

# Mosman Daily



## Mosman and Lower North Shore: Most Inspiring Women in Business Revealed

The north shore is packed with incredible businesswomen from those who work in beauty and fashion to tech gurus and media pioneers. **SEE WHO MAKES THE LIST**

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The north shore has plenty to shout about when it comes to women in business. From those working in beauty and fashion to tech gurus and media pioneers. To celebrate their achievements, the Mosman Daily has compiled a list of some of the region's most inspiring women in business.



## **REBECCA KNIGHTS**

Rebecca Knights is the creative director at Coco Chocolate and the Sydney Chocolate School.

As the chief chocolatier and creative director at Coco Chocolate and Sydney Chocolate School, Rebecca Knights has the job many of us would dream of.

“It certainly is a dream job and we’re lucky it’s been going for such a long time,” she said.

“One of the reasons I love the kitchen so much is because my children can come and they will be up a tree and it will be like the olden days.

“It’s the perfect thing.”

Ms Knights grew up in Sydney and learnt her craft at the exclusive Valrhona school in France, before launching her first Coco store in the UK in 2004.

In 2014, Ms Knights and her family returned home to Australia and now shares her passion with chocolate at the Coco Chocolate shop in Kirribilli and a chocolate kitchen in Middle Head.

Alongside making chocolate, the kitchen is also home to the Sydney Chocolate School which has seen more than 15,000 people learn the tricks of the trade over the last decade.

“It was hard going with COVID-19 because of social distancing, but the school is now back up and running and so many local residents are enjoying coming along – we’ve had people such as (singer) Adele take classes. She loved it.”

Ms Knights said the chocolate produced at the factory is made from single origin, ethically traded highest quality cocoa which is blended with spices, fruits and nuts.

While its labour intensive work, Ms Knights said it was a labour of love.

“When starting a business the hardest thing to do is putting the sign on the door in the first place but from there on out you’re too busy getting on with it,” she said.

“The joy of making a product has never waned and I still love it every day. Especially when you’re lucky enough to have your kitchen on the harbour foreshore.



## **ANNEKE VAN DEN BROEK**

Anneke van den Broek is the chief executive of global pet care brand Rufus & Coco.

Animal lover and award-winning business owner Anneke van den Broek had a strong business sense from a young age.

“My first entrepreneurial endeavour was to breed and sell mice at the age of seven to the pet shop up the road for 20c apiece,” she said.

Fast forward to today and the Mosman resident now runs hugely successful petcare business Rufus & Coco, which sells a range of pet health and beauty products to more than 4500 stores in nine countries around the world.

She founded the company while pregnant with her first child in 2008 and has since grown the business to become one of Australia’s most awarded pet care brands, selling everything from grooming, cleaning and vitamin products.

Ms Van den Broek, who spent 18 months researching and planning before launching the business from her spare room, said innovation and dedication were among the keys to success.

“Being an entrepreneur is full of razor blades and champagne moments so resilience and coming to terms with the ups and downs is essential,” she said.

“Passion will help drive you forward through the inevitable setbacks of small business.”



## **LIZ NABLE**

Liz Nable is the owner of Xtend Barre studios in Sydney.

Former TV news reporter Liz Nable hasn't looked back since trading breaking news for breaking fitness goals in 2012.

Ms Nable is the hugely successful owner of Xtend Barre which has worked with thousands of members at the company's studios in Mosman and the northern beaches over the last decade.

Ms Nable, who runs the business with her husband, said the company began as a "pie in the sky idea" while she was working long hours at Channel 9.

"At the time there were very few studios running barre workouts in Sydney – we started researching franchises and opened our first store in Mosman in 2012," she said.

"We have three kids so it can be a struggle balancing work and family life but the beauty of what we do is we're not in big corporate jobs stuck in the city until 8 o'clock at night.

"It's a juggle but we have fantastic staff and trainers and we make it work with planning in advance."

Ms Nable said the business has bounced back from a turbulent 2020 that included forced temporary closures and capacity caps of fitness centres.

She said the business has kept afloat by hosting online classes to retain customers and has now welcomed many of its dedicated members back into the studio.

"I think now more than ever it's a great time for local businesses – since the bushfires and COVID-19 people really are recognising the value of small and local businesses," she said.



## **SUE JENKINS**

Accoutrement owner Sue Jenkins.

Decades of dedication have made Sue Jenkins one of Mosman's most loved local residents and small business owners.

For 38 years, Ms Jenkins has been at the helm of Accoutrement – the kitchenware, gourmet food store and homewares supplier that has been part of the fabric of the Mosman town centre since 1970.

“I was always interested in cooking – my mother was a terrific cook, there were eight of us in the family, so there was always food around at home and I knew it was what I wanted to do,” she said.

“There aren't too many shops that have been going in Mosman for 50 years and one of the reasons we've lasted the test of time is developing loyalties with customers and looking after them the best we can.”

Ms Jenkins said the last 12 months had been challenging for the store due to difficulties in sourcing stock and the closure of the store's popular cooking classes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But the business shows no sign of slowing down with the shop currently undergoing major renovation works ahead of the store's official 50th anniversary celebrations later this year.

“What's been interesting over the last 12 months is how many people have reignited their interest and passion for cooking – I don't think I've ever sold as many pans and cook books as I have in the last year,” she said.

“It's always really wonderful to hear feedback from customers. That's the reward you get – when people want to come to the shop and get your advice.”



## **TAMARA KENIRY**

Tamara Keniry is the founder of PureFree.

As awareness rises about the impacts of wasteful plastics in food packaging, reusable water bottles have become a hot commodity for shoppers looking for sustainable solutions.

Tamara Keniry launched her company PureFree in 2015 and over the last six years has sold reusable glass bottles to thousands customers and businesses across Australia.

“The idea grew from my love for the environment and concern at the increasing amount of rubbish, particularly plastics,” she previously told The Mosman Daily.

“I wanted to create a water bottle that was beautiful to use, something that people could take with them every day to contribute positively to the future of the planet, while actually getting a better experience for themselves.”

The success of the company has included supplying bottles to corporations including National Australia Bank

Ms Keniry has also recently taken the reins as the president of the Mosman Chamber of Commerce.



## **NIKKI HOLLOWAY**

Nikki Holloway, pictured at her shoe shop The Nowhere Nation.

A self described “diehard shoe lover” from a young age, Nikki Holloway now shares her passion with residents on the lower north shore.

Ms Holloway is the brains behind The Nowhere Nation in Mosman which since opening in 2018 had built a strong and devoted customer base.

“I’ve always been a shoe lover – even from a young age – and working in Mosman where a lot of women love the style element of shoes was a big draw for me – they want to talk about what they’re wearing and finding the pieces to go with it.”

Ms Holloway said 2020 had been a “rollercoaster” year for the business but was bouncing back thanks to the support from local residents.

“We’ve had some our best months ever and some our worst ever – it’s been tricky but we’re keeping on going. There are lots of positives.”

Ms Holloway said her advice to other women looking to make their mark in the business world was to follow their passions

“I was quite naive going into and I think that helped me in some ways – that optimism can really push you forward.

“Diving in headfirst is the way to go.”