



FYIG Features FYIG Chats With...

FYIG Chats With Author/Lawyer/Entrepreneur Jasmine Daya

By **Dean Amond** - February 23, 2018

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FYIG recently got to chat with the multi-talented Jasmine Daya about her new book, *Law Girl's Bump in the Road* which she wrote under the pen name Leia London. Read on to find out more about her book, her food and lifestyle website JD in the Kitchen, and a whole lot more!

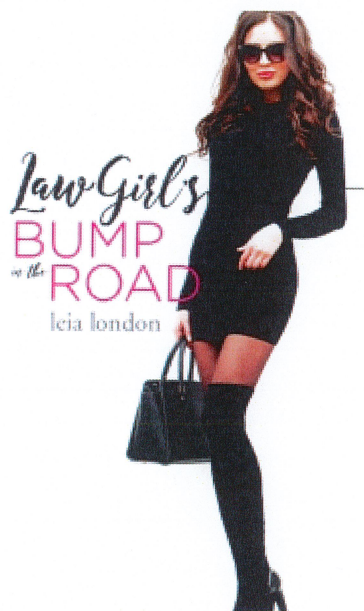
Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am a personal injury lawyer in Toronto and the mother of three children. I have many interests and passions that I pursue because it adds positive energy to my life that makes me a better lawyer and mother. My life is busy but I would not trade it for anything!

Your debut novel *Law Girl's Bump in the Road* is inspired by events that occurred in your own life. Talk about the

events behind the book.

I was in my last semester of law school when I learned that I was pregnant. I was concerned about disappointing my parents, nervous to tell my husband at the time and extremely concerned about how I would start my career as a lawyer given the timing of my pregnancy. I decided to start chronicling my journey as a way to occupy my mind from the unknown that faced me.



My journey was extremely entertaining at times, particularly given my Indian background which meant listening to many ridiculous old wives' tales like drinking warm milk with melted butter to help the baby slide out easily.

When did you realize that you wanted to make a novel out of that period in your life?

A couple of weeks before my son was born, I looked at the pages I had written and knew that it would make a great book one day! Time was the issue. After getting divorced, raising my young son while building my legal career, remarrying, having two more children, making partner and then starting my own firm, I wasn't able to turn my journal into a book until recently. It was

however always in the back of my mind. About a year ago, I decided that I was at the right point in my life to be able to tackle the project. I gathered the courage to show my manuscript to an editor and worked with her while balancing the rest of my life to get to the publishing stage.

Are you interested in creating any other novels after this one?

Absolutely! Stayed tuned.

You've also launched a food and lifestyle website called JD in the Kitchen. What motivated you to create that website?

I feel like I grew up in the kitchen with my mother and grandmother. My mother is incredibly creative. She actually enjoys sculpting chocolate and shaping candy in her spare time! I didn't realize that over the years I too had developed a passion for cooking until I went away to university and would call home for recipes that eventually started to vary from my mother's style and into my own.

After years of people asking my mother to create an Indian cookbook, I told her that we were going to make this happen together. Every Friday after work for almost a year, I would go to my parents' place and test recipes. When I got home, my husband would often playfully try to take my clothes off demanding that they belonged in the laundry and throw me into the shower because according to him, I smelled like I had spent my day in an Indian restaurant! He isn't Indian and although he enjoys Indian cooking, he understandably doesn't love his wife smelling like it.

Our recipes have resulted in a series of cookbooks that are currently in the editing phase. While chatting with some girlfriends about this amazing project that I had embarked upon

with my mom, they asked me how the hell I work every day and still have time to cook dinner for my family. It was at that point that I decided to launch JD in the Kitchen which shares easy recipes, tips, and tricks to help busy people put good food on the table and enjoy family time.

What sets JD in the Kitchen apart from other food and lifestyle websites?

First, I am a practicing lawyer. I leave the office almost daily by 5:30 p.m. to have dinner with my family at home. After dinner, my kids do homework, take showers and go to bed and I head out to meetings, back to the office, to the gym, enjoy time with friends or take care of whatever else needs to be done. The intention of my website is to encourage people with hectic lifestyles that they too can pursue their passions while enjoying family time. It doesn't have to be one or the other.

Second, I am sharing Indian recipes online and will soon release my series of Indian cookbooks. The first one is "Appetizers and Chutneys". I also have a spice line coming out comprised of mini spice packages because not everyone wants to buy a huge package of each of the 5 to 10 spices required in an Indian recipe.

What kinds of dishes and recipes might we see from you on there?

Lots of easy but delicious recipes and most definitely a few Indian recipes.

What are your favourite types of food?

Italian, Thai, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Indian, Japanese, Mexican. Ok seriously, this list could be endless if you give me more time to think about it. I love good food!

In addition to these creative ventures, you're also a lawyer with your own firm and you own a property management company. How do you find the time to fit everything in?

Every morning I hit the office early and excited. I write a to-do list for each company as well as a list for "family/personal" and get to work. I also rely heavily on my colour coded calendar. If it's not on my to-do list or my calendar, it's not happening. There was a birthday party my daughter missed which she sometimes reminds me about. I defended myself and simply told her "It's not my fault! It wasn't in my calendar!". Unfortunately, my 5-year-old remains unimpressed.

Are there any new projects that you'd like to get involved with?

Right now, I'm focused on working with a few charitable organizations and educational institutions. Soon after opening my own firm I realized that this was the missing part of the puzzle for me personally. I volunteer and write cheques for donations but it's not enough. I want to do more. There are always business ventures on my mind and meetings happening. I have no desire to slow down on the business front but I have been so incredibly blessed to see my hard work pay off that it's time for me to really give back.

What advice would you give to aspiring writers and entrepreneurs?

Pursue your passion. If you enjoy what you do, it's not that four letter word called "work".

Let the readers know where to find you online.

My novel, *Law Girl's Bump in the Road* written under my pen name, Leia London, is available on Amazon. You can

follow @Leia.London on Instagram.

My website www.jdinthekitchen.com has my recipes and blog posts. You can follow @jdinthekitchen on Instagram.

My website www.firemanlawyers.com will provide you with information on personal injury matters and contact information for my office if we can be of assistance.

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