Margarita Edwards  
Maria Miuccio  
Marie Matteucci  
Marissa Castillo  
Mayor Shelley Berkley  
Mayra Estrella  
Meena Ramanathan  
Meesha Moulton  
Melanie Speed  
Melanie Bash  
Melissa Warren  
Melissa Weiner

Mercedes Bolt  
Mia Alfonso  
Mia Wolfe  
Michele Rothstein  
Michelle Howard  
Michelle Velez  
Michelli Kaltsas  
Mildred Schneidman  
Mistie Knight  
Monica Garin  
Monica Jackson  
Monica Pappas  
Monica Welch  
Naomi Maldonado  
Natalia Heart  
Natali Tangherlini  
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Rocio Mahoney  
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Sandra Roche  
Sandy Scamman  
Sarah Guindy  
Shane Jasmine Young  
Sharon Maloof  
Sherri Morrow  
Sheryl Best  
Susie Weiner Magit  
Sinni Singh  
Sonja Graff  
Stacey Bledsoe  
Stacey Laricchia  
Steph MacKenzie  
Swetta Kathuria

Sydney Smith  
Tammy Eden  
Tammy Grabel  
Tammy Harless  
Tamra Trainer  
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Tiffanie Craddock  
Tiffany Stabile  
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Tisa Caruso  
Tracy Eglet  
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Trish Williams  
Tyra Bell  
Tzigane Libson  
Valeria Varela  
Victoria Seaman  
Vivian Siebers  
Wendi Schweigart  
Yolla Alsabagh-Arnold  
Yulunda Gladney  
Yvette Auger  
Yvette Zolina  
Zoi Brees



## LOCAL WOMEN WHO TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS

We all know these women in our local community.

The ones who do the most in all the right ways.

Moms, Wives, Sisters, Business Owners and Leaders, Aunts, Grandmas, Nieces, Granddaughters,

Daughters, Nurturers, Providers. All around

real incredible women!

They're real intelligent, real creative, real strong and real amazing women.

**YES, THESE WOMEN!**



# STABILE AND ENTERTAINING – CAPTIVATING AUDIENCES

REAL WOMEN OF SUBSTANCE: MEET THE REAL ANGELA  
AND TIFFANY STABILE OF STABILE PRODUCTIONS





## STABILE PRODUCTIONS, INC.

FAMILY OF SHOWS & TELEVISION PRODUCTION  
EST. 1986

**S**tabile Productions, led by dynamic duo husband and wife, Angela and Matt Stabile have been wowing audiences with their outstanding shows, while creating remarkable family success in the entertainment sector of Las Vegas now for generations. Some of the best adult entertainment on the Strip that Vegas has to offer. Whether you're in the mood for burlesque, feeling a little country, or looking for a laugh, "X" Burlesque, "X" Country, and the comical Piff the Magic Dragon are incredible options for tourists and locals alike.

The backbone of Stabile Productions success is attributed to their family makeup dubbing the Stabile's as the Family of Entertainment! Angela's roots started as a Las Vegas Showgirl and led her to be the phenomenal producer behind the Stabile Productions brand. Matt Stabile was also brought up in show business and managed the one-of-a-kind Jerry Lewis.

Further elevating the Stabile Productions business is their two children, Tiffany and Frankie. They both grew up in entertainment as well and Frankie, as a member of Slash featuring Myles Kennedy & the Conspirators, Mammoth WVH, and owner of the iconic Hard Hat Lounge have also been an integral part of the family's success. Angela states, "Working in entertainment in all capacities is our passion!" And that fortitude and passion run deep here in the entertainment capital of the world.

Stabile Productions has recently celebrated their 21st anniversary of their flagship production, "X" Burlesque and they continue to work tirelessly on every show and project behind the scenes, dominating some of the best Las Vegas Strip hotels of guests seeking an incredible entertainment experience. The company also recently received the key to the city from Commissioner Tick Segerblom, solidifying the well-known fact that the family is known for their high-energy productions and further cementing their impact and success as what we like to refer to as 'The Real Family of Entertainment'!

Angela currently produces and operates all three shows including the iconic "X" Burlesque, "X" Country, and Piff the Magic Dragon. Locals and tourists alike rave about the sexy and seductive topless revues, and we are proud to name Angela and Tiffany Stabile Women Who Wow of Las Vegas once again in 2025!

For tickets and updates, call: **702.777.2782** or visit **stabileproductions.com**

To keep up with Angela and Tiffany in real time and in real life, follow them on IG: **@vegasshowqueen & @tiffanystabile26**





# Denise Dixon

## Founder and CEO of the Denise D Enterprises, LLC

Born in Jackson, MS, Dixon was largely raised in North Las Vegas and grew up with little means but an abundance of ambition. As a youth, she faced limited opportunity and poverty, but eventually triumphed over tragedy. She credits her involvement with founding philanthropic community projects at the time with paving the way for her various endeavors later on, such as the Sister2Sister Connection and Men of Tomorrow programs at her non-profit Center for Life Enhancement. These were some of the first mentoring and enrichment initiatives she created to support children and teens in at-risk neighborhoods - all of which she created while earning her associate degree in Business Management from University of Phoenix in 2010.

In 2015, Dixon set out to achieve two other longtime dreams: open her own business, the Cosmetology Institute of Las Vegas and become a certified, licensed cosmetologist. To date, over 1000 of cosmetology students have graduated from the Cosmetology Institute of Las Vegas with 97% being licensed and working in their field.

The Cosmetology Institute of Las Vegas received national accreditation in 2019 and was named Small Business of the Year by the Urban Chamber of Commerce. In October of 2021 CILV was featured on the Today Show online with a story featuring the school's annual Wig-a-thon event, a community service initiative put on by CILV students in support of the fight against breast cancer.

In 2020, Dixon published her first book, *Poverty Costs More Than You Think*, highlighting how she went from “welfare to

wealth” and overcame personal struggles and adversity as a young woman.

Dixon has acquired/racked up a host of accolades and appearances in the past decade, including segments on NBC News 3 Las Vegas and winning the 2016 Fox 5 Shining Star Award. She has been profiled in Las Vegas Woman Magazine and other local publications for her achievement as one of 2020's Top 100 Women of Las Vegas, as well as Las Vegas Black Image Magazine.

Dixon is also an advocate for ongoing education. In addition to her associate degree and cosmetology license, in 2021 Dixon expanded her knowledge into the medical genre of hair and scalp to become a Certified Trichologist through US Trichology Institute. Soon after she opened Dixon Hair Therapy Studio offering hair restoration services. With a strong passion for hair restoration, Dixon formulated her own product line with a Nigerian Chemist and GrowScripts Hair Therapy System was created. This product line includes a complete system for hair restoration and has given proven results to clients, and will officially launch in the spring of 2025.

The multifaceted socialpreneur decided to combine all her endeavors in 2023 and that is where Denise D Enterprises, LLC (a holdings company) was formed.

Denise D Enterprises, LLC is a dynamic holdings company committed to creating a legacy of wealth, abundance, and opportunities. With a diverse portfolio of ventures spanning, education, beauty, wellness, philanthropy and real estate.

In her free time, Dixon enjoys spending time with her five children. Since 2018, she has served as President and vice-president of the Las Vegas Zeta Amicae auxiliary under the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc. This Auxiliary is for non-degreed professional women who provide support to the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, community service, and scholarship.





**DENISE D. ENTERPRISES**  
LEGACY-ABUNDANCE-WEALTH

**DIXON**  
HAIR THERAPY



Denise is a Licensed Cosmetologist/Trichologist specializing in hair restoration.

Denise became interested in hair restoration because of her own hair loss at the age of 16.

She suffers from traction Alopecia and it took years of paying professionals who couldn't help her before she decided to educate herself about hair loss. The truth about hair loss is that there are many different factors that cause it and the truth about hair restoration is that there are many different treatments to restore it. Denise's goal is to give you a personalized treatment plan to activate your damaged hair follicles and restore your hair to its natural healthy state.



**Book a consultation today!**



Denise Dixon - Owner of CILV

**702.503.3579**

info@denisedenterprises.com | denisedenterprises.com

722 W Carey Ave N Las Vegas, NV 89030, Suite 2



# Superb Maids

## Cleaning with Heart, Transforming Lives

The American Dream comes in all shapes and sizes. For Elena Ledoux, it came wrapped in a mop, bucket, and a whole lot of heart.

When Elena first arrived in the U.S. 25 years ago, she wasn't flipping burgers—instead, she was working as a server at Red Lobster, hustling every day while juggling law school. Her hard work eventually paid off, lifting her family out of poverty and setting her on the path to becoming a successful insurance defense attorney in Honolulu. But Elena's story didn't end there.

Nine years ago, a childhood friend Nargi won the green card lottery, making her way to Las Vegas without knowing any English and with little money to her name. Instead of watching from the sidelines, Elena rolled up her sleeves and asked, "Why don't we start a cleaning business together?" They put in \$1,000, a lot of hope, and launched Superb Maids. With no plush office or big marketing budget, they had something more valuable: their friendship.

From the start, Elena's philosophy was simple. "We don't just clean houses. We clean with love," she says. Her team of dedicated employees is encouraged to "clean like you would for your mom." That personal touch sets Superb Maids apart, and it's why the company's motto—Honest. Simple. Clean.—resonates deeply with clients. The company performed over 39,000 cleanings and enjoys reputation as #1 maid service in Vegas.

And it's not just customers who benefit. From day one, Elena and Nargi made a commitment to helping their team achieve success. By creating an environment of utmost respect and support, they're empowering their employees and uplifting their lives.

The impact has been nothing short of inspiring. Within a year of launching, Superb Maids had won the "Best of Las Vegas" award, and a steady stream of recognition followed, including the prestigious 2019 SBA Small Business of the Year award for



Nevada. The company soon grew beyond Nevada, opening branches in over 14 U.S. cities. How? By collaborating with other entrepreneurs, helping others achieve their American Dream.

For Elena, Superb Maids has become more than a business—it's a family. When she's not running the company, you'll find her spending time with her husband, two sons, and friends, grounding herself in the joy of those simple, everyday moments that make life special.

Elena's story is proof that the American Dream is alive and well, and that sometimes, success is found where you least expect it.





# Delivering Beauty, Calm & Health



**#1**

Rated on Google & Yelp

**38k+**

Cleanings Completed

**98%**

Positive Feedback

Imagine coming home to a spotless sanctuary where every corner gleams and every room is a breath of fresh air. That's the promise of Superb Maids. With our award-winning services, you can reclaim your time and enjoy a beautifully clean home without lifting a finger.



### Professionalism

Licensed, Bonded & Insured. \$2M liability policy. 100% employees are W-2 and background-checked.



### Featured In

ABC 13 KTNV, Chanel 3, Chanel 8 KLAS, VEGAS, INC and Nevada Business Magazine, Today.com, Reader's Digest, MarthaStewart.com, Yahoo News



### Our Awards

2019 SBA's Small Business of the Year, Best of Las Vegas, Angie's List Super Service 2016-2023, US Chamber of Commerce's Dream, Yelp's Top 11 in USA, Top-Rated Award, Women Who Inspire NV



### Our Services

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## From Brazil to Building a Healthier Future: My Journey

# Meet the Real Larissa Reis of PROTEINHOUSE

**W**hen I first set foot in the United States from Brazil, I had just \$500, a suitcase, and an unshakable determination to carve out a successful life. With no grasp of English, no connections, and only a vague plan, I was fueled by a strong belief in my potential. I quickly discovered my passion for fitness, diving into the world of bodybuilding. Although it was an intimidating path, it felt like the right one for me. My commitment and hard work soon paid off, earning me a reputation in the fitness community for my discipline and resilience. This dedication opened doors to sponsorship deals and features in top fitness magazines—a dream realized through sheer perseverance and passion.

However, I knew this was only the beginning of my journey. My success in fitness provided me with a platform to make a more significant impact. Inspired by my dedication to health, I co-founded PROTEINHOUSE with my business partner, Andrew. Our vision was to create a health-focused restaurant that served delicious, protein-rich meals without compromising on flavor. What started as a single location quickly grew into a global brand, resonating with people who appreciated our mission and the quality of our food. PROTEINHOUSE became more than just a restaurant; it evolved into a hub where individuals could nourish their bodies intentionally, empowering them to reach their fullest potential. This experience deepened my understanding of the vital connection between nutrition and well-being, reinforcing my desire to positively influence people's lives.



As I embraced my role as a health coach and mother, my perspective on wellness transformed even further. Motherhood enriched my life and reshaped my view of true health. I began to perceive wellness not solely as physical strength or appearance but as a harmonious balance of mind, body, and spirit. This revelation propelled me toward a journey of self-discovery and holistic healing, which has now become my life's mission. I delved into practices like breathwork, meditation, sound therapy, kundalini yoga, and clean eating—not just to learn but to embody these principles. These modalities helped me find balance within myself, and I felt a calling to share this journey with others.

Reflecting on my evolution from bodybuilding to holistic wellness, I am grateful for the challenges and opportunities that have shaped me. My hope is to inspire others to view health as a holistic journey of growth and self-love. True wellness transcends building muscle or shedding pounds—it's about discovering joy, peace, and fulfillment within. My story stands as a testament to the fact that with purpose and perseverance, anyone can cultivate a life that nourishes the body, mind, and soul.

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# Gratitude, Luxury, Lifestyle

Allow us to Reintroduce the Real Tiffany Q.

This past fall, we had a beautiful afternoon at Lake Mead. Some of our Real Vegas Tribe took the boat out on Lake Mead for a very enjoyable day! The gentle breezes, sun, and water were the perfect backdrop for our cover girl, Tiffany Q's cover shoot. The weather was fantastic as we journeyed over to Hoover Dam, which is always a sight to see!

Tiffany and some of her close friends enjoyed a scenic cruise on Lake Mead. Champagne and caviar were delightfully served with all the classic accompaniments. An incredible and memorable time was to be had by all! We all stopped to give thanks and gratitude that as Las Vegas locals, we are so fortunate to be able to enjoy the lake, only about a 45-minute drive from the city. Life is beautiful. The moments that afternoon at the shoot were magical.

As the girlfriends sipped the bubbly, they were reminded of the "Pretty Girl Mantra".  
Kindness is king. Happiness is golden. Life is Nirvana.

A special thank you to Tiffany Q. and close friends for helping to create such a memorable and luxurious afternoon. We are blessed to know you and congratulations to Tiffany for being named a 2025 Women Who Wow!





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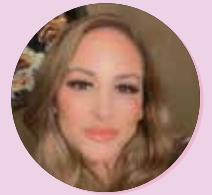
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The Therapy Place's team of speech language pathologists are all experienced and knowledgeable in a variety of areas. Skilled in both pediatric and adult populations, The Therapy Place is proud to be able to serve a wide range of patients treating deficits in speech, language, swallowing, voice, and cognition.

Since the start of her practice in 2008, owner Janice Aranas MS., CCC-SLP, has remained steadfast to her vision to create a patient focused clinic dedicated to quality service and genuine care for families. The Therapy Place has since proven itself as one of the leading speech therapy practices in the Las Vegas community. which prides itself most in the progress that patients have made over the years, the loyalty families have shown to the clinic, and a staff that is truly loved by the community it serves.

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# From Medical Assistant to CEO: The Inspiring Journey of Desiree Collins at Smith Plastic Surgery

By Roy Nelson

In a world where rapid career changes and sudden industry shifts are becoming the norm, Desiree Collins's journey stands out. Over a decade ago, she stepped into the world of plastic surgery as a medical assistant, driven by a passion for helping others and a deep-rooted commitment to patient care. Today, she holds the position of CEO at Smith Plastic Surgery, a leading plastic surgery center in Las Vegas, Nevada. Her remarkable rise through the ranks is a story of resilience, dedication, and balancing a high-powered role with the responsibilities of family life.

## The Early Days: A Passion for Patient Care

Desiree's introduction to healthcare began with humble beginnings. As a medical assistant, she quickly became known for her compassion and commitment to every patient who walked through the doors. Early on, she learned the importance of making patients feel comfortable and understood, especially in the world of plastic surgery, where emotional care is just as critical as physical transformation. Her genuine warmth and dedication became her signature, setting her apart in a field often driven by clinical detachment. From her very first days, Desiree established deep, meaningful connections with patients. "It was about listening," she says.

"Every person who comes here has a story, a reason for wanting to enhance or change something about themselves. My job was to make sure they felt heard, that they weren't just another face in the clinic." This philosophy has remained at the heart of Desiree's approach, even as her role has expanded exponentially.

## A Mother's Balancing Act

Behind the CEO title, Desiree is also a dedicated mother who brings the same commitment and care to her family life. In addition to her demanding role, she coaches her son's soccer team, demonstrating that her dedication isn't limited to her career. Juggling her professional responsibilities with family life is no easy feat, but Desiree manages it with grace, finding fulfillment in both her personal and professional pursuits. Her son is her inspiration, a constant reminder of why she strives to excel in her career—to set a positive example for him about hard work, resilience, and compassion.

Her role as a coach offers her a unique opportunity to influence her son's lives and those of other young athletes. "Coaching is about building confidence," she says, "and helping each child understand their potential. It's about much more than just



winning or losing." For Desiree, this philosophy of nurturing growth applies as much to her son as it does to the team that she leads at Smith Plastic Surgery.

### **Climbing the Ranks: From Assistant to Leader**

Throughout her years at Smith Plastic Surgery, Desiree's focus and dedication caught the attention of her colleagues and superiors. Her career path wasn't a straight line but a series of steady, well-earned promotions. She moved from medical assistant to administrative roles, gradually taking on more responsibilities and showcasing her skills in management and patient care coordination. Her natural leadership qualities shone through, and she became instrumental in shaping the patient experience at the clinic.

Desiree's journey was also a testament to her willingness to keep learning and adapting. She wasn't satisfied with the status quo, constantly seeking new ways to improve operations and foster a more supportive environment for both staff and patients. Her dedication and adaptability made her a prime candidate for higher leadership roles, culminating in her promotion to CEO.

### **A Discreet Guardian of Celebrity Clients**

One of the more unique aspects of Desiree's role as CEO is managing high-profile clients. Las Vegas, with its glitz and glamour, attracts celebrities from around the world, many of whom seek discreet cosmetic enhancements. Desiree has become the quiet force behind ensuring these clients receive not only the finest care but also the privacy and respect they demand.

Desiree understands that maintaining privacy is paramount, especially when dealing with clients in the public eye. "It's not just about looking beautiful," she explains. "It's about allowing our clients to feel secure and respected. Their trust is sacred to us." For Desiree, managing these relationships is as much an art as it is a science, balancing transparency in medical care with the discretion her celebrity clients require.

In addition to confidentiality, Desiree takes pride in the customized care plans offered to each client. "No two procedures are the same because no two patients are the same," she says. Her approach to celebrity clients is the same as for any patient—personalized, patient-centered, and empathetic. Whether it's a minor cosmetic enhancement or a major transformative procedure, Desiree ensures each client is treated with respect and kindness, fostering trust and loyalty among a clientele that could easily go elsewhere.

### **Guiding Smith Plastic Surgery into the Future**

As CEO, Desiree is now responsible for overseeing every aspect of the practice. Under her leadership, Smith Plastic Surgery has continued to thrive, with services expanding to meet the diverse needs of a growing patient base. The clinic, led by the renowned Dr. Lane Smith—a multi-board-certified plastic surgeon with a reputation for excellence—is known for offering cutting-edge procedures and an unmatched level of expertise. Desiree's contributions have further cemented the clinic's reputation as one of the premier plastic surgery centers in Las Vegas.

### **The Heart of Her Success: Relationships**

At the core of Desiree's success is her ability to build relationships, both with her team and her patients. She is known for her collaborative leadership style, which has fostered a culture of respect, innovation, and empathy within the clinic. By prioritizing teamwork and open communication, Desiree ensures that every member of the



team feels valued and supported—a philosophy that translates directly into better patient care.

This relationship-driven approach has also made Desiree a trusted figure in the clinic. Staff members know they can count on her, not only as a leader but as a mentor and ally. "It's important to me that everyone here feels like they're part of something bigger," she says. "We're all working towards the same goal, and that's providing the best possible care to our patients."

### **Looking Ahead**

Desiree's journey from medical assistant to CEO is an inspiring example of what dedication and perseverance can achieve. For young professionals in the healthcare industry, her story serves as a powerful reminder that hard work and a commitment to patient-centered care can open doors, even in fields as competitive as plastic surgery. She has proven that you don't need to have a traditional path to reach the top; sometimes, all you need is the determination to keep climbing, one step at a time.

As Desiree looks to the future, her focus remains on continuing to elevate Smith Plastic Surgery. She hopes to expand the clinic's services, bring in new technological advancements, and continue providing the high level of care that patients have come to expect. But more than anything, she wants to maintain the sense of community and compassion that has been the hallmark of her career.

Desiree's story is more than just a professional success story—it's a testament to the power of empathy, dedication, and the belief that one can create a meaningful impact, one patient at a time.

**About the Author:** Roy "Big Country" Nelson is a Las Vegas native and is a former 4x MMA Champion, UFC TUF Champion, Renzo Gracie Blackbelt, who now is partnered with Choice Life Care and their ambassador program.

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## **Dr. Nancy Uscher, Dean of the UNLV College of Fine Arts**

Dr. Nancy J. Uscher is Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Presidential Professor of Music at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She oversees seven departments and schools, as well as the Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art and the UNLV Performing Arts Center.

Prior to joining UNLV in 2016, Dr. Uscher was President of Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle for five years. Before that, she was Provost and music faculty member of the California Institute of the Arts. She previously spent 12 years at the University of New Mexico as Professor of Music, where she also served as Director of the Center for the Arts in Society and as Associate Provost of Academic Affairs and Department Chair.



## **Kirsten Brandt, Chair of the UNLV Department of Theatre and Executive Director of the Nevada Conservatory Theatre**

Prior to joining UNLV Kirsten Brandt was associate chair and artistic director of the department of film and theatre at San Jose State University. Brandt is an interdisciplinary artist and educator whose practice embraces inquiries into gender, technology, and politics. An award-winning theatrical director, playwright, and producer with over 20 years of experience, her passion lies in igniting the imagination of audiences through visceral storytelling and visual poetry to encourage dialogue and ethical engagement. She specializes in musical theater, experimental theater, devised and ensemble created events, Shakespeare, and the intersection of live performance and digital media.



## **Dr. Heather Addison, Chair of the UNLV Department of Film**

Heather Addison joined UNLV FILM in 2016 as the Chair. She has taught a broad range of courses in film history, criticism, and theory, with a particular focus on genre



studies and animation. Her primary research area is Hollywood's relationship to American culture. At UNLV, she co-wrote a \$271,000 National Endowment for the Humanities grant that cataloged and preserved materials in the Department of Film's Howard Hughes Motion Picture Production Records (now available in Special Collections & Archives at the UNLV Library).

Addison has published her work in a large number of scholarly journals. Her books include *Hollywood and the Rise of Physical Culture* (Routledge Press) and *Motherhood Misconceived: Representing the Maternal in U.S. Films* (SUNY Press), a collection of essays co-edited with Elaine Roth and Mary Kate Goodwin-Kelly.



### **Alisha Kerlin, Executive Director of the UNLV Marjorie Barrick Museum of Art**

Alisha Kerlin encourages dialogue about art and ideas through interdisciplinary programs and innovative exhibitions linked to wide-ranging community outreach. With full graduate faculty status, she received the UNLV College of Fine Arts Outstanding Administrative Faculty of the Year in 2017. In the same year, she earned an inaugural UNLV Top Tier award, confirming her academic excellence, creative activity, and pursuit of research befitting a Top Tier institution.

Kerlin played a vital role in the Barrick's transition from UNLV's "hidden jewel" into an award-winning university art museum. She introduced practices that brought the organization of the visual art collection in line with international museum standards. Committed to making the Barrick an accessible resource for all, she has created initiatives that target both the academic community and K-12 schoolchildren. In the first year, the Bus to the Barrick program brought over a thousand visitors to campus, most of them for the first time. Kerlin also rebranded the institution by adding "of Art" to the name, solidifying the fifty-year-old museum as a gathering place for the creative community. A graduate of the University of Tennessee (BFA) and the Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts, Bard College

(MFA), she connects the university to a top-tier cohort of emerging scholars and artists. Kerlin's own artwork has been shown at institutions ranging from P3Studio at The Cosmopolitan, Las Vegas, to the Museum of Modern Art's PS1 Museum in New York.



### **Lori Cobo, Executive Director of the UNLV Performing Arts Center**

Lori Cobo is the Executive Director of the UNLV Performing Arts Center, a position which had been a dream of hers very early in her career. She began working in the performing arts as an usher when she was in the 12th grade at Bonanza High School (Las Vegas) and gained experience in various production areas (such as technical theatre, finances, and house management) over her more than 30-year career at UNLV. She is most proud of the team she works with at the Center.

Cobo is passionate about the educational mission of the Center, ensuring that many of our visiting performing artists interact with local primary, secondary, or higher education students and believes in the power of arts education, mostly because of the benefits she has received from it. Cobo started taking piano lessons at the age of 7 and participated in many choirs before starting her career in the arts. She was also educated at UNLV, first receiving a Bachelor of Science in hotel management and then a Master of Arts in theatre administration.

She is married to classical guitarist Ricardo Cobo; so, even at home, she's surrounded by the performing arts. Cobo has two children, also residents of Las Vegas, and is definitely a dog lover. She enjoys spending time with her family, playing piano, attending performances of all types, baseball, and everything Disney.



# TEAM REBEL AQUATICS

**T**eam Rebel Aquatics Dive is a springboard and platform diving club, part of Team Rebel Aquatics.

It is led by UNLV head dive coach Anne Schwemmer and coached by UNLV Assistant Coach Rachel Pearson

Team Rebel Divers have a rigorous training schedule, competing at a level where their only competition in the valley is their teammates. The divers train for several hours each evening and on Saturdays. Team Rebel Dive has a variety of training levels, Academy, Varsity & Elite. These levels work to meet each diver's individual needs and help the divers progress on their own path to success. Diving takes courage, discipline, enthusiasm, and hard work. It not only builds athleticism, but it promotes healthy living choices, builds character, and helps our divers gain valuable life skills.







This group of elite divers are carving out a name for themselves as the only elite divers in southern Nevada. And their dedication, perseverance, commitment, and heart has paid off. These elite divers are nationally ranked and competing at the national level. Bella Benes & Victoria Olmeda qualified and competed in AAU's Red, White & Blue National Championships last spring. Victoria Olmeda, Josephine Kress, Sydney Watkins, Melissa Chen, Cooper McCullough & Karlee Love qualified for USA Dive Zone F Championships, with Melissa Chen & Cooper McCullough moving on to the USA Dive Junior Nationals.

The process of mastering dives—from simple jumps to complex flips—requires patience and perseverance. While there are several facilities that offer 1m and 3m springboards, the state of Nevada does not have a platform, of any height, for divers to train - youth, elite or collegiate. Team Rebel Dive trains at the UNLV Aquatic Center, and travels across the southwest region, within Nevada, California, and Arizona to compete and further train on the platform towers.

The 2024-2025 competitive season began the weekend of Oct. 25th. Team Rebel Dive traveled to Southern California where they displayed their skill, demonstrated their ability, and proved they were ready to compete. The team earned several first-place wins, multiple podium placements, as well as various top five finishes. The team will have many more competitions in both California and Arizona, as well as hosting their two invitational meets of the season. The first will be in December, with plans to host an additional meet in February.

Team Rebel Dive is always looking to expand their team and encourages those interested to come out and try a practice! The support of the dive community is family-friendly, nurturing, and encouraging. The families and support systems of Team Rebel Dive work together to provide limitless opportunities for the youth and divers, as well as enrich the diving community as a whole.

The potential of our young athletes is unlimited, and we want to foster a future where success, discipline, teamwork, and passion thrive — both in and out of the pool.

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By Ronnie F. Lee

AN INTERVIEW WITH

### TRACYAN MARTIN A.K.A. **TRACY**

**Ronnie:** So pretend you're on an elevator and give me your elevator introduction.

**Tracy:** Okay, my name is TracyAn Martin, but most of my friends just call me Tracy. I live in Las Vegas, and since I was a child, two of my favorite things have been music and animals. We've always had dogs growing up. After moving to Vegas, I needed a companion, so I got my sweet baby Maddie, my little schnauzer, who just turned one. She's the best decision I made last year. Between Maddie and music, that's how I maintain life.

**Ronnie:** Awesome! When you say you do music, where do you do that music? What's your profession?

**Tracy:** My background is in touring with various artists like Janelle Monáe, Oprah, Melanie Fiona, Ceelo, and Fantasia. Most recently, what brought me to Vegas was Cirque du Soleil. I play trombone and keytar in the show Mad Apple, and I'm also the backup pianist when needed.



**Ronnie:** You said keytar. What is that?

**Tracy:** A keytar is an instrument from the '80s that looks like a guitar but is actually a keyboard. It's cool and kind of transforms you into a superhero when you put it on. People are always like, "Yo, what is that?"

**Ronnie:** You already mentioned your dog. What breed is she, and what's her name?

**Tracy:** Maddie is a miniature schnauzer. She's almost full-grown, weighing about 14.8 lbs. Her dad was 15 lbs, so she's close to that.

**Ronnie:** What made you choose that breed?

**Tracy:** Before I got into music, I thought I'd be a veterinarian, but I couldn't handle sick animals. My first job was at The Pet Company in Atlanta, where we sold small animals. I had to learn about various breeds, and I chose the schnauzer because it's intelligent, playful, and has an adorable "angry" look. Growing up, we had Shih Tzus and poodles, but the schnauzer just felt right for me.





**Ronnie:** What makes Maddie special?

**Tracy:** Maddie is special because she's become the unofficial mascot for the show Mad Apple. My friend Jeff helped name her, and it fits her personality perfectly. She's brought balance to my life, providing a sense of purpose and responsibility. As a creator, I tend to do things on my own schedule, but Maddie has helped me establish a routine. I don't wake up at 11:00 anymore—now it's more like 7:00 or 8:00. She makes sure I take care of her, which in turn helps me take care of myself.

**Ronnie:** Is it just you and her?

**Tracy:** Just me and her. We're hanging tough together.

**Ronnie:** Do you have any unique stories about you and Maddie?

**Tracy:** Maddie has a funny habit of using her paws like hands. I grew up in church as a pastor's kid, so sometimes she'll stand at the stair rails, and I'll pretend she's praying for me. It's a little church thing we do. Maddie is also very sensitive to my



emotional needs. She's my unofficial emotional support dog. She knows when I need cheering up, and she'll get me out of any funk I'm in.

**Ronnie:** She's providing you with a lot of psychological strength.

**Tracy:** Absolutely. Moving 2,000 miles away from family and friends was a culture shock, but Maddie has been my familiar place. I've always had dogs, and she's made the transition easier. I even thought about getting her a companion, but for now, taking her to the dog park helps her socialize. It's also a great way for me to meet new people with a common interest.

**Ronnie:** I saw a picture of a birthday event. Was it hers or yours?



**Tracy:** It was her birthday. I've turned into a completely different person—I'm buying her dresses and all the pink stuff in the world. I wasn't a pink girl before, but here I am now, an avid pink wearer. Her uncles and aunties are just as invested in her. For example, Uncle Jay got her this necklace, and her auntie got her a shirt that says, "Next Level Diva," because that's what she is.

**Ronnie:** What kind of person do you think would be a good match for a schnauzer?

**Tracy:** Someone who is emotionally and physically available. Schnauzers need a lot of attention and care. They require a routine and love to play. If you're willing to make time for them, even when you feel like there's no time, you'll have a happy dog. Maddie's needs keep me grounded and remind me of the importance of companionship.

**Ronnie:** Thank you, Tracy. I appreciate you taking the time to talk with us.

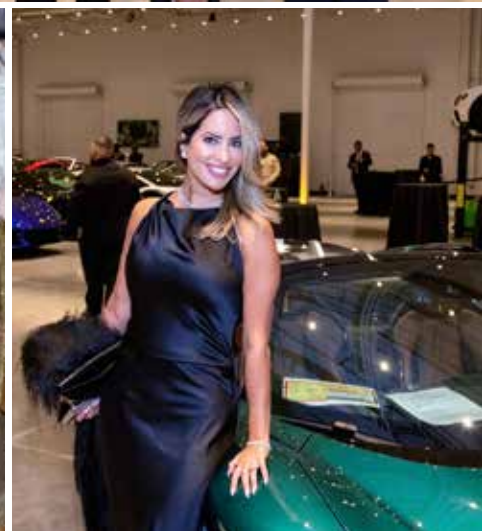
**Tracy:** Thank you for the opportunity!



FOR FULL INTERVIEW PLEASE VISIT [REALVEGASMAGAZINE.COM](http://REALVEGASMAGAZINE.COM)

OR WATCH THE VIDEO AT [BUTILOVEMYPET.COM](http://BUTILOVEMYPET.COM)









## REAL VEGAS<sup>®</sup>

Vegas Auto Gallery is the brainchild of Nick Dossa, a highly experienced car enthusiast, who has accumulated years of experience, specializing in high-line vehicle sales and service. Nick Dossa's inspiration helped to fill a void in the Las Vegas marketplace for a lack of selection of luxury and exotic vehicles. Vegas Auto Gallery already has an established online presence and reputation, supported by a growing local clientele.

Vegas Auto Gallery hosted the Grand Opening of their new Southwest location on Saturday, December 7th, 2024, and some of our Real Vegas Tribe had the pleasure of covering this grand event. They are now proud to offer two locations situated on prime real estate in the Las Vegas auto market, offering the most extensive luxury car inventory in both the state and the country.

*Photos Courtesy of Michael W. Rogers Photography*





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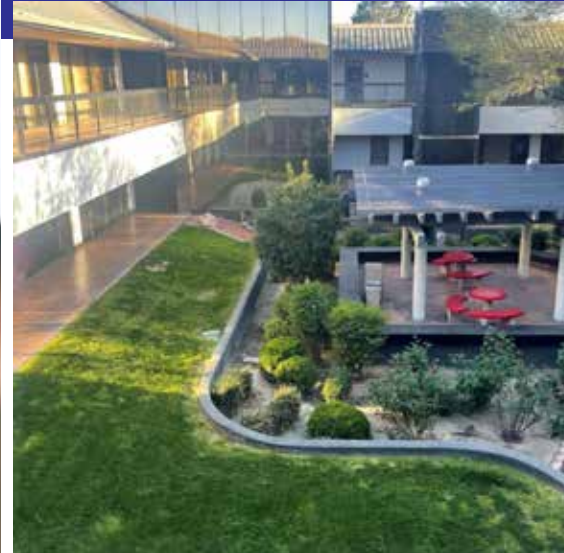


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