



The Best Beverly Hills Building Is Not In Beverly Hills!

By Suzanne Takowsky

When business owners consider leasing office space, they usually want clean, updated facilities, a decent location and rent that doesn't break the bank. But most businesses don't have José Luis Nazar for a landlord. I didn't know what to expect when I met up with José for our interview at his newly remodeled office building on San Vicente Blvd., a block north of Wilshire and across the street from Beverly Hills proper. But what welcomed me looked like an art museum! The building is his dream come true, with glorious artwork, beautiful lines, views that reach to the Hollywood Hills sign, a screening room, expansive conference rooms, sensuously curved interior walls, and a resident manager, engineer and designer who keep the building picture perfect.

Powerhouse law firms, real estate companies, accountants, just about every business you can name refers to the building (www.640south.com) as *home-away-from-home*. And, my super spies tell me, big name entertainment com-

panies such as Wildfire Studios are also on the tenant roster. Maybe that's why A-listers such as Al Pacino, Cate Blanchett, Sylvester Stallone, and Mel Gibson have been seen strolling in the front door. José has not simply created a stimulating working environment for his tenants, he has created a spectacular building of endless imagery that brings out the creative genius in all of us, including curious sightseers who regularly stop to photograph the building, its interior design and the art—some which is displayed outside the entrance. When I asked José why he put so much effort and money into remodeling his building at a time when most landlords are pinching pennies, and why he so generously shares his beautiful art with the world, he said, "I don't like to look at the bottom line; that's no way to run a business. I'm not so interested in the numbers as I am in wanting to run a building that I am proud of."

Today, José has a life filled with all the fabulous things money can buy, but it's not how he spent his early years. Born in Chile, he worked as a budding entrepreneur as a teenager and, by age 17, started his first business, a dime store, with \$300. He was so young, his mother had to authorize his checking account. In 1972, José sold the business for his initial investment and emigrated to Miami, where his first night he slept in Biscayne Park because he didn't want to pay \$8 for a room at the Y. José sold English courses door-to-door to cover college tuition, and became a salesman at a small publishing house he owned within three years. He eventually moved the company, Lexicon, to LA and then, based on his humble beginnings, developed a self-taught, multimedia

English course, *Inglés sin Barreras* (English Without Barriers), that became an international bestseller. The rest is history.

These days José, a self-made millionaire and Single in the City kind of guy, enjoys a life most people only dream of. But that doesn't mean he has forgotten his roots. Giving back to the community, helping the less fortunate and running his foundation, HeavenCent, which supports the arts and helps children at risk, is a big part of his life. We love José, and that's why we decided to bestow on him our *Hottest Landlord With The Coolest Building Award*—because not only does he like the good life... he helps others enjoy a good life as well.



Photo Credit: Ali Khosravi Golden Color Photo

