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**SUZIE
MALERBE**
BORN FOR THIS

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» cover story

By Lindsey Wells
Photos by Nigel Etem

SUZIE MALERBE

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Suzie Malerbie with her husband, Adrian, and their daughter, Priscilla.

“ Your work is a reflection of yourself. What I put into it is what I get out of it.” —*Suzie Malerbe*

We've all heard that when two things are meant to be, they fit together like missing puzzle pieces. Two pieces that, when put together, produce something more significant than the sum of its parts. Such is the case with Suzie Malerbe and real estate. As a child growing up, Suzie's parents owned a home decorating and design business. "Since I was young, my brother and I would go and decorate homes for Christmas, or even just for everyday use. The customers would come to our store and ask if we were available, and that's what we did. I thought all kids did that, actually," Suzie says, laughing. She was born for this.

Before she got her real estate license 16 years ago, Suzie was buying and selling homes to flip. It wasn't long before her friends began asking her to help them too. In her first year as a licensed real estate professional, Suzie closed \$20 million in real estate transactions, with her first-ever sale being \$3.3 million. "It just took off from there and has grown every year," she says. Her sales tripled the following year, and grew steadily every year after that.

Now an agent with RE/MAX Select One, Suzie's client base is worldwide. Not only does she help sellers and buyers with their homes, but

Suzie is also a developer and designer herself. Her from-the-inside-out product knowledge has, no doubt, been a significant factor in her success as an agent. With that knowledge and Suzie's team of workers backing her, sellers choosing her as their agent have that added benefit when selling their homes. "A lot of times I will remodel their home for them upfront or just do small things, for example new floors, new paint, or new counters, and nine times out of 10, I'll front the money for them as an added bonus, and they pay me back through the sale of their home," she says. "I'm presenting their house in the best way possible. Sometimes clients may not have the means to accomplish this or know how to. That's when I step in and help them."



Suzie's passion for what she does shines through in every transaction — just ask her clients. At the time of this interview, Suzie had just shown one of her listings to a potential buyer and could hardly contain her excitement. "My buyer was showing his girlfriend the house for the first time, and he said to her, 'Oh, my gosh, I think Suzie is more excited than you!' The girlfriend started laughing, but I really think I was," Suzie says joyfully. "I was so excited to show her. I could not wait. I was bursting." To hear Suzie tell it, she lives and breathes real estate.

However, as big as her passion is for real estate, it doesn't hold a candle to how she feels about her family. Suzie and her husband, Adrian, have been married 25 blissful years. As

the interviewer, I was curious: how does one manage to keep a marriage going strong for that long? Suzie says, "We're that rare couple. It really is communication. I know that probably sounds cheesy, but you have to choose your battles, and you have to communicate. Nothing's ever perfect, of course, but I really appreciate him. I adore this man completely, and I feel that from him too." Adrian, a former bodybuilder, is licensed in real estate, too, and helps Suzie out with her business when she needs it.

The couple's one daughter, Priscilla, 27, is currently working with Suzie as her marketing manager until the pandemic is over and she can put her master's degree in psychology from Pepperdine University to good use.

When asked what her interests are outside of real estate, Suzie had to pause to think about it for a minute. "Real estate really is 24/7 for me. It never stops. Before the pandemic, my husband and I would travel at least every other month because I had a lot of clients overseas. In normal life, we would travel a lot. We actually joked about it this past year, and I said, 'Wow, look at all that money we saved from not traveling,' she says. "These days, I'm happy dedicating my time to my passion: real estate."

Needless to say, Suzie has landscaped a future of which she can be proud. For her, success is being grateful for everything that has been given to her and everything she's worked for. The numbers are just the icing on the cake.



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