

## **Historic Folsom Small Business Stories – Celebrating Fem-preneurs!**

Did you know that in Historic Folsom, there are a TON of women-owned businesses? Coupled with the incredibly diverse types of businesses you'll find here, we think it makes the district pretty unique! Here are a few stories from some of the fem-preneurs you'll meet here. You'll find several other female business owners featured in our other Historic Folsom Stories articles so be sure to check theirs out!

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### **Women empowering women.**

**Anita Grey, owner of Anita Rochelle Boutique**, started her career in the dental industry where she worked for 25 years. But as a mom to four beautiful children, she decided she needed to do something that allowed for more flexibility. Anita ended up starting a completely new career as a Mary Kay beauty consultant which is where she discovered her passion for helping women. She wants every woman to feel gorgeous in their skin, whatever age, stage or size they are. While at Mary Kay, she was extremely successful, rising through the ranks.

But Anita wanted to truly be her own boss. She opened her first boutique, The Bag Lady, selling luxe purses and then pivoted to clothing when she saw the market for purses declining. From starting with pop-ups to owning a brick-and-mortar store, Anita has a passion for fashion and is every woman's biggest supporter!

**For Kat Costa, owner of Kat Eye Photography**, she too wants every woman to know just how beautiful she is. That's why she followed her dream of becoming a professional photographer. Plus, she wanted to show her daughters that they can pursue their dreams.

Kat photographs weddings, engagement, and boudoir sessions where she captures natural beauty and intimate moments. Kat realizes that when you're baring it all (or most of it), boudoir photos might feel intimidating. But she's a firm believer that they're incredibly empowering for women. Her kind and welcoming personality makes everyone feel at ease and the end result are photos that showcase just how exquisite you are.

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### **Doing something for themselves.**

**At Not Too Shabby, owners Bobbi Eddy and Pam White** created their own happy place with the intention of making it a welcoming happy place for others when they come in. Before they owned the shop, Bobbi and Pam had successful careers in banking. But when the bank they worked at was acquired, Bobbi lost her job that she'd loved for so many

years. She knew she'd never have the same kind of incredibly empowering mentor she'd had before if she found another job in the industry.

They started looking at potential franchises to go into, but nothing captured their hearts. One day while driving down Sutter Street, Bobbi saw a "For Sale" sign on Not Too Shabby and in that instant, she knew she had to save the shop. It took a lot of convincing Pam and their family, but ultimately Bobbi made the leap to business ownership. After Pam saw how much fun Bobbi was having running the store, she left her corporate job and hasn't looked back! Over the past 20 years, they've crafted one of Historic Folsom's most beloved shops!

**Gloria Cunningham, owner of Full Sol Market, and Stacey Cameron, owner of Marigold Boutique,** are two vibrant, bold entrepreneurs whose career paths were very different but thankfully merged together. Gloria worked for many years at West Elm, where she helped customers with interior design. So, when she lost her job, she saw it as a blessing because it gave her the opportunity to finally do something for herself. For Stacey, she'd been a hair stylist for her entire career. But she'd always been very creative and in her spare time would design jewelry and modify thrift store finds. She started selling clothing on Poshmark and eventually decided to open her own store.

Stacey and Gloria first met when they had separate shops on the 800 block of Sutter Street. They became instant friends and realized that together they were even better. When the location opened up at 718 Sutter Street, they packed up and moved down the street, combining their two stores into one amazing space where they're following their dreams!

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### **The magic of passion and purpose.**

**Stacy Gould, owner of Ruby's Books,** has worn many hats throughout her career. From being a middle school math teacher to becoming a doula, she's always followed her heart. And one of her all-time favorite things to do is curl up with a great book. So, when she read an article about the rise of independent bookstores, she felt the calling that she had to bring one to the heart of Historic Folsom. In the midst of Covid, Stacy made it happen. She's curated the most amazing selection of books, featuring local authors, hosting book clubs, release parties, and other community-gathering events.

**Lisa Wolf, owner of WOLFHOMÉ,** worked in the tech space for most of her career where she managed corporate visitor centers. But when she moved to Folsom with her family, a single "For Sale" sign ignited a desire within her to become a business owner. She realized her dream was to own a cute retail shop in a very charming downtown, and her dream's been going strong now for the past 20 years! Lisa shares her passion for incredible style, high-quality products, and curating a sensorial experience in her store. But something else

she does is create a space for local makers to feature their products in her store. She wants others to have a platform to sell what they create and serves as their biggest cheerleader!

**For Amanda Biasi, owner of Karen's Bakery,** she knew she wanted to carry on the business that founder Karen Holmes started over 25 years ago. Over 18 years, Amanda worked side-by-side with Karen at the bakery, managing day-to-day operations and an amazing team. When Karen decided to retire, Amanda stepped up, raised her hand, and took over the business. She didn't want the business to be sold to an outsider – her goal was to take care of the team who she'd worked alongside for two decades. They're a big family.

Today, Amanda has brought her own flair to the restaurant, adding more savory items to the menu. But one thing that's not changed? Her love for the business, her team, and the joy Karen's Bakery brings to every customer.

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### **Female + Family = Recipe for Success**

**When you combine three amazing and strong women who also happen to be related,** you get the warmth, coziness, and deliciousness that is the Folsom Café. Susie, Amy and Ashley Pierce come from very different career backgrounds but together they make magic. Susie is Amy's mother-in-law and Ashley's mom, and she'd always wanted to go into business with her daughters. Susie has a successful career in real estate, Amy's been in the wine industry, and Ashley has managed (and opened) several chain coffee shops throughout the west coast.

Amy and her husband also happen to own Ben & Jerry's a few doors down so when Amy discovered the café was listed for sale, Susie and Ashley were all in. Each of them brings their unique skills, backgrounds and talents to the table, but most importantly, they bring a whole lot of love to the café!

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And while this article only features a handful of the many women business owners, we suggest you take a walk through Historic Folsom and visit all of the fantastic female-owned businesses. You never know – introducing your daughter, niece, granddaughter or friend to one of these merchants might inspire her to take an entrepreneurial path in life!