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### Tania Aranki and Bella Rowe: A Mother-Daughter Duo Creating Wellness for Face and Body

Finding creative ways to help her daughters' food allergies and skin sensitivities was the starting point for Tania Aranki's skin care line containing clean and superior ingredients. Her company, Isa Mia, blossomed when her older daughter, Bella Rowe, joined her in the business that sets high standards and, as a bonus, offers free samples to potential customers!



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# RELAX AND ENJOY BEING A MOM!



I came across this quote one day and yes, it made me laugh, but it also put things in perspective. I have always had a Type A personality. My days revolve around schedules, to-do lists and organization. Well, I guess I should say that they did because now I try, but it seems that most days aren't as organized and planned as they once were. Typically, they don't go as planned.

As a mom, I have struggled with trying to be as perfect a mom as I can be, being everything to everyone. I am guilty of doing things myself rather than having our boys help more because I just want to get it done, the right way, my way. That is a fault that I am working on because there are some things you just have to let go of or precious time is lost on trivial things. Trivial things like leaving a backpack on the floor, not putting everything away in the perfect spot I created for it, and the bed not being made to my standard.

We are in the busy part of our boys' baseball season, flag football and golf. This year, our baseball schedule is a lot busier with more

— ❖ —  
***“Whenever you feel like a bad mom, just remember that the mom from Home Alone was halfway to Paris before she realized she was missing a child”***

— Author Unknown —

games and tournaments than years prior. At our first baseball tournament this year, I realized how much I enjoyed watching the boys. Seeing them have a blast with their team and out on the field is heartwarming. I used to get so caught up in the feeling of “I have to do this” or “I have to take” so and so to this place that I didn't just sit in the stands and soak up what the kids were experiencing. I was stressing about the next thing we were doing or what would need to be done after the game to have everything ready for the next.

Truth is, we are all doing our best as moms. Everyone parents differently and has their own way of doing it. It is not a one size fits all. We

can't be perfect all the time and we learn as we go. Take the time this Mother's Day to reflect on all that you have done well and show appreciation to the moms that have helped us along the way. After all, if we haven't left our kid behind as in *Home Alone*, I think we are nailing it! Happy Mother's Day.

Cherish It,

*Tammy*  
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“Early detection is key” is a mantra every woman knows. With regular screening visits, radiologists have the best chance to catch abnormalities early, ensuring less invasive treatments. “A painful mammogram is a thing of the past at our center. We’ve changed the experience entirely with patient-controlled technology,” Dr. Voeltz explained. “It’s a significant investment for the practice, but we gladly absorb that to provide a better exam. That ensures women come back every year, which is the biggest benefit for patients.” Imaging for Women now offers Contrast Enhanced Spectral Mammography, a new type of mammogram for women with an increased risk of breast cancer. CESM finds cancers at a rate comparable to MRI and is quicker

and less expensive for patients. As part of their new high-risk clinic, they also offer genetic testing and counseling.

In addition to investing in the latest technology, the physicians are committed to investing in the community. Imaging for Women has donated more than \$4.5 million in free care since opening in 1997. They work directly with Northland Healthcare Access and various other organizations to help those in need throughout the greater Kansas City area. Their Special Services Program is aimed at keeping care affordable and accessible to patients who are uninsured.

Imaging for Women opened in 1997 and was Kansas City’s first free-standing imaging center dedicated to women’s health. Dr. Voeltz, Dr. Zupon and Dr. Miner continue to lead the practice in specialized breast care, offering several different imaging tools tailored to the patient’s individual risk, including 3D and contrast mammography, whole breast ultrasound and image-guided breast biopsies. Patients experience more comfortable exams in a relaxing atmosphere. Imaging for Women looks forward to providing the best care possible to their patients for years to come. ♦



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# COFFEE OR TEA? THE BATTLE OF THE BEVERAGES

BY LISA BUTLER

*It's not the Superbowl or the World Series or even the presidential election, but on any given day, the battle of the beverages can be heard around the world. While water is a necessity, and milk is popular, coffee and tea seem to percolate the most debate.*

**T**hese common pick-me-ups are two of the most widely consumed beverages in the world. But when it comes to health and wellness, is one better than the other? The robust deliberation continues here. See how your favorite drink fares with this fun comparison.

## SPILLING THE BEANS ON COFFEE

Coffee is a quintessential part of daily American life. According to a study by Statista, 88 percent of Americans drink between one and five cups of coffee a day. And America isn't the only country loving the likes of lattes. Most of the world's ten leading coffee-consuming countries are in Europe, but Brazil tops the list. This should come as no surprise for coffee connoisseurs since it is also the biggest coffee-producing country in the world. Of course, the U.S. is the largest coffee importer; we need all those beans to supply some of the biggest coffee chains in the world.



While there's nothing like a steaming cup of coffee to give you instant energy in the morning, or the stamina to pull an all-nighter, coffee is scientifically linked to a long list of possible health benefits, giving us another reason to make it a venti.

## BENEFITS OF COFFEE

- Excellent source of antioxidants that may play a role in preventing several chronic and acute conditions.
- Enhances energy levels.
- Reduces risk of Type 2 diabetes.
- Promotes more physical movement.
- Enhances heart health.
- Reduces risk of liver disease, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.
- Promotes healthier skin and decreased body fat.

## TEA

Around the world, tea takes the cake for being the most popular beverage, after water, of course. Globally, almost 6.8 billion kilograms of tea are consumed per year, and with over 3,000 tea varieties, people are filling their cups again and again. The vast



popularity of tea is driven by its distinct taste and increased awareness of its numerous health benefits.

### BENEFITS OF TEA

- Research has shown a reduced risk of heart disease in people who drink green or black tea regularly.
- Helps keep blood sugar in check, reducing the risk for developing Type 2 diabetes.
- Offers several antioxidants with green tea providing an extra punch.

### SOME CONS OF COFFEE AND TEA

Along with benefits of these stimulating beverages comes possible risks, mostly from drinking too much. Caffeine overload can cause nervousness, restlessness and poor sleep. Some people may also experience loose stools and other gastrointestinal issues from too many cups of joe or tea. Nausea, abdominal pain, heartburn, dizziness and muscle pain are also potential side effects.

Overconsuming coffee and tea may also interact with certain medications, increasing their effects in the body. Most doctors recommend not exceeding a total daily intake of 400 milligrams of caffeine, which is about four cups of brewed coffee or eight cups of green tea.

### THE FUTURE OF YOUR FAVORITE

Whether you side with coffee or tea, or partake in both, the making of these beverages and the way they are served continues to evolve with the wants of the world. This year, coffee trends are

geared toward our busy lives, with cold coffee reigning supreme as an easy on-the-go drink. And while frothy milk is a popular topper, look for cold foam to take the lead. Social media is also presenting some creative ideas with food-topped coffees. Think dried strawberries crumbled on a strawberry latte or sprinkles of apple pie atop an oatmeal milk cappuccino. Coffee shops are also pursuing sustainability in their practices; look for more discounts for customers using their own mugs.

Teas are progressing, too. Health-conscious consumers are giving a nod to moringa tea. Made from the leaves of the moringa plant, this tea is said to offer nutritional benefits including vitamins A, C and B6 as well as beta-carotene and amino acids. On-trend tea shops may also offer Pu-erh tea, a higher-caffeinated version closer to the jolts of coffee, and honeybush tea, an herbal infusion from South Africa known for its honey-like flavor.

### PICK YOUR PASSION

Trends come and go, but our love of coffee and tea is continuous. While more research is needed to identify all the benefits, both tea and coffee can be part of a healthy diet. Whatever your pick of liquid potion, you are sure to be a winner with either of these two popular everyday drinks. A good cup of our best-loved beverage can make us feel better, give us clarity and even extend our life if paired with a healthy lifestyle. When it comes to the battle of the beverages, between coffee and tea, your choice wins the contest. ♦

**SOURCES:** [webstaurantstore.com](http://webstaurantstore.com), [eatright.org](http://eatright.org) and [webmd.com](http://webmd.com).

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# Midwest Myofascial Release Center

Now Offering Classes and Recruiting Massage Therapists

BY CHRIS WESTWATER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

*Midwest Myofascial Release Center has been a mainstay in the Kansas City metro area for almost 20 years, offering clients personalized myofascial therapy provided by kind and caring therapists in a peaceful atmosphere. Jan Kelly, owner, wants her clients to leave the office feeling physically better and emotionally uplifted.*

She especially likes educating her clients and other therapists to help others as they help themselves. “For example, you tell me that you are having low back pain. If you can come to one of my classes, I can give you some tools and educate you as to where that back pain is coming from,” Jan said. “Then you can work on it yourself with techniques learned from the class.”

## EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONAL THERAPIST

Jan Kelly began her journey in helping her clients heal in 1988 when she graduated from college and began working as an occupational therapist. She became a certified massage therapist in 2000 and subsequently an expert level, John Barnes’ Approach®, myofascial release therapist. In 2004, she opened Midwest Myofascial Release Center. Recently, she completed a 300-hour aromatherapy certification course as well. These disparate disciplines may sound unrelated, but Jan combines them all to create something new to benefit her clients. Regarding the more unconventional aspects of aromatherapy, massage therapy and myofascial release, Jan affirmed she “interprets the science behind each field of study to provide the best solution for every client.”

She also wants to provide her therapy and classes in an environment conducive to healing and learning. With that in mind, Jan renovated both her Overland Park and west Plaza locations to facilitate education as well as client visits. “Instead of having five individual treatment rooms, I now have two individual treatment rooms and one large classroom plus one room that’s set up more like a gym with Pilates equipment at the Overland Park location,” she described. She’s also refreshed the west Plaza location.

## TAKE A CLASS!

With her extensive and varied fields of expertise, Jan is now embarking on sharing her knowledge with clients, fellow therapists and others in the physical therapy and rehabilitation space. “What I’m trying to do right now is to bring more education to the Kansas City metro area,” she said. Initially, Jan is offering one-hour classes on topics ranging from aromatherapy to easing muscle pain with ball-rolling techniques. She plans to





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***“I’m an expert level therapist. I’ve been doing some form of physical rehabilitation since I graduated in 1988,” she said. Jan wants to share her knowledge with interested and open-minded licensed therapists.”***

---

offer in-person one-day or half-day aromatherapy workshops on “the chemistry of aromatherapy, the therapeutic safety of essential oils, and how to make oil blends that support what you want,” she noted. In addition to the in-person workshop, Jan is developing online courses that can be accessed remotely and completed at your own pace.

### **LOOKING FOR THERAPISTS: EMPLOYEES AND MENTEES**

Are you a licensed therapist who is looking to establish or grow your current practice or are you interested in working for an established business with a great reputation? If so, reach out to Jan at Midwest Myofascial Release Center to learn more about mentorship and employment opportunities. Jan has grown her practice over the last 19 years. On average, she sees 40 clients a week and her schedule is so full that she’s rarely able to accept new clients. “I’m an expert level therapist. I’ve been doing some form of physical rehabilitation since I graduated in 1988,” she said. Jan wants to share her knowledge with interested and open-minded

licensed therapists.

Her mentorship programs run six to twelve months and they explore every area of running a successful massage therapy and myofascial release business based on her own experience. If you’re looking to start or build your practice and want to learn from someone with a steady business and consistent clientele, Jan’s mentorship program could be right for you.

If you’d rather work for someone instead of owning your own business, Jan is also looking to add to her team by hiring a few licensed massage therapists who conduct themselves professionally and with kindness. The ideal candidate is a team player who prioritizes their client’s health and comfort while being willing to learn, and who would join fellow therapist Kristin Rolf as well as Jan at Midwest Myofascial Release Center. Kristin is an aromatherapist, visionary craniosacral therapist and long-time licensed aesthetician. Visit the website for more information about Kristin.



### **CENTER NEWS**

With Jan’s robust and varied experience and certifications, she is a wealth of knowledge. Whether you’re interested in learning how you can use myofascial release techniques to improve your patients’ or your own physical health, or you’d like to include aromatherapy in your daily life, Jan can help. Additionally, Midwest Myofascial Release Center now carries products for self-care and aromatherapy. Check out the Midwest Myofascial Release Center website about upcoming classes and get ready to improve your health.

Register online at [midwestmyofascialrelease.com](http://midwestmyofascialrelease.com) or call the office at 913-343-9042 today.

# PERMANENT MAKEUP: IS IT FOR YOU?

BY GAIL SILVERSTEIN

*Imagine never having to apply eyeliner in the morning while getting ready for work! Or simplifying your beauty routine every day so that you have time for more fun or just more time!*

*If so, permanent makeup might be the answer to your problems. More than a beauty trend, permanent makeup presents solutions to real-life, everyday challenges. From taking back your morning to saving money on cosmetics, let's explore more about this beauty procedure.*

**K**nown as cosmetic tattooing or micro-pigmentation, permanent makeup uses a special pen that contains iron oxide to tattoo your skin. Pigment is placed between the epidermis and the dermis of your skin. Under the careful hand of a highly skilled professional, you can attain a natural look. Thin eyebrows are made fuller, filled in by tattooing. Pale lips become a thing of the past with lip tinting applied permanently. Tattooed eyeliner highlights the color of your irises and makes your lashes look thicker. Look youthful again with fake freckles added to your visage. The benefits of permanent makeup vary but one thing is certain, it's not a passing fancy.



## IT'S A TIME SAVER

Permanent makeup saves time every day because you won't need to put on makeup, or at least as much as you normally might. Also, there's no need to freshen up your face. Eat, drink and be merry without the hassle of reapplying lipstick. And speaking of lips, as you age, cracks and fine lines often appear on mouths. Permanent lipstick can cover these age-related imperfections.

## FOR THE ATHLETE

Stay in whatever game you're playing without worrying about sweating off your eyeliner. Dive right into the pool without coming up wearing raccoon eyes. If you're an athlete or just work out at the gym, cosmetic tattooing is a game changer. No more worry about looking your best on and off the court!

## AVOID ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Permanent makeup provides solutions to other eye-related problems. Around 10 percent of the population suffers from cosmetic allergies, according to the National Institute of Health's National Library of Medicine. If allergens have your eyes itching from irritation, permanent eyeliner solves that problem. For eyeglass wearers, applying makeup presents another challenge as you

can't apply makeup with your glasses on! Some days just having a steady hand in the morning wreaks havoc on your eyeliner. Or maybe you never quite mastered the art of applying makeup. Whatever the case, you can choose from a subtle version of eyeliner to more eye-catching dramatic enhancement and everything in between.

## CREATE SYMMETRY

Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all? It's no fairy tale that most people's faces are not symmetrical. One eye might be wider than the other. Your bottom lip is not as full as the top. Creating symmetry is a time-consuming, nearly impossible task using traditional cosmetics. Permanent makeup can increase symmetry, putting an end to bad makeup days.

## MORE SOLUTIONS

Permanent makeup can camouflage scars or help breast cancer survivors restore nipple and areolas through tattooing. Hair loss, whether from chemo treatment or alopecia, can be remedied through scalp micropigmentation, a scalp tattoo that resembles a freshly shaved head. Permanent makeup is also an appealing option for



people with Parkinson's disease, arthritis, cataracts or aftereffects of stroke so they can look their best without the frustrating physical challenges of applying makeup.

### IT'S A MONEY SAVER

Top-quality cosmetics cost top dollar, and you throw them away every few months and replenish your stash. Despite the initial costs, permanent makeup saves you money in the long run. Permanent eyeliner lasts up to three years, lipstick from three to five years, and tattooed eyebrows about one to two years. With the average procedure ranging from \$250 to \$600, it's no wonder the permanent makeup industry is booming.

With so many benefits, permanent makeup may be right for you. Just be mindful that the inks and dyes used in permanent makeup are color additives that are still being evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. As with any procedure, speak to your doctor as well as research the qualifications of the person wielding the special pen. Ensure that the equipment used in the procedure is sterile and sanitized. Finally, be aware that permanent makeup can't be easily removed, and you can have only one color tattooed on your skin. But the good news here is that it will gradually fade over time, so there's your opportunity to change colors.

Wake up looking your very best with permanent makeup. Few risks make this a beauty trend worth researching. With minimal down time, reasonable price tags and so many choices, why not take your appearance to the next level! ♦

**SOURCES:** *stealthstyle.com, pmuhub.com and health.clevelandclinic.org.*

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# Clothes Mentor

*High-Quality Trending Apparel at Great Prices*

BY CHRIS WESTWATER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

*If you love to purchase brand-name, high-quality, trending clothes and accessories at a discount, check out Clothes Mentor today. "Our goal is to help you look and feel your best by offering great quality apparel at an extraordinary value," said Lee-Anne Hamilton, new owner of Clothes Mentor in Overland Park. "We carry your favorite brands, from Old Navy to Louis Vuitton and everything in between. You can find great fashion at a great price in a friendly environment."*



Clothes Mentor is a small, family-owned and family-oriented business. Lee-Anne took ownership of Clothes Mentor on August 1, 2022, and as a longtime customer and employee, she was able to keep the best aspects of what customers and employees love about Clothes Mentor and make some fun improvements.

## WHAT'S THE SAME

They still have the same great location

and hours and are dedicated to a high quality of service and inventory. "Our clientele is 21 to 91, and we have styles for every woman in sizes XXS to 4XL in trending apparel from desired brands, including luxury designers," said Stephanie Hamilton, social media specialist for Clothes Mentor and Lee-Anne's youngest daughter. They carry casual wear to business wear and although you won't find formal wear, you can find cocktail party items. Around the holidays, there are often glitzy and fun pieces to find as well. With



brands from Target and Old Navy to Chicos and Ann Taylor plus luxury designers, there's something at Clothes Mentor for everyone.

Even though the ownership changed from Phyllis Lord, original owner, to Lee-Anne, the staff has remained the same, including Phyllis' sister-in-law, Annye, who Lee-Anne calls "the backbone of the store" and who has managed the Overland Park location for over a decade. Repeat customers will see the same smiling faces and all customers can expect the same great service Clothes Mentor is known for.

If you're interested in reselling your items or have sold pieces to Clothes Mentor in the past, the process is still the same. "Bring in your current-in-style, on trend, excellent condition, freshly laundered and neatly folded apparel," Lee-Anne said, and receive cash on the spot or store credit. "We buy things every day."

### WHAT'S NEW

"I've been a shopper here since the day it opened 13 years ago," said Lee-Anne. "I started working there in 2016 and when Phyllis decided to retire, I took ownership of the store." Lee-Anne and Stephanie updated the logo, refreshed and reorganized the space and updated the furniture in the waiting area. One other change, they no longer carry maternity clothes.

They also focused on building their social media presence. "We post new items daily on our website. Stephanie highlights new inventory on our Facebook and Instagram pages as well," Lee-Anne said. Stephanie added, "You can order online. Store or curbside pickup is free. Shipping is \$8.99 for purchases under \$100. Anything over \$100 is shipped free." Follow Clothes Mentor on Facebook and Instagram to keep up with new inventory and see the fun outfits Stephanie and other staff create.

### GIVING BACK

Clothes Mentor acts as a collection point for two local charities that focus on underserved women in the KC Metro community. Hold Em Up 4 Care provides free, well-fitting bras for Kansas City-area teenage girls and



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***"Bring in your current-in-style, on trend, excellent condition, freshly laundered and neatly folded apparel," Lee-Anne said, and receive cash on the spot or store credit. "We buy things every day."***

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women. No Shame's mission is to provide period products for underserved communities in the KC area. Clothes Mentor collects clean, gently used bras, new bras, new underwear and menstrual products. "These are things that we as women need and these donations make a difference in the lives of the women who receive them," Lee-Anne said. "Bring your items to Clothes Mentor to help Kansas City-area women and girls."

Clothes Mentor offers special shopping opportunities for seniors, girls' night out, loyalty points and personal shopping.

If you're 65 or older, shop at Clothes Mentor on Wednesdays and receive 10 percent off your purchase. If you're looking for your next girls' night out event, schedule an after-hours shopping party for you and up to 12 of your friends and have the store all to yourselves for some excellent retail therapy. Most Clothes Mentor locations across the U.S. participate in Club CM, a loyalty points program for registered users, and you can earn double points at Clothes Mentor Overland Park on Sundays. Need a personal shopper? Clothes Mentor provides a free personal shopper experience. Fill out the quiz on the website, then come into the store and check out the outfits your personal shopper chose just for you.

"You can find nearly everything here without having to go to a lot of places," said Lee-Anne. "Find all of your favorite brands in one place at up to 70 percent off retail price." ♦

For the latest information on events, promotions or newest additions to the inventory, visit [overlandpark.kc.clothesmentor.com](http://overlandpark.kc.clothesmentor.com), Facebook, Instagram, the store at 11610 W. 135th Street or call 913-239-0411.

# NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

BY MARIA RILEY

*While most people are aware of foster care as a concept, few are intimately involved with the children in our communities who desperately need safe and loving homes during traumatic times in their lives. Since May is National Foster Care Month, it's a great time to peek behind the curtain into what foster kids and foster families experience.*

Over 400,000 kids are currently in the foster care system in the United States. Approximately 34 percent of those children are living in a kinship placement, which means they are being cared for by a family member or close family friend who had a preexisting relationship with the child. The remaining 66 percent of children in foster care live in non-kin homes, or traditional foster care homes in which the foster family did not know the foster child before placement.

After having our oldest daughter biologically, my husband and I became foster parents. The arduous licensing process involved more than 40 hours of classroom training, local and FBI background checks, multiple interviews by social workers, and a complete house inspection to verify the safety and security of our home. Though the process felt daunting and overwhelming at times, I appreciated that Child Protection Services thoroughly vetted people who were willing to take children (and the modest monthly stipend that comes



with them) into their homes.

Another great benefit of the intensive classes and challenging licensing process is that it moderately prepares foster parents for the demands of fostering children. Children are placed in the foster care system because they have suffered abuse or neglect, and the impacts that has on their behaviors and interactions vary. Because of this, most foster kids exhibit defiant or difficult behaviors as they process and adjust to their whole lives being turned upside down.

When a child is placed in the custody of Child Protection Services, the primary goal is always reunification with their family of origin. Once a judge determines the cause for the child's removal, a reunification plan is created. The county provides a myriad of services for the birth parents, including counseling, inpatient and outpatient rehab, housing support, transportation to visits and appointments, and other assistance as needed. These services support birth families who often do not have the resources to meet their own needs and the needs of their children.

Each foster care case is as unique as the child in care. Some kids



remain in foster care for just a few weeks, and some are in foster care for years. In most cases, the best possible outcome for a foster child is reunification with their biological parents. Children have a deep desire to be with their birth parents, and often, once a biological parent is given help and assistance, they can reunite with their kids. However, due to various reasons, including mental illness and addiction, sometimes reunification with birth parents isn't possible. When this is the case, the child becomes eligible for adoption. The county then searches for an extended family member or a close family friend who can offer permanency for the child along with a similar cultural upbringing.

When a kinship adoptive placement cannot be found for the foster child, the social worker seeks out an adoptive foster home, which is a family that is licensed to both foster and adopt children. Many foster parents become licensed for adoption at the same time as their foster licensing, just like we did. Then for us, when the children who were staying with us as foster kids became eligible for adoption, we were able to offer that continuity and permanency for kids who had lived with us for over two years.

We adopted three children from two different families of origin through foster care. Foster parenting simultaneously was the hardest and most rewarding thing I've ever done. Though our story ended in adoption for us, I strongly discourage parents who are actively seeking adoption to become foster parents. Since reunification is always the initial goal of birth parents' case plans, couples who are seeking a permanent child can easily become disillusioned by the foster care system. Throughout the process I had to remind myself that these children didn't ask for their challenging situations and don't deserve to have parents who can't take care of them. What they desperately need until their home is safe to return to is a stable, loving family to meet their physical and emotional needs. Practically every county across the United States is desperate for foster families, so if you have room in your heart and room in your home, consider changing a child's life by becoming a foster parent. ♦

**SOURCES:** *childwelfare.gov.*



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# Tania Aranki + Bella Rowe

## A Mother-Daughter Duo Creating Wellness for Face and Body

BY CINDY MCDERMOTT  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
AMBER DEERY

*It's not often you hear the CEO of a company describe herself as a mad scientist. But when it comes to concocting the perfect ingredient list for wellness, face care, bath and body products for both women and men, Tania Aranki has cornered the market on inventing. Over the years, she's cooked up the company Isa Mia, and her daughter, Bella Rowe, is stirring things up right beside her. The Spring Hill, Kansas, duo has created a super formula for a successful business offering powerful products, packed with lots of goodness. They work together employing solid problem-solving skills, creative and scientific, yet they don't overthink their solid mother-daughter relationship.*







**W**'m the mad scientist and sometimes things get out of hand. I love creating. I can wake up in the morning and have an idea. Or I'll go to bed at night and think, 'How do I fix this issue with a formula?' and in the morning I will have figured it out. It can be a little crazy with all of those ideas but that's the beautiful part of the duo that we have," said Tania. "Bella is very artistic and can take my scientific craziness and make it into the thing that I had the idea for but was not able to get there on my own."

"We complement one another so well. We fill the voids where the other person can't do it. Anything that I can't do, Mom can do it," noted the 22-year-old Benedictine College graduate. "It is like puzzle pieces; we're both making a big picture, but we're able to fill the areas that are missing."

## PUTTING A THEORY INTO ACTION

According to the Isa Mia website, "Our company is where art meets science. We love being creative just as much as we love getting our hands dirty." Tania says it's the driving force behind Isa Mia, which is rooted in one of

Bella's many nicknames. Products are clean and formulated with superior ingredients at a reasonable price. Primarily known for skin care with The Serum and Face Potion, the product line extends between the sexes, from teens to mature skin. Rather than clogging countertops with bottles and pumps, Isa Mia focuses on a few basic products to complete an entire skincare regimen.

Bella notes that Isa Mia's mission is to make life simple again by offering clean and quality products to the skincare market. Through Tania's successful experimentation, harmful and unnecessary ingredients are eliminated to make room for "powerhouse ingredients" such as apple stem cells, babassu oil, vitamin C, vitamin E, silk extract, bamboo extract, apricot kernel oil, rose absolute and hyaluronic acid, to name a few.

The creation of Isa Mia has been a long and fruitful one that began out of necessity. When Bella and her sister Nadia were children, they were plagued by food allergies. Tania, who had little formal training in developing scientific formulas, began her deep-dive research and created nourishment that was safe for them to consume. Then it was discovered that Bella also suffered from sen-



sitivities to topical products. Building on her foundation of concocting safe dishes for her children to consume, Tania began creating skin products for her entire family. She cut the useless fillers, parabens, dyes, phthalates and harsh preservatives, and she replaced them with those powerhouse ingredients.

"It started in the kitchen and it grew enough that I took over the basement in our old house," said Tania. "But it didn't go to the next level until Bella came on board and then the business took off. My formulas didn't change, but Bella was able to match the quality of the product with the labeling, containers and website. Within one year of working with an IT company, she rebuilt the website from the ground up."

## TAKING A DIFFERENT CAREER PATH

While she was cooking up these different formulas for her family, Tania served as





“If you’re in business for the right reasons, people will see that,” promised Bella. “We’re in this business for the right reasons, and we’re doing it ethically and we’re doing it for ourselves as well as for all of the people around us and that shows in our products.”

– Bella

a community interpreter. Eventually, she left that role but she needed something else to keep her busy. With the support of her husband, John, and her daughters, she decided to devote her work energy to Isa Mia.

“I really dig making these products and I wanted to take this to the next level. I wanted to create things that are clean for us and it blossomed from a hobby to a hobby business,” commented Tania. “Then Bella came on a couple of years ago and it really took off. The real goal was to share products that met my standards with others.”

“I remember going to boutique shows and seeing the whole thing start without my understanding that I would someday be a part of it. I remember Mom creating her own lab space in the basement of our home in Lenexa versus this awesome lab space that we have in our farmhouse in Spring Hill, Kansas,” said Bella. “I remember her cooking away when I was little and making new products and me getting to be the test monkey each time she had a new product.”

As the formula creator, Tania’s first product was her Yoga Mat Spray that was used to sanitize equipment. Friends began asking for it and Tania sensed the potential she could realize with many of the products she had already created for her family. A Face Potion came next, and then in 2014, Tania formed a limited liability corporation. Bella was already helping out at shows, and she eagerly picked up marketing the products and consolidating the brand of the Isa Mia line. In 2020, mother and daughter made it official and went into partnership. While many consultants might advise not to go into

business with family, this team has made the magic happen.

“People say not to go into business with family, but our whole family is extremely close with each other, especially with my mom. We’re very similar but we’ve found that in working together we fill each other’s voids and complement each other with our strengths. Mom is the mad scientist but I’m able to match the creativity and make sure we stay in the same lane before we branch off into another direction,” noted Bella. “And before you go into business with anybody, especially your family, you need to talk about why you’re going into business and hold true to that and build each other up when one is lacking.”

“I’d love to tell you that we sat down and mapped it out but it was very organic. Bella and I are both very similar, very creative and both very high energy. Our superpowers would be that we get things done very quickly. We see it, do it and get it done,” shared Tania. “Bella is creative and structured, and she has the strengths that I lack. We’re very open about our weaknesses and flaws. I see her as a very valuable resource, and I trust her. We don’t micromanage.”

## WHAT’S COOKING IN THE SCIENCE BEAKER FOR ISA MIA

The future looks exceptionally bright for this mad scientist and her daughter to drive Isa Mia to incredible new heights. Now, they have several years of experience under their lab coats and offer the following advice for other entrepreneurs.

“You have to keep the rock rolling. If you stop the momentum at any time, it will be so much harder to get back into it. To get your business to grow, you have to keep it going. So even during the dry



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**“We’re our number one customer so we make sure we’re happy. Also, expect more from yourself and set high standards. As for you and your business partner, do the right thing because it’s the right thing to do.”**

**- Tania**

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spells, a slow burn is better rather than hopping on a trend because you lose sight of why you’re doing this business in the first place,” shared Bella.

“Trust that the other person has it covered. There’s no room for micromanaging because if you do that, then you should just do it yourself,” commented Tania. “There are some weeks when I’m overwhelmed and I’ll reach out for help. Maybe one week it’s a 60/40 split, and the next, it’s 80/20. It all works out. But understand that’s the way it is because it’s never 50/50.”

Of course, purchasing products from Isa Mia is a key takeaway that Bella and Tania want to leave with readers. But they also offer these insights for not only business success but life success. “First, I care what I put in my body and care equally about what I put on my body. Also, please shop local. Maybe you’re getting a great deal at a big box store, but you don’t have the value of having access to your formula maker as you do with Isa Mia. I guarantee that those companies don’t put as much effort and as many powerhouse ingredients into their products as we

do,” stated Tania. “We’re our number one customer so we make sure we’re happy. Also, expect more from yourself and set high standards. As for you and your business partner, do the right thing because it’s the right thing to do.”

“If you’re in business for the right reasons, people will see that,” promised Bella. “We’re in this business for the right reasons, and we’re doing it ethically and we’re doing it for ourselves as well as for all of the people around us, and that shows in our products.” ♦



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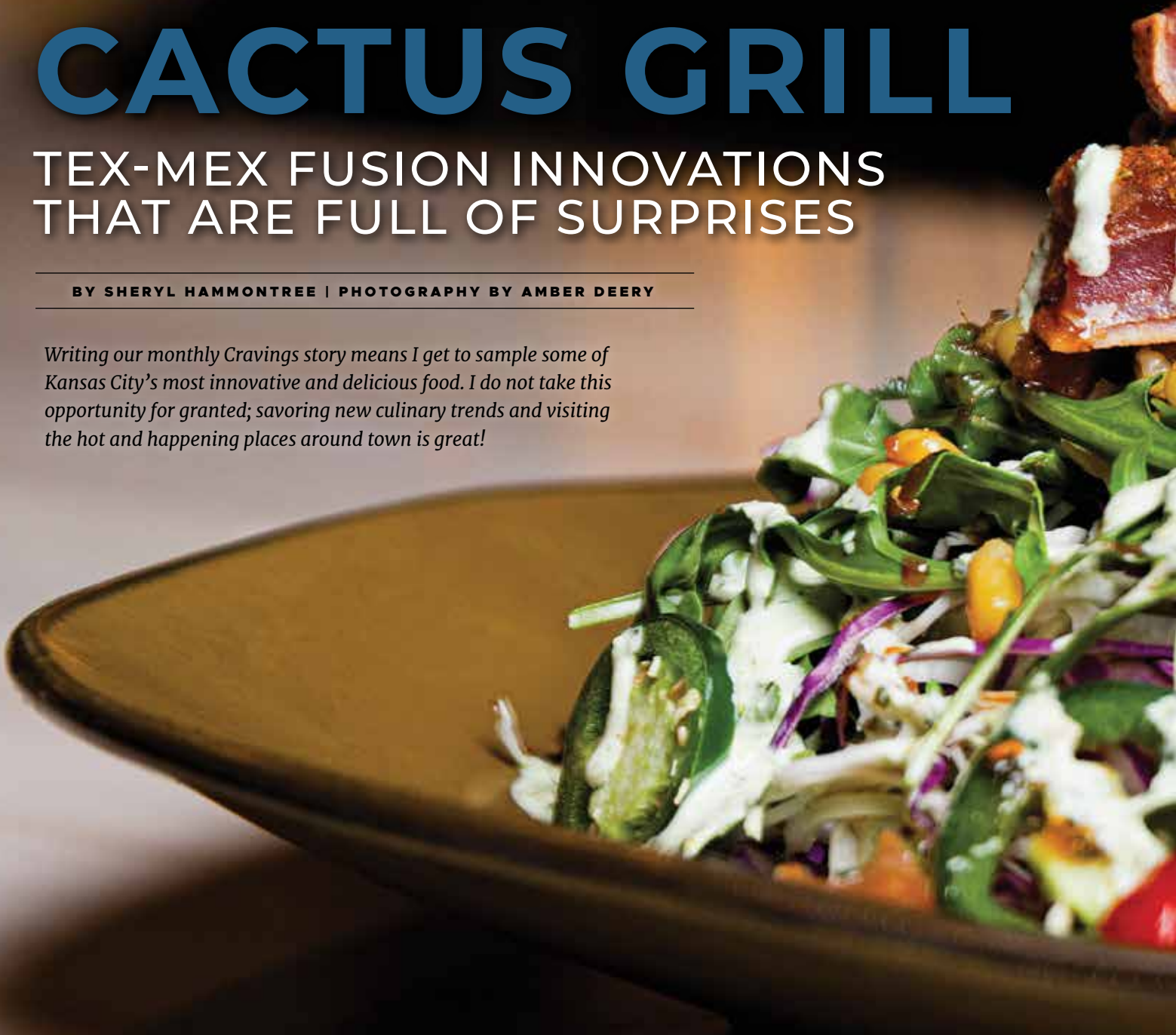


# CACTUS GRILL

## TEX-MEX FUSION INNOVATIONS THAT ARE FULL OF SURPRISES

BY SHERYL HAMMONTREE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMBER DEERY

*Writing our monthly Cravings story means I get to sample some of Kansas City's most innovative and delicious food. I do not take this opportunity for granted; savoring new culinary trends and visiting the hot and happening places around town is great!*







**A**lso great was tasting the Monterey Chicken Burrito at Cactus Grill and finding it to be just as delicious as it was 30 years ago! Yes, Cactus Grill's Leawood location is celebrating 30 years in Kansas City and their newest location in south Overland Park is turning three. Let's celebrate them!

While the burrito, crispy chips and corn masa are deliciously unchanged, Cactus Grill, like the rest of us, has grown up a bit since 1993. You need to check out their recently remodeled, high-vibe decor and new Tex-Mex Fusion menu items.

As beautifully plated starters, salads and entrees were brought to the table for sampling, general manager Ryan Vaughan shared a bit about his culinary background and the path leading him to Cactus Grill's newest location at 7841 W. 159th. I listened and sampled as Ryan told me about Ed Gieselman, the founder of Cactus Grill, who decided Kansas City needed a good Tex-Mex restaurant, so at age 19 he opened one! Thirty years and multiple locations later, Ed is still involved; he and Ryan talk just about every day, and it sounds like Ed is a terrific owner and mentor as he willingly shares his wisdom and gives Ryan and the team space and opportunity to influence the menu. Ali SanJuan is Cactus Grill's director of culinary creations, and he's always coming up with innovative and creative ideas that are ahead of or within industry trends. He has been a loyal employee with the Jose Peppers/Cactus Grill family since he was 14 years old, in 1997. Together, Ryan, Ed and Ali are keeping it fresh and making this newly remodeled Cactus Grill Bluhawk location an elevated Tex-Mex dining experience.

#### FRESHLY SQUEEZED TEX-MEX FUSION

You'll walk in and immediately notice the chill yet high vibe. The color palette, lighting and decor strike the perfect balance of being elevated and at the same time casual and fun. You're greeted with a smile, and not long after being seated, a basket of thin, perfectly crisp chips arrives at your table with a bowl or two of salsa. You'll order a margarita, but which one? I've tasted many margaritas and not





General Manager,  
Ryan Vaughan

If you're craving traditional Tex-Mex, I suggest the Monte-rey Chicken Burrito. It's mesquite-grilled chicken, pico de gallo and cheese wrapped in a flour tortilla then baked, topped with espinaca con queso and served with black beans and desert rice. Traditional menu items such as tacos and enchiladas (available gluten free) are bursting with next-level flavor because the fish, chicken, shrimp and steak are mesquite wood grilled. You will taste the difference.

Ready for something less traditional? Tasty, fresh, Tex-Mex fusion is on this menu. I'd suggest trying the Ahi Tuna Bowl. This was such a surprise and my favorite. Seared and cubed Ahi tuna, fresh avocado, black beans, cilantro rice, shredded cabbage and baby arugula are tossed then topped with sliced jalapeños, red bell peppers and serrano crema. This dish is summertime light and satisfies your cravings.

The Salmon Berry Salad is another summertime-light choice. Grilled fresh Atlantic salmon, strawberries, blackberries, goat cheese and honey-roasted pecans are served atop mixed greens and arugula, then tossed with raspberry-walnut vinaigrette and drizzled with a touch of honey. It's more sweet than savory but crazy refreshing.

## UNEXPECTED FLAVOR FUSION

The Margherita Chicken can be found on the Specialties menu and that's exactly where it belongs. This combination is like nothing else. The mesquite-grilled chicken breast is topped with fresh cilantro pepitas pesto, melted mozzarella and seasoned cherry tomatoes, then drizzled with balsamic. On the side is a generous portion of crunchy, grilled vegetables and off-the-cob street corn. Earlier I declared the Ahi Tuna Bowl as my favorite but, on second thought, it's a tie with this dish.

## DESSERT DELIGHTS

For dessert, you might want to try the mango margarita or maybe a bowl of crunchy churros, a decadent piece of lava cake or the fried ice cream I remember from 30 years ago. It's still amazing.

Ed, Ryan, Ali and the team would love for you stop by, pull up a chair and stay a while, but they also know that sometimes you just want to eat at home or need to eat at the soccer fields. You could order online, but they'd rather you give them a call and place your order with one of their staff, who is ready to ensure you're getting exactly what you want, such as dressing on the side, extra cheese, no beans and double rice, gluten-free, no sour cream, whatever makes you happy. And here's a bonus; Cactus Grill's fabulous fresh-squeezed margaritas are available for carryout, too! ♦

Find Cactus Grill Overland Park at 7841 West 159th Street and cactusgrill.com. Call 913-354-2272 for perfect carryout orders and more information.

***The Margherita Chicken can be found on the Specialties menu and that's exactly where it belongs. This combination is like nothing else. The mesquite-grilled chicken breast is topped with fresh cilantro pepitas pesto, melted mozzarella and seasoned cherry tomatoes, then drizzled with balsamic. On the side is a generous portion of crunchy, grilled vegetables and off-the-cob street corn.***

a tough call if ordering just one; the Jalapeño marg is spicy but not hot and the Skinny marg is simply perfect! Personally, I lean savory and less toward sweet, so I was a bit slow to try the Mango Margarita. But when I did, whoa! It was not sugary sweet at all; it's made with mango puree and like everything else at Cactus Grill, it tastes fresh because it is fresh. All their margaritas are made with fresh-squeezed juice. To be clearer, all their juices are squeezed on location each day. It doesn't get fresher than that!

When ordering your margarita, go ahead and order a shareable; ask for the To Die For Ceviche. This tastes like summer, with citrus-infused red snapper with avocado, mango, chiles, cilantro, red onion, celery and jalapeño served with chicharrónes! Speaking of chicharrónes, if you're rocking keto, ask your server to swap the basket of chips for chicharrónes; they taste great alone or with a dunk in the salsa.



Art director, illustrator and entrepreneur Sheryl Hammontree is happiest when creating. As a freelancer, she creates visual styling and targeted messaging to strategically solve challenges for clients. As the owner of Thoughtful Threads, she creates expressive apparel to empower people and build a community of kindness. Sheryl heads outside to find energy, inspiration and calm; whether in the garden or on a trail, her soul is fed by creating memories with her husband, Joel, family and friends.





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# CHICKEN SALTIMBOCCA

RECIPE & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LANE | LAUREN-LANE.COM



## INGREDIENTS

4 thinly sliced chicken cutlets (scallopini)  
 8 slices thinly sliced prosciutto  
 8 fresh sage leaves, plus more for garnish  
 All-purpose flour, for dredging  
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 ¼ cup olive oil  
 3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
 ¼ cup dry white wine  
 ¼ cup chicken broth  
 Lemon wedges, for serving

## DIRECTIONS

Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Dredge in flour and shake off excess. Place 2 sage leaves on each breast. Wrap each piece of chicken in 2 slices of prosciutto. Press the prosciutto to help it adhere to the chicken. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium flame. Place the cutlet in the pan, seam-side down first. Cook for 3 minutes or until crisp and then flip the cutlet over and sauté the other side for 2 minutes, or until cooked through. Transfer the saltimbocca to a serving platter and keep warm. Add butter to the skillet. Add the wine and cook over high heat until reduced by half, 2 minutes. Add the stock and bring to a boil. Cook until reduced by half, 3 minutes. Pour the sauce on top of the chicken and serve. Garnish with extra sage if desired. ♦

## TIPS

**1:** The wine sauce is delicious, but I often make this dish without a sauce.

**2:** To make your own thin chicken cutlets, place a boneless, skinless chicken breast on a cutting board and slice it horizontally into two even, thin pieces.



After 25 years in creative design and management with Hallmark Cards, Lauren Lane quit to pursue her lifelong passion for food and entertaining. Lauren has reinvented herself at 50 and now pursues her dream of teaching others how to cook easily and entertain effortlessly. Follow her on Instagram, Facebook and her blog so you don't miss any of her recipes and cooking tips and tricks.

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# KILLERS OF A CERTAIN AGE

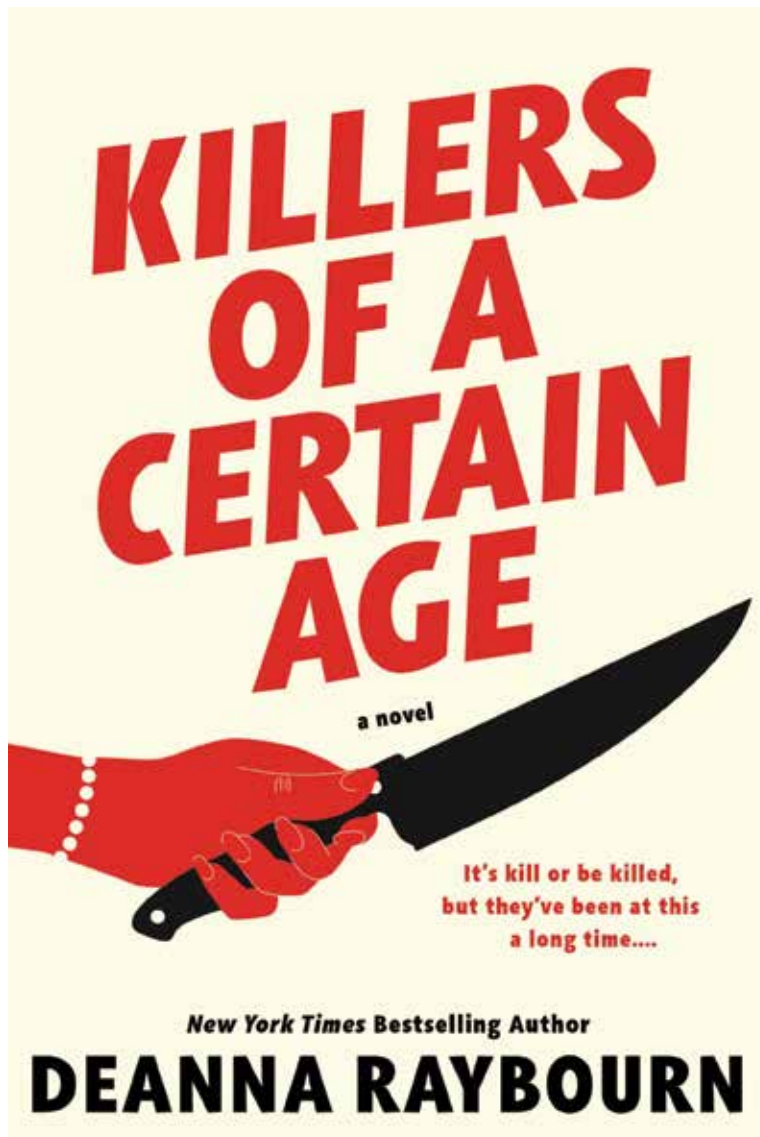
## BY DEANNA RAYBOURN

REVIEW BY MARIA RILEY

*Deanna Raybourn has crafted a modern thriller featuring four older women who struggle with relationships, menopause and the fact that their previous employer is trying to kill them in her newest novel, Killers of a Certain Age.*

As career assassins, the threat to their lives is nothing new, though. Billie, Mary Alice, Natalie and Helen have spent the last 40 years of their lives dedicated to the Museum, the elite organization of assassins. Now in their 60s, they are rightfully celebrating their retirement. Their employer has graciously treated them to a retirement river cruise to thank them for their years of service and to give their own assassin an ideal opportunity to eliminate the four women once and for all. The retirees uncover the assassination plot just in time, and the women manage to escape from the boat with their lives, though a little worse for wear. They realize that the Museum won't stop until they are dead, and so they're forced out of retirement for one last job.

As the tale unfolds, the story vacillates between their present-day turmoil and the time when the women were just meeting. Under the tutelage of Constance Halliday, four women were recruited to create the first all-female group the organization referred to only as the Museum. Since its inception in the wake of World War II, the Museum



has existed solely to remove those whom traditional governments are unable to touch. Initially, the targets were almost exclusively Nazis who managed to evade capture or death at the close of the war. As the number of remaining Nazis dwindled, the Museum branched out and continued to pursue the drug lords, sex traffickers and dictators who needed to be eliminated quickly and quietly.

Now, for reasons unknown to the women, the Museum has targeted them. The foursome must band together to discover who put the hit on their heads while managing to stay alive themselves. Though they have extensive training and experience, they are not as young as they used to be. Their reflexes have slowed, and they can't bounce back from confrontations as quickly as they

used to. They discover, though, that their age is a tremendous asset. Since the world is full of young, technology-dependent professionals, the retirees can use the world's underestimation of older women to their immense advantage.

*Killers of a Certain Age* is Raybourn's first contemporary novel. She



is best known for her Veronica Speedwell series that is set in Victorian England and features a strong-willed butterfly hunter turned amateur sleuth. This series followed the Lady Julia Grey series about a mystery-solving woman in the Victorian era. Raybourn's decision to set her newest novel in the present was risky, but the risk has paid off. In her modern thriller, Raybourn has brought her skill of crafting a strong female lead who solves a mystery that has fallen on her lap. In *Killers of a Certain Age*, though, Raybourn modernizes in more ways than just the setting.

Billie stars as the novel's main character, with the present-day story told in first person through her eyes. Instead of the classic male counterpart as in her Victorian era novels, Billie is flanked by three women who have lived and fought alongside her for most of her life. Each woman has her own idiosyncrasies and motivations, but the bond they share is stronger than any differences in personality. The quartet juggles constant relocation, looking over their shoulders and discovering the masterminds behind the plot to kill them, all while keeping a sense of humor and indelible love for each other.

Raybourn weaves humor throughout the entire tale. The characters keep their moods light with sometimes-risque jokes and crude comments. This fun and compelling read checks all the boxes for an entertaining read: loveable characters, dynamic action and just a touch of vulgarity. While the violence is not overly gory, the killers are assassins after all, and some heads had to roll.

In order to contain the action and backstory of all the characters, Raybourn wasn't able to build out all the details of some of the relationships. She sacrificed depth of characters in order to propel the story along, but some readers may find themselves wishing for more from some of the relationships. Most of the characters, including Billie, through whose eyes we see most of the book, seemed to remain stagnant throughout the entire book. The women ended the novel in a state close to how they began.

For a novel about older women who kick butt and can take care of themselves, it has everything you could ask for. Raybourn reminds readers that women are capable and strong, and that sometimes being underestimated is the greatest asset you can have. ♦



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# LOVE THEM OR HATE THEM, EVS ARE HERE TO STAY!

BY LINDA R PRICE

*In 2022, 4.3 million new battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) were delivered globally, and the market is increasing every day. In the United States and Canada, EV sales increased by 49 percent from January to June, or H1, for the last several years despite a weak market for light vehicles in general.*



**T**esla leads the field in EVs with sales of 565,000 units in H1. Coming in second was the Chinese company BYD with sales of 641,000 units when totaled with their PHEV sales. Also in China, the neighborhood electronic vehicles increased their sales by a staggering 113 percent. These small vehicles putter along at 25 mph and carry a maximum load of 3,000 pounds.

To spur this increase in EV, and to relieve the constant demand for more gasoline and other petroleum products, the Biden adminis-

tration has legislated tax cuts for domestic battery manufacturing. Their goal is to reduce dependence on Chinese supplies and accelerate the transition to a cleaner energy source. One sweet initiative is a tax credit of \$35 per kilowatt-hour for each U.S.-made cell. This alone will reduce costs by a third for car manufacturers. Tesla, General Motors, Ford and their Korean partners, LG Energy and SK

On are lining up to benefit from this tax break.

Fuel economy is a primary reason people are switching to EVs. Even in states where electricity is expensive, it is still over 50 percent



cheaper than gasoline. According to the EPA, a Model 3 Tesla costs about \$550 per year to charge while a BMW 3 Series costs an average of \$2,000 a year in gasoline.

Range is critical to the driver of EVs. There aren't as many charging stations as there are gas pumps across the U.S., and not all charging stations are created equal. The Society of Automotive Engineers describes three levels of EV charging stations. Level 1 stations are those typically found in the home and use a 120V outlet. They are slower, less efficient and more costly than a Level 2 outlet. Level 2 stations use 240 volts and 24 amps. They are recommended by experts for the average consumer. You will need to consult an electrician to be sure your household wiring will accommodate the added usage. These stations are also found in public areas such as garages and parking lots. Level 3 stations, or DC fast chargers, are helpful during long trips. Though it takes 30 to 45 minutes, the driver can add an additional 100 to 250 miles of range to his trip mileage.

It's on the long highway drives that the driver must plan ahead and consider how far their vehicle can go in the real world. The EPA ranges of EVs are rarely exceeded as they frequently are with gasoline cars, according to car industry testing. This is especially true in cold weather when, in one test, the battery was used to warm the cabin of the vehicle and consumed up to 35 percent of the charge, or approximately 60 miles of range, is a large bite of an estimated 310-mile EPA range rating.

At present, there aren't enough charging stations for the number of cars on the road. Not only that, many feel that the DC fast-charging stations are the only ones practical for long road trips. The

U. S. Department of Energy's Alternative Fuels Data Center states that there are approximately 44,000 Level 2 charging stations with over 100,000 charging ports and around 6,600 DC fast charging stations with 28,000 charging ports.

Drivers need to equip themselves with phone apps and knowledge of the different EV charging networks to navigate this new technology. ChargePoint is the largest EV charging network in the United States, but Tesla wins the race with Supercharger ports. Unfortunately for non-Tesla owners, Tesla ports service only Teslas. Other car manufacturers are racing to catch up. Ford is partnering with the Volkswagen Group of America's Electrify America. General Motors is working with EVgo to launch more than 2,700 DC fast charging stations between now and 2025. The U.S. Departments of Transportation and Energy are investing \$5 billion over five years to improve the EV charging network.

Range isn't the only major concern of transportation experts. The battery packs add thousands of pounds to the average EV. The added weight causes an imbalance in collisions, since EVs weigh far more than a comparable gas engine car. This may lead to more traffic fatalities in the future. Other factors such as additional road wear, tire noise, and towing and payload are associated with the added weight of huge EV batteries.

As with all new technologies, ever-evolving improvements and luxuries make EVs a fine investment to consider. ♦

**SOURCES:** *caranddriver.com, axios.com, ev-volumes.com, cars.usnews.com, fortune.com and cnet.com.*



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4810 Roanoke Pkwy, Kansas City, MO*

























## JUST SAYIN'

BY Q104 PERSONALITY JENNY MATTHEWS  
PHOTO BY LAUREN FRISCH PUSATERI

*My co-host and dear friend, Mike Kellar, and his wife just welcomed their first child into the world eight months ago.*

It has been really special to watch as he navigates his way through new parenthood. It has brought back a lot of memories! Some wonderful, some not-so-wonderful (i.e., sleep deprivation). But what it has really shown me is just how fast it all goes.

My little girl, Julianne Faith, will turn 13 this year. She made me a mama after a long infertility struggle. My son, Miles Parker, will be 11 this December (my 12/12/12 baby). They are growing up. They are becoming more independent. In some ways, it's awesome! But I miss my babies. At the same time, I absolutely love my relationship with my big kids. We talk about everything (and I do mean

everything). I love that they feel comfortable enough to come talk to me about all the things. One of my favorite times of the day is after my daughter takes her evening shower and we sit on her bed and she gives me all the middle school gossip. My son is currently testing his boundaries and has figured out the power of eye rolling. Jules went through this, too. Thankfully, it didn't last long. I think she realized she was getting a lot further in life without the pre-teen attitude and all that goes with it!

There are hard days. Motherhood is truly a journey. What do people say? The days are long but the years are short. It's so true. My radio partner is in the season of diapers,

bottles, no sleep and sweet baby giggles. I'm about to buy a Mom's Taxi bumper sticker and my social life is now completely non-existent as my new job is keeping track of their social and sports calendars! And you know what? I wouldn't trade it for the world.

One day my husband and I will be empty nesters. We'll have time for date nights and weekend getaways. I'm looking forward to it, but in the most bittersweet way. I'll miss this chaos.

Happy Mother's Day. And if you're still waiting for your miracle, my heart is with you. Hang in there. It's worth the wait. ♦

Jenny Matthews co-hosts *The Morning Drive* with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews on Q104 New Hit Country, weekday mornings from 6 - 10am. Connect at [www.jennymatthewsonair.com](http://www.jennymatthewsonair.com) and check out *The Morning After* with Mike Kellar + Jenny Matthews podcast!



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- August 20, 2022 -

# Aubree and Carter Odell



WRITTEN BY MARILYN ISAMINGER

**A**ubree Odell, 23, graduated from the University of Kansas with a BS in biology and a minor in business. She works for Pfizer and lives with her husband in Joplin, Missouri. They are expecting their first child, Beckham, this month.

Carter Odell, 24, graduated from Baker University in 2021 with a bachelors in exercise science. He's in the final stretch of clinical rotations for his doctor of physical therapy. He's looking forward to welcoming his new hunting buddy.

"Our mothers like to say that they are the reason for the two of us meeting," Aubree laughs. "My mom was Carter's grandpa's oncology nurse in 2017 and she formed a bond with his family. One day I stopped in to see my mom while she was working and Heather, now my mother-in-law, was there and teased my mom after I left that she had a handsome single son who needed to meet her daughter. Several months later, Carter and I met through mutual friends and the rest is history!"







Carter woke Aubree up one morning and asked her to go on a walk with him and their dog, Oaklee. “I refused at first; it was too early for me to be awake let alone take a walk. However, he bribed me with Starbucks and took me onto KU’s campus. We let Oaklee run around near the football field and then we walked up to the campanile, where Carter got down on one knee and asked me to spend forever with him! I was completely shocked and it took me a while to decipher whether I was dreaming or not but it was the easiest ‘YES!’”

The blissful couple tied the knot on August 20, 2022. Jane Kapsalis served as maid of honor; bridesmaids were Kylee Davis, Campbell Odell, Lyssa Schabel, Shayla Schaper, Lucy Johnson, Lakelyn Shaffer and Savannah Serven. Cooper Odell served as best man; groomsmen were Jalynn Lawrie, Nate Davis, Sam Huckabee, Jon Scire, Nate Pauly, Joey Janes and Parker Guffey. Flower girls were Emma Morse, Maisie Webster and Karsin Graham; ring bearers were Jibril Morse and Daxton Graham.

“We got married in my hometown, Independence, Kansas, at Glenclyff Farm, which is owned by family friends; I was a flower girl at their daughter’s wedding there many years ago,” Aubree shared. “With Carter’s hometown just 20 minutes from Independence, we had over 450 guests in attendance! August 20 was a very hot day in the middle of a drought; we had hoped for rain prior to the wedding so nature would look more alive but didn’t get any. As soon as the music started playing for me to walk down the aisle, it poured! Initially everyone stood wide eyed and thought maybe I would wait it out but I continued my walk down the aisle and got married in the rain! It rained for about 15 minutes and the rest of the night was a celebration I wish I could replay 100 times over again.”

The couple honeymooned in Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, where they rested and relaxed. ♦



**PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY**  
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To round out the tour, the Thowe garden reveals that you don't need a huge yard to make a big impact! To make the most out of every inch of their property, the Thowes have extended their small home to include a beautiful outdoor living space. The Thowes host frequent outdoor parties, and guests enjoy a fire pit surrounded by a variety of low-maintenance perennials and potted plants for additional color and flair. It is also a must see!

Across the five gardens, visitors will enjoy seeing a variety of plantings suited for sunny beds and shaded beds, semi-sun and semi-shade areas, woodland gardens and water gardens, big spaces and not-so-big-spaces. One of the gardens even features a banana grove! **And new this year**, the Geib garden will share the works of a local artist who shares her enthusiasm for nature through watercolor, oil and pencil creations of sunsets, cloudscape, birds and other creatures. ♦



The Geibs' Gardens



The Thowes' Garden

# GARDEN CLUB OF SHAWNEE

JUNE TOUR HIGHLIGHTS THE BEST OF SPRING IN *Kansas*

**A**fter a four-year hiatus, the Garden Club of Shawnee will be hosting its popular biennial Garden Sampler Tour. This year's tour features gardens exhibiting creative ideas for extended outdoor family living areas, child-friendly play areas in whimsical themes and gardens specializing in organic gardening and native plants. Whether you are interested in flowers or veggies and herbs, sun gardens to shade gardens, wooded gardens to small-space gardens, you will see it all!

Three of the gardens feature lovely water elements, including ponds, bubbling streams and waterfalls. Some of the ponds are home to koi, shubunkins and goldfish, and all are beautifully landscaped with a variety of plantings, including calla lilies, cannas, papyrus, taro and elephant ears, to name a few. Additionally, two of the gardens display the result of 30 years of experimentation and learning what grows best in our Kansas rock-filled, heavy clay soil. Here vis-

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### TOUR DATE

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- \$15 each
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- Visitors accompanied by a ticket holder may purchase a ticket at any of the gardens.


### ADVANCE TICKET PURCHASES AVAILABLE

- Family Tree Nurseries, Shawnee and Overland Park
- Wild Birds Unlimited, Shawnee and Olathe
- Earl May Garden Center, Shawnee
- Online availability Eventbrite @thegardenclubofshawnee

### RAFFLE TICKETS


- \$2 ea or 3 for \$5 cash
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# MAY 2023

## APRIL 29 – MAY 14

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## MAY 5 - 7

### **Brookside Art Annual**

The KC art festival season kicks off with the Brookside Art Annual, when the tree-lined streets of charming Brookside transform into al fresco gallery spaces, plus tasty treats and live music.

## MAY 13

### **Country Roots Fest KC**

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## MAY 20

### **Armed Forces Day**

**1:00 -3:00PM, THE LAWN AT LEGENDS**

#### **OUTLETS**

Celebrate the brave men and women who serve our country. Pay tribute to the dedicated service of our armed forces. There will be plenty of exciting activities for the whole family, including a military vehicle display, live music and an obstacle course.



## MAY 21

### **KC Triathlon**

KC's premier triathlon event kicks off the summer season at Longview Lake. Options include Olympic, sprint and relay distances as well as a duathlon.



## MAY 25 - 28

### **Cirque Du Soleil – Corteo**

#### **T-MOBILE CENTER**

Get carried away with life! The clown Mauro has passed, but his spirit is still with us. Instead of mourning, the funeral cortege celebrates the here and hereafter with laughter and exuberance.

## MAY 28

### **Celebration at the Station**

Start your summer with the largest free Memorial Day weekend event. Against the majestic backdrop of Union Station, the Kansas City Symphony performs patriotic favorites with appearances from special guests, followed by fireworks to end the evening.



#### **FitWear Boutique**

**5601 W. 135th St., Suite 2215,  
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**May 1:** Books and Boutiques, OPCC, benefiting St. Luke's South Hospital  
Purchase tickets [www.saintlukeskc.org/saint-lukes-foundation/books-boutiques](http://www.saintlukeskc.org/saint-lukes-foundation/books-boutiques).

**May 6:** Derby Party, check-in at FitWear Boutique. Watch party hosted by Veritas; ticket sales and raffles benefiting [bmafoundation.com](http://bmafoundation.com).

**May 11:** Mother-Daughter Shopping Event; LinkxLou will be in store doing permanent jewelry!

**May 13:** Photo Mini Sessions, benefiting [bmafoundation.com](http://bmafoundation.com).



## SAVE THE DATE

## JUNE 2

### **Jazzoo**

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(DEC. 22-JAN. 19)

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**TAURUS**  
(APR. 20-MAY 20)

Saturn is in trine with Jupiter at the end of the month, giving your sign an added oomph in the relationship sectors. This is a time when you will grow closer to your mate, or find one who is worth keeping around. If this is your birth month, you will enjoy the benefits of the Gemini spirit, which is always a fun time. Give in to your inner child and enjoy the sheer exhilaration of the season.



**VIRGO**  
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 22)

Finances figure prominently this month. As Benjamin Franklin said, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be." This is a good motto to live by until the end of the month. The second half of 2023 is shaping up to be an amazing time for you financially, if you can just bide your time wisely now.



**AQUARIUS**  
(JAN. 20-FEB. 18)

Your daily routine has improved and you've managed to create a schedule and budget that are working for you. Don't stop now. You will build on this energy and it will move you past any hardships.



**GEMINI**  
(MAY 21-JUN. 20)

You are in your element this month as the planets stack up in your favor, giving you the energy to begin projects at the beginning of the month, and then giving you the stamina and energy to see them completed toward the end of the month. Your powers of communication and persuasion are going to rock everyone's world.



**LIBRA**  
(SEPT. 23-OCT. 22)

Springtime is a time of year that will truly energize you, filling you with love for your fellow man. Make sure that some of that love is spent on yourself, as your health will suffer if you don't. Spring cleaning, sorting through old things, de-cluttering, will be the things to kick start this time of year for you and bring you to an amazing state of mind.

# STAR JOURNEYS

BY MELODY BUSSEY

*As we move from the darker time of the year into the bright sunshine of springtime, most signs are going to find themselves thinking of hearth and home, love and new beginnings. Getting out into nature on a daily basis is going to increase the energy level for all signs, so make a point of getting out and really seeing the beauty that is beginning to push through winter's wool blanket. This is the perfect time to reconnect with your own inner child.*



**PISCES**  
(FEB. 19-MAR. 20)

All of the inner reflection of last month has brought you to the conclusion that you need to put the laptop down and get out there to enjoy life. Jupiter will interact with Saturn, giving you a chance to enjoy life again.



**CANCER**  
(JUN. 21-JUL. 23)

This is the month for you to truly come into your own and learn many life skills that are going to serve you well. Learn the skills that will allow you to let things go, keep your temper in check, and to not take on everyone else's problems. If you've connected with a significant other, they will also be good for your career. Travel is in the stars for you.



**SCORPIO**  
(OCT. 23-NOV. 21)

That inner restlessness isn't going to get any better until you plan a short getaway weekend. How about a girls' getaway vacation? With retrograde on the horizon, you may already be feeling the weight of the world sitting on your shoulders. In fact, your self-image has taken a hit and this short trip with friends is just the ticket. Remember, you are only as old as you allow yourself to feel.



**ARIES**  
(MAR. 21-APR. 19)

This month is about harnessing the power and warmth of the returning sun's rays to mend and repair your close connections with people in your life. Around May 23rd or so, you will feel very close to your loved ones. May 21st will be stellar for you as well, because you will discover something that will increase your bottom line.



**LEO**  
(JUL. 24-AUG. 22)

Your family always figures prominently in your life, but will more so this month. Along with the blooming spring flowers will come relationships deepening with your family members. You may find yourself going into business with them, or find that you've inherited something to cherish.



**SAGITTARIUS**  
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Mercury and Venus are partnering to bring some very good mojo to your life, so make sure that you aren't self-sabotaging what is a very good relationship. If you feel compelled to say something to a co-worker, you should.



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