

# This Legendary Designer is an Iconic Figure of the Woman's Modern Renaissance



Steve D Sims

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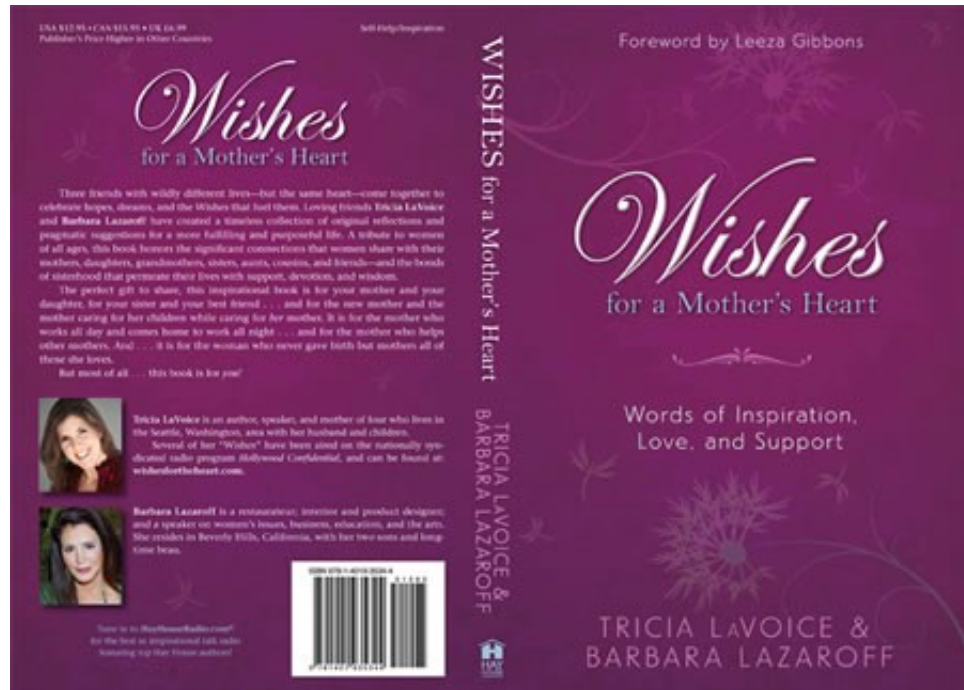


Everyone knows about Wolfgang Puck's luxurious global *Spago* restaurants, but some don't know that the talented designer behind them is none other than the chef's ex-partner, Barbara Lazaroff, also known affectionately as the Queen of Beverly Hills. And she's done more for the restaurant industry than you may think. Barbara Ellen Lazaroff is a designer and restaurateur whose best design work is part of Wolfgang Puck's chain of worldwide flagship restaurants, and she also transformed the traditional style of the American restaurant and kitchen.

Lazaroff was born in the Bronx. She's spoken fondly about her childhood in New York, but is candid about the real struggle in her upbringing. Both of her parents were working class, and her father went through many jobs while her mother struggled to raise three children while working. This likely was a driving factor behind her ambitiousness and the risk she took in working to get Puck on television and subsequently launching the restaurant chain. She met Puck at 25 and married him in 1983 before they set off on the quest to create the unique and world-renowned Wolfgang Puck brand.

Another major accomplishment of Lazaroff's is the exhibition kitchen in American. This style of kitchen in which there is little division between restaurant patrons and chefs can be credited to her. Lazaroff launched the concept, which is now a widely popular style across the country for restaurants. Other design

projects from Lazaroff include Chinois on Main, Trattoria del Lupo, Postrio Bar, and Grill and Granita.



In addition to her iconic restaurant and design work, Lazaroff also has film credits. She served as a producer and writer for the 2013 documentary, *Femme*, which featured a hundred different interviews with prominent successful women from around the globe. Lazaroff also co-authored a book titled *Wishes for a Mother's Heart*, with author Tricia LaVoice. Lazaroff was also featured in *RenWomen: What Modern Renaissance Women Have to Teach Us About Living Rich Fulfilling Lives*, a book written by authors Dale Griffiths Stamos and W. Scott Griffiths. She also has a dinnerware line called the Flame of Life in which some of the proceeds are used to support her philanthropic efforts.

Lazaroff has talked extensively about the modern struggle to open a new restaurant with an attention-grabbing brand. In a recent podcast with Steve Sims, Lazaroff said, *“You have to be creative sometimes. So these people, sometimes young people say, ‘I’m going to open a restaurant’ and they fail! And you know the old statistics, 99% of all new restaurants fail within the first year. It’s one of the toughest businesses, there are so many moving parts. It isn’t just the great food. You want a nice ambiance. Obviously, if you have an exquisite ambiance and the food is horrible, people will say, ‘Let’s go look at this great-looking restaurant. But let’s go eat over there.’ And that dumpy looking place with the food is amazing! Or they’ll say, ‘Let’s go have a drink at the great looking restaurant.’ But you know, granted you, if you open a great, great, great looking bar with some simple snacks, you might do very well. But it’s true. It’s very difficult. So I think all the elements matter, as you will know, as a world traveler, you go into a restaurant, you certainly want nice service.”*

With so many innovations in the design, art, and cuisine industries attributed to Lazaroff, it’s no secret that she is a rags-to-riches icon when it comes to the conversation about powerful women striving for success.

To hear more from Barbara Lazaroff

Website: [Barbara Lazaroff — Exuberant Living](#)

Books: [Wishes For a Mother’s Heart](#)

To listen to this podcast: [Barbara Lazaroff — Queen of Beverly Hills](#)

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