



Carla Blandon
Blandsi Boutique and Essence Beauty Supply
Pismo Beach, CA

Carla Blandon is the sole proprietor of Blandsi Boutique and Essence Beauty in Pismo Beach, California.

Raised in Nicaragua and Costa Rica by parents who were business owners, Carla believes entrepreneurship is in her blood. Originally, her idea was to start a travel agency, but her inspirations changed as she learned more about entrepreneurship and how to create a business that would fit her style, creativity, and love of fashion.

Shortly after moving to California, Carla found Mission Community Services Corporation and the Women's Business Center. Carla took the 11-week Empezando course to learn the steps to starting her own business. She attended training sessions that offered her everything from customer service, to accounting, to team-building, and networking. While working in the banking industry, Carla began working for MCSC as a consultant and instructor in evenings and weekends, helping other Hispanic individuals with their entrepreneurship dreams.

"After learning so much, and helping other people start their businesses through MCSC, I realized that I had all of the knowledge and experience I needed to follow my own dream of opening a beauty salon and then a boutique." Since opening her doors Carla has built up a loyal base of customers that appreciate her unique, creative style.

Carla loves interacting with her customers and helping them find what they need. Her passion for the dedication of fellow small business owners inspires her to keep products from local businesses in her store. "I know what it takes to plan, create, and start a new endeavor. Whether you're selling a product or running a retail business, having local support can make all the difference!" She sells everything that a "girl needs," beauty products, clothes, purses and scarves. In addition, her two stores sell candles, essential oil spray, jewelry, and accessories made by local artisans.

"Looking back," Carla says, "I don't think I would have done anything differently. It took me many years to find the business that represents who I am and what I want to convey to others, and I couldn't be prouder of what I have achieved!" With the help of MCSC Women's Business Center Carla opened two stores, has five employees and all with an initial investment under \$100,000.

To give back and continue to help others, Carla now again teaches the Empezando class at MCSC. Reaching out to the Spanish-speaking community helps her to stay connected and continue her own process of learning and growing. "I have found it helpful to surround myself with people who understand my vision. It can be hard to stay positive when you are focusing on your income, your products, and your clients, so having a strong support system is important!"



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