



# The ART of celebration





## 3 FEMALE-OWNED BUSINESSES CREATIVELY ELEVATE SPECIAL OCCASIONS

**With so much** uncertainty going on in the world, there is a lot to be said about commemorating happy moments — and the Vail Valley knows how to celebrate. Three locally owned and operated businesses — My Balloon Obsession, The Grazing Fox and Fancy Pansy — have become integral in thoughtfully ensuring occasions are more joyful, vibrant and memorable through their innovative art.

Although their disciplines differ, these businesses share common ground: all are female-owned, born from side gigs and rooted in colorful creativity. Each founder elevates events by making people feel special, prioritizes artistry in their craft and delivers curated, customized experiences for every client.

BY LAURA LIEFF

PHOTO BY 11 ELEVEN CREATIVES





## The Grazing Fox

**After over 20 years** in the restaurant industry, Pamela Davis was ready for something different. The longtime local has a passion for authentic hospitality, and an impressive history that includes helping to conceptualize and open Bol (which is still in Vail) and Yellowbelly (which used to be in West Vail). Davis handled many behind-the-scenes, day-to-day operations until she got pregnant and stepped back from hospitality.

During that time, she was known among their friend group for hosting annual cheese parties for which she made lavish charcuterie boards that prompted her guests to ask why she wasn't turning those boards into a business. Finally, an event industry friend convinced her to do it and The Grazing Fox was born. "It started small and then, in 2020, I got my commercial kitchen and the floodgates opened," Davis remembers. "It was all word-of-mouth and the universe just sent it."

Next thing she knew, The Grazing Fox was handling high-end amenities for the Four Seasons Resort and Residences Vail and receiving calls for corporate events, weddings, rafting trips and private soirées. Davis says that after COVID-19, people were excited to gather and share food and experiences which is what The Grazing Fox is about — bringing groups together around artistic, thoughtfully-designed grazing boards and tables. "We take pride in sourcing the finest ingredients and ensuring that every board and table is a masterpiece of flavor, texture and design," adds Davis.

She describes assembling her creations as "collaborative pieces of art" because multiple people are involved and a lot of thought goes into the details of each board and table. Once completed, it usually takes at least two people to carry and transport these creations to their destinations. "I love my job because I get to be an artist every day, work with food and make people's vacations better," Davis explains. "It's so cool to create something with intention knowing that it will bring joy. People are happy to see us and it's an honor to be included in their special occasions." +



**For more information, visit**  
**[thegrazingfox.com](http://thegrazingfox.com)**



## My Balloon Obsession

**Founded in 2017**, My Balloon Obsession was conceived by LeeAnna Salazar — a graphic designer who grew up in Eagle County and inherited the family party store called Party Central. After graduating from the Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, she managed the graphic design for several national and local organizations while also helping her mother at Party Central. After her mom passed away, Salazar closed the shop but was still fielding calls about balloons. “The balloon industry experienced a renaissance during COVID,” Salazar explains. “I received so many calls around that time that my hobby turned into a full-on business.” She also credits social media for the recent balloon boom. “People used to think balloons were cheesy or just for kids but that has changed,” she adds.

These days, My Balloon Obsession is the premier company for hotels, restaurants and private clients looking to celebrate in style. Locals and visitors call Salazar to construct a wide array of intricate balloon arrangements for celebrations like birthdays, weddings and graduations because her artistic creations make events more extraordinary. “Balloons have made their mark as a symbol of joy,” says Salazar, but there is more to them than just bright colors and helium.

She explains that designing and assembling balloons starts with basic techniques but also requires attention to detail, dealing with fluctuating helium prices and understanding the science. For example, she takes into account weather elements, temperature shifts and the effects of altitude. “My shop is located at one elevation, but when I drive to higher altitudes within the Valley, I keep in mind that balloons expand,” she explains. “In the beginning I learned the hard way about balloons popping in transit, but now I always consider the elements, look at the weather and have tools with me in case I need to pivot.”

Pivoting aside, Salazar is glad to be in a cheerful line of work. “People’s eyes light up when they see me because they know the party has arrived,” she adds. “Balloons are a visual representation of happiness for both adults and kids. Sometimes I can’t believe I get to do this for a living.” +



**For more information, visit**  
**[myballoonobsession.com](http://myballoonobsession.com)**



Photo by  
Frankie Sheridan



**For more information, visit  
[fancy-pansy.com](http://fancy-pansy.com)**

and sad) and those milestones matter.” Throughout the year, Fancy Pansy creates arrangements using fresh, seasonal flowers that are carefully tailored to each event, restaurant, holiday and person. She adds, “Flowers bring the outdoors inside with a cozy, special feel. When people walk into a place and see flowers — whether it’s a restaurant or an event — they know it’s an important occasion.”

When asked about the artistry of floral arrangements, Sheridan says the ability to look at clients’ inspiration photos and know exactly what they need and how to execute it comes with experience. But that’s not the only aspect that sets Fancy Pansy apart — “it’s also about how we treat people,” she says. “My staff cares as much as I do and we all take the time to pay attention to details, provide helpful suggestions and work with clients to meet their vision.”

### **SHARED PASSION FOR JOYFUL OCCASIONS**

Because Salazar, Davis and Sheridan are deeply rooted in the Vail Valley community, and are in the business of artistically enriching events, they often cross paths which they all enjoy. People are always excited to see balloons, food and flowers — especially when they are presented in such imaginative ways — which is why clients prioritize having them at their most significant occasions.

Clearly the artistry, expertise and time behind these creations is important and the innovative efforts of these three women — like the occasions they elevate — are absolutely worth celebrating. +

## **Fancy Pansy**

**Flowers have always** been part of Frankie Sheridan’s life because her mother was constantly doing something beautiful with them. But it wasn’t until Sheridan’s Vail Resorts development job was eliminated that she decided it was time for a new career. As she contemplated opening her own flower shop, she researched existing locations, took a six-week flower arranging class and worked part-time in the City Market floral department for a year. After all of that, she decided to venture out on her own.

In 2017, Fancy Pansy opened in Avon. “Flowers aren’t just about design — they are about helping people feel seen, celebrated and connected,” Sheridan explains. “We are involved in the most intimate moments of people’s lives (both happy

Photo by  
Christy Buster

