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VIEW FROM THE TOP

It's like having Christmas every day," says Clarissa Edelen, owner of Fabulous Finds Upscale Consignment store in Longmont. I found the store to be fun and enjoyable. Time seems to slow down when you are strolling through the racks of unique clothes and home décor.

A lot of men and women are trying to save their money, as well as the environment. Going to Fabulous Finds Upscale Consignment is the perfect way to make sure you save money on clothing, jewelry, furniture, and more. A lot of people these days are reading books about the simplification of life, says Clarissa, buying and consigning previously owned furniture or clothing is a great way to make sure your life stays simple and that furniture doesn't end up in a land fill.

Opening in April of 2011, the shop used up its first-month projected budget after only three days. Within two months, the shop grew to add more home décor items, and expanded to over 2000 square feet. "There was a vision merging the clothing and home décor from the start we knew it would work," Jill says.

The second expansion led to a store that was horseshoe-shaped with an acupuncture/massage studio in the middle. That worked out for a short time, until that business found a new space just a few doors down. This allowed Fabulous Finds to expand for a third time. The store now boasts more than 5000 square feet of space, and is looking to add more space in the near future.

In the beginning, it was just the two women working non-stop 16 hours a day, they say. They are now up to 13 employees. Clarissa says their business has grown really fast, and they want to thank all of their customers and consigners for sharing in the process of finding new homes for the wide variety of merchandise found at Fabulous Finds.

Clarissa says they have consignors from all over the country—from as far away as Arizona, Florida, Massachusetts, California, and North Carolina. "These are friends and family," Jill says. "But also, we have customers who've moved away but continue to consign with us." Clarissa goes on to say that their store has answered a call within the community. "We advocate 'reduce, reuse, and recycle,' and refuse to pay retail," she says with a big smile on her face. "We've had people come in and say, 'You're our new destination store.'"

While the finds are what bring customers in the door, it is the atmosphere that keeps them coming back time and time again, Jill points out. She likes to say that once inside, the atmosphere is more like the famous watering hole Cheers than a consignment shop. Customers are known by their names, and there is always enthusiasm for finding the perfect item for each and every customer, she adds.

Because the store sells so many items on any given day, there is always something new at Fabulous Finds. This brings customers back again just to see what has been added since their last visit. Clarissa's excitement about sharing her finds is seen in the way the

store is appointed. I think the store has an upscale couture feel to it.

Savvy shoppers are embracing the upscale resale concept, Jill mentions. "People understand the smartness of resale, whether they're looking for a bargain or want to make a little money on things they're ready to sell. Every day is different, and the need to make the day spectacular is why Fabulous Finds has become so popular. Whether it's a special event, new job, dinner party, or just because, the perfect outfit, accessory, or décor item can be found at Fabulous Finds."

Fabulous Finds makes the process easy. Clothing is accepted during specified hours each day. Items of a seasonal nature are accepted during certain months, and all clothing needs to come to the store clean and ready to be sold. Consignors can wait during the process, or for those on a tight schedule, drop-off is available. For furniture and other large décor items, it is recommended that pictures be sent in advance. Once items are accepted, Fabulous Finds does the rest.

FABULOUS FINDS UPSCALE CONSIGNMENT

By Jennifer Brown



The Fabulous Ladies of Fabulous Finds

Not satisfied with having just an average upscale retail store, Clarissa sharpened her knowledge by attending business development seminars. She says that she is ready to offer her insight and experience to other entrepreneurs. Awarded the Rookie Small Business of the Year award by the Longmont Chamber of Commerce, the community already has seen what dedication, vision, and hard work can do, she says.

When asked what advice she might offer to other women-owned businesses, Clarissa offers a few straightforward suggestions, including: 1. Spend time in the industry you choose. 2. Use the small business development center in your area. 3. Have a business plan and follow it. 4. Have a social media plan. 5. Create a sound marketing plan.

When asked what has had the greatest impact on the business, Clarissa explains that social media has had a huge impact. "And the word of mouth would be the envy of any retailer because people rave about it."

Community giving is another area that sets this store apart from other consignment shops, she says. Many local community groups have taken advantage of their generous capacity to host events as fundraisers. By donating a portion of the events' proceeds, these groups not only have an opportunity to hold an outstanding event in a spectacular setting, but they are able to fundraise as well, Jill notes. In addition, each week, Fabulous Finds donates unsold clothes to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota.

With the holidays fast approaching, there is always something new at Fabulous Finds. Whether you are looking for bebe, Banana Republic, Chicos, Coach, Prada, Tiffany, or St. John and everything in between, there is a great chance that you will find it at Fabulous Finds.

Fabulous Finds Upscale Consignment store is a Longmont, Colorado-based company located at 600 S. Airport Road, #AA. Call 720-340-4152. You can also visit the website at www.fabulousfindsconsign.com or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fabulousfindsco for more information.

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