

AUTHENTIC

Allison DeVane

Delta Zeta - Arizona State

After returning to Arizona in 2015 from a brief move to NYC, Allison was searching for her purpose in life. A self-proclaimed professional barista, she found it by putting a unique spin on tea. Allison is recognized as a trendsetter in the beverage industry as the founder of Teaspresso, an innovative brand reimagining the tea drinking experience. From an appearance on "Shark Tank" to being selected as one of the inaugural Tory Burch Foundation's Business Fellows, this alumna is introducing the coffeehouse community to an entirely new way to consume their caffeine.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION IN CREATING TEAPRESSA?

I always loved coffee and, whenever I would visit a new place, I'd experience the local community through their coffee shops. My Korean mother served lots of tea at home, and while it is a large part of our culture, I hated tea! I wished it could be more like coffee. When I moved home and my dad



asked me, "If you could get paid to do anything, what would you do?" I thought, "well, make coffee of course." I spent months in the kitchen creating my vision of a tea inspired coffee. I then took to the streets, literally, and started Teaspresso from my bicycle tea cart in downtown Phoenix.

COMMUNITY IS A LARGE PART OF TEAPRESSA. CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE TYPE OF IMPACT YOU WANT TO MAKE AS A BUSINESS OWNER?

It is important that we are an innovative brand, not afraid to try new things. I want to empower people,

women especially, to know they can make a career out of being a barista. It is an experience that can take you anywhere. I enjoy pouring myself into other people to ensure their success. In addition to our 30 employees across three physical locations, Teaspresso has a growing wholesale business, which is digitizing the experience for the customer, making tea more than just a drink, but a part of life.

WHAT TO YOU ATTRIBUTE YOUR SUCCESS TO?

The "Shark Tank" experience validated what I was doing. I had only been in business a year when the episode aired. While some people would think not being selected was a failure, there was a lot of good that came from the experience. I turned that back around into my business to make it even better. I also love learning. I try to learn as much as possible to make my product even better.

IS THERE ANY ADVICE YOU WOULD SHARE WITH OTHER SISTERS WHO ARE PURSUING THEIR OWN PASSIONS?

Many female entrepreneurs are more cautious than their male counterparts. But I say don't be shy. Don't worry about what people think about you. Just go for it! 🍀

You can find out more about Allison and her Teaspresso journey at www.teaspresso.com.