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Meet Milla Goldenberg of House Hunter L.A. in Northeast Los Angeles



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Today we'd like to introduce you to Milla Goldenberg.

So, before we jump into specific questions about the business, why don't you give us some details about you and your story.

My story begins in the former Soviet Union, where I was born. Things were rough and my family was desperate to get out. Finally, in 1979, we did, leaving as political refugees and emigrating to Los Angeles. We landed at Fairfax and Santa Monica with the other Russian FOBs.

Some of my relatives still live there. I was three years old and remember nothing except playing at Plummer Park with my sister and cousins.

Soon after, my family moved to The Valley, where I finished growing up in a stable and uneventful household. I went to high school in Reseda, then attended UCLA for my undergraduate degree, USC for my master's. I'm what they call a Brojan, so I win regardless of which school wins when the two teams play.

Then came a series of jobs in newsrooms, editorial departments, even a compliance department in a major financial firm. I worked in LA, San Francisco, even London for a summer. All the while, something was wrong. I hated going into the office every day. I'd watch the clock all day. I hated having bosses and a yearly review where someone else determined my value. I was doing well on paper but inside I was dying.

Soon after turning 40, I quit my stable, six-figure job of 12 years to pursue real estate full-time. Finally, I was ready to take a chance on myself and on what I really wanted. It was scary and hard, but the road rose up to meet me. I've been blessed and busy ever since, helping Angelenos buy and sell property all over the county.

I'm living my dream now and my only regret is that I didn't try to do it sooner. Some days I feel like I'm trying to make up for lost time. Other days I feel like I'm exactly where I need to be. But all days, I wake up energized and grateful that I get to (finally) do what I love in a city I love.

Overall, has it been relatively smooth? If not, what were some of the struggles along the way?

Real estate can be very feast or famine and I've had my fair share of famines, sometimes going months without a paycheck. It's been humbling and, in the worst of it, I've questioned the choices that led me here. I've worried about letting my family down and being selfish for pursuing my dreams at the expense of their stability. But I try not to wallow in these thoughts too long. They are counterproductive and do little to get me out of my rut.

Being an entrepreneur means constantly battling your own mind. While I believe in the power of positive thinking and the law of attraction, it's still a daily battle to stay focused on the right things. I try to meditate, visualize, use affirmations, listen to motivational podcasts and business books to keep my head screwed on straight. Once my mindset is right, everything else will flow. But to get it right is an exercise in discipline, faith and patience. I'm better at it than I used to be, but I still have a long way to get to where I want to be.

House Hunter L.A. – what should we know? What do you do best? What sets you apart from the competition?

House Hunter L.A. is my brand and brainchild. I am the house hunter and L.A. is my playground. I go where the work is and have closed deals all over town, though my base is in Highland Park, where I have lived for the past 12 years.

I work with both sellers and buyers, people who are buying for the first time as well as trading up. I love working with single women especially since I bought my own house as a single woman so I understand their unique needs.

It's been my ultimate privilege to serve the people I've served. And service is my greatest driver. I want all my clients to feel like they are my most important client. Buying and selling property can be scary and complicated, especially in California, and my goal is to minimize my clients' stress, to answer all their questions, to be their greatest advocate, to negotiate hard on their behalf.

I treat their money like my money. I take their calls late into the night. I even provide after-care once the deal closes, helping them find contractors and vendors for everything they need. My clients are not just a paycheck; they are my community. And I approach them with a servant's heart, giving them as much of myself as I can because I love what I do. The days when I get to hand over the keys to someone who never thought they'd get into a house have been some of the best days of my life.

What is "success" or "successful" for you?

On a professional level, success means never having to work for someone else in an office again. That's been my greatest "why" and driver to keep going as an entrepreneur, especially when the road gets rocky. I'm at the point where I'd rather make no money working for myself than make tons of money working for someone else (which has already happened)!

On a personal level, success means greeting each day with gratitude and operating from a place of love with both myself and with my loved ones.

On the most simple level, success is cuddling with my son, feeling his arms around me and hearing his laughter; If I get to experience that once a day, it's been a successful day in my book.

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