

MIAMI LIVING



IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

From Vince Chase's driver to the *Think Like A Man* franchise, four thriving sandwich shops, and now the summer's most anticipated film, *Entourage* – **JERRY FERRARA** is riding high

EXCLUSIVES WITH

ANDREA NAVEDO
ANGIE MARTINEZ
CARA SANTANA
OMARI HARDWICK
RACHEL ROY
SERINDA SWAN
THOMAZ BELLUCCI
ZOE TORRES

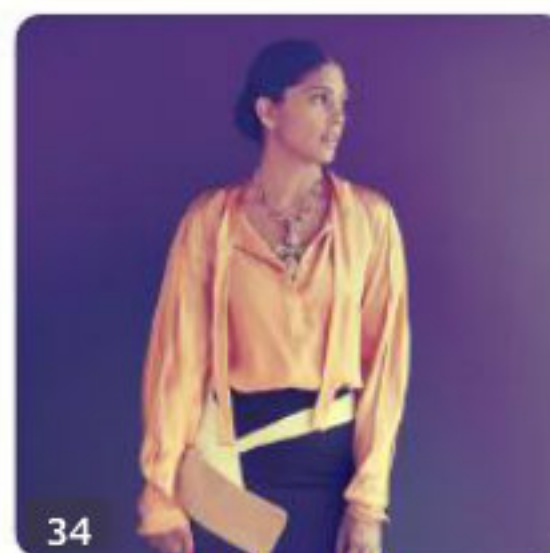
TRAVEL

STAY AT THE HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL
EXPLORE THE KENNEDY SPACE CENTER
DRINK UP AT LIQUID

PLUS

REAL ESTATE, FASHION, RESTAURANTS & MORE

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Introducing LIQUID Pool - Bar - Lounge

Uncharted Territory

Cara Santana takes the plunge into the app world, script writing, and her Native American character, Sooleawa

Words by Vanessa Pascale • Photo Credit: Ian Maddox



It's a Friday evening, the "happy hour" time slot, and The Lobby Lounge & Garden inside The Ludlow New York City hotel is buzzing with music and chatter. "Is it quiet enough in here?" Cara Santana asks. I assure her that my iPhone should pick up our conversation despite the din. Fortunately, it did. The diminutive brunette beauty, cloaked in a beautiful cream coat, dark top and skinny jeans, is in town to launch The Glam App in New York, and to do press for her television show, *Salem*.

Within the first few minutes of our conversation, I feel an immediate kinship with the sprightly actress. Maybe it's because the 31-year-old is an Aries, a sign very compatible with Aquarians (which I am), but more likely because we share a few commonalities: an affinity and ability to quote every line from *Friends*, choosing "passionate" as the one word to describe herself and that her Friday night lineup includes *Shark Tank* and *20/20*. I must add that tonight, we are both eager to be in front of the television at 9 p.m. to catch the Sawyer / Jenner special. A total girl's girl and woman's advocate, her warm personality and perma-smile will have you girlcrushing on her and thinking, *I really liked her*, minutes after her departure.

The CEO/co-founder of The Glam App created an app that is bringing the "every woman" a "luxury, affordable, convenient beauty experience." This idea was born while Cara was getting ready for an *InStyle* party. Since she wasn't being paid to attend, she was on her own, which meant "glam" (a \$2,500 team of hair/makeup people) was not being provided to her. Not wanting to pay the high price tag, she considered her options. Sitting at a makeup counter was so out of the question. She thought there must be freelance hair/makeup people dying for experience and exposure. "And I was like Uber! What about Uber for hair, makeup, and nails? How do I make this work?" She enlisted the help of makeup artist to the stars and good friend of hers, Joey Maalouf, to figure out how this could be beneficial for beauty professionals and women. "He was like we need to create a virtual agency. So in doing so, we allow these freelance hair/makeup artists, in all levels, to have this virtual agency that connects them to consumers."

Talk about the app began last fall, and by early February of this year Cara and Joey launched the first app in Los Angeles. Then came Orange County in early April, and NYC in late April. "We've got two cities a month for the next 6 months. By the end of the year, I want to be in 30 cities and hopefully keep growing and go international. Miami is July 22," Cara says enthusiastically. The Glam App beauty professionals are all licensed, handpicked from beauty schools, salons and local agencies, and undergo a background check. "We just want to provide stylists with extra connectivity into the community, 'cause I'm sure there are women dying to have this experience and don't know that they can... When women look good, they feel good. And when they feel good, they're empowered and I wanted to bring that to women."

The press reception for The Glam App has been very positive, and has included coverage by *InStyle* and *Vogue*. Moreover, it has garnered a celebrity following of Julianne Hough, Nina Dobrev, Gigi Hadid, Cara tells me. "But really, the women I really want to target is the every woman. I think about my mom, who's a corporate attorney; my brother's girlfriend, who's in school —those are the women. I really want them to be able to have this luxury, beauty experience at an affordable rate." The Glam App has been used to bring women in the hospital an uplifting beauty experience, and beautification to ladies who have events like prom, homecoming, even weddings to attend. "Our highest service is a \$100. We run the gamut and spectrum on price and experience." Like Uber, you can't choose a specific person, you order the service, set a date and time, and voilà, beauty professional to the rescue, coming your way.

Cara has always been interested in the idea of transformation and creativity. As a child, her parents enrolled her in theater art camp. "I loved delving into another person, creating someone that wasn't me. I don't know if that means I'm schizophrenic or something," she laughs. She convinced her parents at 15-years-old to let her attend a boarding school in Los Angeles for the performing arts. She made the move and as soon as she graduated, she began auditioning for acting roles. "It's by the far the biggest passion in my life." Cara is currently playing Sooleawa in WGN's *Salem*, which is in its second season. "*Salem* has been such a dream," she says with a big smile, "I mean as an actress, getting to do a role that is so unlike you—I play a 16th century Indian shaman daughter. I don't speak any English and I'm not fluent in Algonquian, so I had to learn it. And I'm not Native American, so I really got to delve into the culture 'cause I wanted it to be as authentic as possible, out of respect."

Fashion Staples of a Fashionista

"A leather jacket, —'cause it goes over everything, it goes over a ball gown and over jeans— a good pair of jeans, (her favorites are J Brand and 7 For All Mankind) a nice pair of flats, a good tee (T by Alexander Wang). When in doubt, basics! And you will look chic."

What would fans be surprised to find out about you?

"That I'm funny. People are like, 'You're so serious.' I think when it comes to my work or it comes to my business I do take it very seriously, but I like to have fun. I'm really funny, I think. I have to admit I love reality TV, which is shameful 'cause I'm an actor... I love *Shark Tank*, *Intervention*. I'm not afraid of some *Teen Mom*," she laughs, "I am so invested. My friends are like, 'You watch that?' It's a guilty pleasure."

A role that Cara is really interested in playing is one that's dark, and set in a true story- biopic type, like the character Maggie Gyllenhaal (her favorite actress) plays in *Sherrybaby* (her favorite movie), which is about a single mom from a broken home battling addiction and trying to conquer her demons. She recently finished filming the movie *Smartass*. "It dealt with alternative lifestyle and drugs and alcohol and took a turn into a realistic, like non-fantastical, which *Salem* is very fantastical, very realistic movie. That was fun, but I haven't really had the opportunity to do the movie I want to do. But my career is still young, so hopefully I will."

Unafraid of taking steps into the unknown and trying new things, Cara is currently working on her passion project. "I'm 11 years sober, so I am writing a script about addiction and sobriety and that's something I'm super passionate about. I've never written anything so it's super new to me. It makes me so nervous 'cause it's not anything I've done, but I feel like I have a story to tell." She aspires to produce this piece in 2016. In addition to being an entrepreneur, an actress, and new screenwriter, Cara is also a fashion blogger.

She created CaraDisclothed.com to start a conversation about fashion and, like The Glam App was created to do, bridge the gap between the *Vogue* employee and 15-year-old —ultimately dissolve the idea that looking good has to be expensive. "Along with sort of the idea of transformation, the first aspect of transforming

yourself, whether it's for a character or on the day-to-day, is your appearance, so I've always been intrigued by fashion. It's the way you communicate to the people around you, who you are in the moment in time, or what you're about and I think that's so powerful. My blog is really about why I'm wearing what I'm wearing, how it makes me feel, where I got it. Here's the \$20 item and here's the \$2,000 item. Here's everything in between! You can look good no matter how much you're spending."

You have your hand in a bit of everything, I tell her. "I know. I never sleep. My boyfriend [Jesse Metcalfe] gets so irritated because we'll be in bed at midnight and I'm on my phone and he's like, 'Who? What? What are you doing?' And I'm like, 'I have an idea, or an email and if I don't get it out of my mind, I won't be able to sleep.'" While on the subject of her boyfriend, I had to get the scoop from "Jesse's girl" (as listed on her



Twitter). "I couldn't resist the pun," she giggles about the label. The two met 11 years ago, when her roommate, at the time, had a guest spot on *Desperate Housewives*, which Jesse was staring in. They briefly dated casually, stayed friendly over the years, and then when they were both single, they gave it another go. Who made the move to transition it from friendship to relationship? I ask. "I think he would tell you he was waiting till when he was ready to have a serious relationship... I'm not one for frivolity. I'm not a casual dater. I'm not like a 'for-fun' girl. I'm like a serious kinda gal. I think he wanted to make sure he was in the right place before we started dating again." The happy, canoodley couple (just check out her Insta and Twitter: @CaraASantana, they are so cute) have been dating for seven years now.

What sort of dating advice would Cara give to single ladies? "Never sacrifice anything for a guy, first and foremost. You have to come first. Your career will never leave you, if you don't want it to. I think that ambition, individuality and independence are important... If you're single and you're focusing on yourself and a great guy comes along, I would say continue to focus on yourself and let them fit in, instead of you trying to fit into their life." As we wrap up, I ask if I've covered everything? "I have a dog named Dexter —that's the only thing you didn't cover," she laughs, then adds, "You covered everything." She smiles. What kind of dog is it? I inquire. "Jack Russell Chihuahua mix. He's really cute. He's tiny. He's our baby." **ML**