

Raven Valdes

Nightlife! Magazine recently sat down with Raven Valdes, founder of Raven Events, LLC, the self-styled and operated company that creates, promotes, and hosts various high-end social gatherings predominately in the Scottsdale area. Valdes is at once intelligent, charming, and beautiful; three aspects of her persona that have surely influenced the success of her business. Her words are smooth, persuasive silk, but they insinuate a focused, intense ambition that belies her casual demeanor. She takes her work very seriously so that others may forget theirs for a little while, using her diverse skills to create the ultimate party experience. To all of you looking for a unique, classy, and stylish atmosphere, meet Raven Valdes. You won't forget her...

NLM: How long have you been in the Valley, and what made you decide to come here?

Raven: I've been here for about 10 years. I came from the Baltimore/DC area, but I am originally from west Texas, and I missed the big skies, the dry climate. But Arizona is so pretty, so I decided to move here.

NLM: What inspired you to start an event planning company?

Raven: Since I was 18 years old, I've been organizing events and getting people together. I've always been the 'social director' amongst my friends. People eventually noticed that I could fill a room, and so it was something I realized I could make money doing. Also, I felt that there was something missing for the 25 and over crowd. I feel they are a forgotten demographic. The so-called 'trendy' bars still cater to a younger set. There are not a lot of places that offer the right environment for people who are a little more sophisticated, who don't want to be hanging out with kids in excessively baggy, ripped jeans who drink 'till they puke, y'know?

NLM: So you're saying that ripped jeans and drinking 'till you puke isn't sophisticated? I must have missed a memo.

Raven: The kind of crowd that comes to my parties appreciates the money that is spent, the detail, the opportunity to look good and be treated with respect. I make sure they have it, because I nurture my guests. It's about service and providing the atmosphere.

NLM: How busy are you?

Raven Events



Raven: Oh, it's growing so fast. I literally get three to four requests a day to plan events from companies and individuals, but I can't do them all. I have to be selective of what comes my way. For instance, if it's a request to throw a party for a bunch of people from North Scottsdale, but the venue is in Ahwatukee, there's no way. I also get asked to promote existing events that I didn't create and again I have to be selective, making sure that I only offer the classiest events to my guests. A lot of what I do is focused on helping certain restaurants, bars, and clubs fill a room on their off nights.

NLM: Why not hire people to help you?

Raven: The thing is that not a lot of people can do what I do, it's not easy, and I feel that I need to be at the event in order to greet everyone and make sure that the event is running smoothly. To be honest, it's hard to trust anyone else with putting these parties together. Sometimes I have help at the actual functions, but that's about it. I do everything, including designing the décor, hiring the staff, lining up entertainment, bringing in the sponsors, the advertising, creating the invitation, everything. I'm overwhelmed, but I can't relinquish the quality. I have to follow through personally with everything. It's the quality that keeps 'em calling.

NLM: Do you ever sleep?

Raven (laughing): Hardly. I have a wonderful support

system, though. My boyfriend is a musician, and he's away touring a lot, and yet he makes the effort to come to every event when he's here, so it's really nice to know he cares. I have a wonderful group of friends who are very supportive, too. But I also have my own line of jewelry and accessories called Raven's Boutique (www.ravensdesigns.com), so I'm incredibly busy.

NLM: Do you ever promote or host charity events?

Raven: I sure do. I have a 7 year old autistic son, so the charity efforts hit close to home. Recently I've put on events for Soul Sanctuary, a shelter for domestic violence, the American Stroke Association, and I did a huge event benefiting the Wild Horse Ranch Rescue and Breast Cancer Foundation on September 30th at a private home in Scottsdale.

NLM: Thanks very much, Raven, it has been a pleasure!

Raven: Thank you! And don't forget to come visit me every Wednesday at La Rouge Martini Bar (at Barcelona) for Raven's All Night Happy Hour. Also, don't miss the Masquerade Ball on Saturday, October 28th at Flicka's. Oh, and I'll be taking Raven's Friday Night Rendezvous to various surprise venues each week starting in mid November.

For more information and a calendar of Raven's events, visit: www.RavenEvents.com or call 480-664-0228.