



## My Sister's Closet

BY PAULETTE BRITTON



**WHAT'S IN A NAME?** How about truth in advertising! My Sister's Closet, an upscale designer resale boutique with locations in Arizona and California really is owned by 2 sisters – meet Ann and Jenny Siner.

My Sister's Closet was the first upscale consignment store in Arizona. "I had a dream job," states Ann. "I was the Director of Marketing at Petsmart, stock options, great package, the whole deal."

She was in Texas and dropped in to a store and came out with a pile of nice clothes for almost nothing. "I don't know if I'm lucky or stupid, but I gave up that great job with the idea to start a business in the Phoenix area, that was an unproven and untested concept."

Jenny had just graduated from college about that time in Colorado. "I kind of fell into the business naturally. It seemed like the obvious thing to do. I always enjoyed retail, I love clothes, fashion and layout merchandising. And I needed a job."

Ann and Jenny make a great team. Ann is the self-proclaimed business nerd, thriving on spreadsheets and analysis. Jenny is artsy and creative and spends a lot of time thinking about the layouts of the stores."

"We don't do dark and dingy," said Jenny.

These sisters set out to change the face of re-sale. They wanted to remove the stigma and make it acceptable. Now it's different, everyone cross-shops. Women who shop at Saks also go to Target, the Rack and re-sale shops, like My Sister's Closet.

"Women often come in to sell their things but also take a look around, and then they are hooked! That's how we have built our brand, one woman at a time. Our customers are awesome and they are so loyal and share our store by telling their friends," comments Jenny. "They get excited when they find something new, but it's also a place to sell. We provide a great service and another way to shop."

Ann remembers those early years, where location was so important. "We needed a clever business plan and a great location, so we opened our first store next to the Biltmore. Now we have 15 stores in Arizona."

And then the sisters mustered up more courage to expand. Was Arizona an anomaly or would the model work in other cities as well? "We traveled to Los Angeles a lot for shopping and dinner of course. There were so many individual stores to go to. What we did was bring all the treasures of the valley into our San Diego and Encinitas stores. 1000's of designer labels in one store," said Jenny.

The sisters have some definitive ideas about the customer experience in their stores.

**Jenny:** We want to offer great products at a great price and a great shopping experience. We want people to go home and feel good about where they have spent their time.

**Ann:** We want to be fair and honest to customers and consigners, offering a service to sell the things you know longer have



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use for, and creating a great shopping experience for our customers.

**Jenny:** We love our employees. We want the right people in the right roles. That being said, we always want our employees to make sure the customers are greeted and well attended to in the stores.

**Ann:** We want ease of shopping and convenience, which is why we are open 7 days a week for convenience. We pay our consignors right on the spot. A high percentage of our consignors keep a store credit and use it for their own shopping needs.

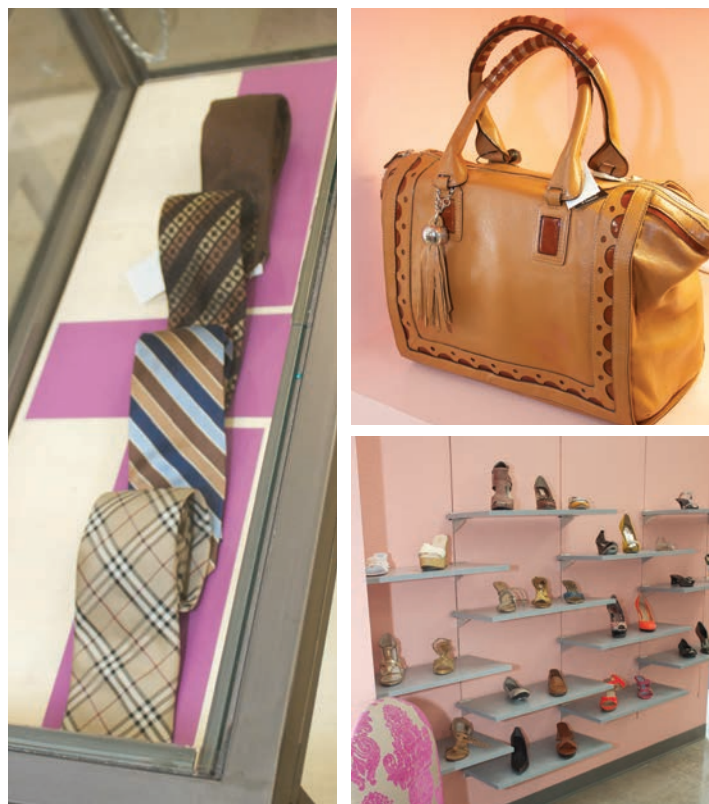
Both sisters agree: Everyone wants a quality product at a huge savings and people love to clear out their closets. There has not been a lot of options for high end shoppers. That's what we do really well.

Ann and Jenny have obviously found that with a little tweaking, the business model has over-laid nicely onto the California landscape. But wait, there's more!

Now men have some options as well with Well Suited – the male consignment counterpart to My Sister's Closet. And they have also expanded several Arizona locations to include My Sister's Attic – you guessed it, a place to consign designer furniture.

Ann and Jenny opened their doors in 1991 and are making plans for their 25th year in business, which is just around the corner. Keep your eyes open for upcoming announcements.

Whether you are buying or selling, check out My Sister's Closet and Well Suited, right on the fringe of the Rancho Santa Fe Encinitas border at 146 N El Camino Real, or call 760-436-3600 for more information.



*This Business Spotlight is provided to the residents of Rancho Santa Fe, introducing My Sister's Closet as a sponsor of the Rancho Santa Fe Connector for this month. Please visit their website at mysisterscloset.com.*



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## Port Wine, The Ultimate Gentleman's Drink

BY NICK GUY



Complex, refined, and smooth; these are all adjectives we can use to describe both our Fathers and Port Wine. Ranging from sweet to dry, red to white, there is a Port out there for every Dad! But selecting the correct Port for your dad can be a challenge, if you are not informed on the topic.

Port wine is a fortified wine made in Portugal. Fortified wine means that when the wine develops to the winemaker's intent, a neutral grape spirit, known as Aguardiente, is added to stop fermentation. This results in a sweeter wine with higher alcohol content. There are a variety of different types of Port, but most of them fall into two categories: Ruby and Tawny.

Ruby Port has a lighter body and sweet, fruitier taste because it is aged less than any other port, which also means it has a lesser price tag. Kopke Fine Ruby Porto, for instance, has pronounced flavors of cherries and plums, a real crowd pleaser. All Ports labeled Tawny must be aged at least two years in wood, resulting in a drier wine with complex flavors of caramel, figs and almonds. Both are great after dinner, paired with chocolate or a fine cigar. Taylor Fladgate 10 Year Tawny Port is a nice place to start for someone unfamiliar with Tawny Ports.

Unlike that of the regular wine varieties that need to be consumed quickly after opening, Ports can last for months, allowing your Father to enjoy his gift for more than one day. Port can also be aged for a lengthy amount of time. Consider this great idea: gift a Port wine to a new father to be opened on his child's 21st birthday! What a great tradition and a great way to celebrate, -telling stories over a glass of finely aged Port!

This Father's Day opt for a Port wine instead of whiskey or the last minute drug store gift, your Dad will thank you for it. (By the way, did you catch why the wine is called Port? Port wine is a Portuguese fortified wine produced exclusively in the **Douro Valley** in the northern provinces of Portugal.)

*Contributed by Holiday Wine Cellar. [www.HolidayWineCellar.com](http://www.HolidayWineCellar.com), or visit the landmark store at 302 W Mission Ave. Escondido, CA 92025.*