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High-Fashion Shopping — From Home

BY ANN MIZEL

If you're a woman who hates to shop or simply doesn't have the time, in-home trunk shows by Tiburon's Adriene Coffey might be for you. Coffey makes the contemporary, New York-designed women's fashion line Etcetera available to her clients during personalized, one-on-one appointments six times a year.

"Our clothes are really user-friendly," Coffey said one recent morning, sporting a stylish summer shift. "It's all I wear, except at Little League games. Etcetera makes the 'designer look' affordable, and the clothes are built to last."

To help her clients build their wardrobes, Coffey keeps files on their purchases, complete with fabric swatches. "Our premise at Etcetera is mix-and-match, as opposed to buying a piece here and there and ending up with nothing that goes together," she said. "The idea is to be efficient in the way you shop and spend your money. When you have five to seven Etcetera pieces, you'll actually have 12 to 14 different outfits."

Coffey's clients — she has a database of 1,000 — runs the gamut from stay-at-home moms to professional women who come to her shows from all over the Bay Area.

Coffey depends on her associate, Judy Domenici of Larkspur. "She's my gal Friday. Judy has lots of local clients of her own who depend on her for closet organization and personal shopping, and we refer back and forth," Coffey said. "Etcetera doesn't carry accessories other than belts and scarves, and Judy is great at helping our clients complete an outfit with shoes, bags, jewelry, etc."

Each of her trunk shows lasts about 12 days. Etcetera shipments arrive just the day before a show, but Coffey has her routine down to a science. The clothes are unboxed, steamed and hung on two huge racks in Coffey's garage (no room in this garage for the family's cars). Most of the living room and dining room furniture is moved out and makeshift "dressing rooms" — thanks to screens from Pier One — are set up.

And Coffey's shows always go on — "no matter what," laughed the south Texas native. "When I just started with Etcetera 10 years ago, we had a terrible storm, and power went out. So we had a show by flashlight. I'm a 'never say no, hold my nose and jump in with two feet' kind of person."

Coffey and Etcetera seem a perfect fit. "My work is very rewarding, and I meet the most amazing people. My hours are flexible, and as a part-time job, I'm able to work out of my home and have more time for my family." Coffey was the first Etcetera consultant hired on the West Coast, and is one of only 20 consultants on the company's advisory board.

Before Coffey's marriage to San Francisco attorney Sam Coffey, she worked in sales, marketing, event planning and recruiting. She manages to find time to interact all over Marin — at Marin General Hospital as a "Raccoon" volunteer, with the National Charity League, Adopt A Family of Marin, Ross Valley Women's League and the PTA. Coffey formerly served on the board of the Foundation for Reed Schools.

The Coffeys' two children, Caroline, 13, and William, 12, both attend Del Mar Middle School.



Adriene Coffey displays a red dress and carries all manner of high-fashion designs for affordable prices with her private trunk shows of fine apparel in her Tiburon home. Photo: Jocelyn Knight