

AdvocateDaily.com

CANADA'S LEGAL NEWSWIRE

Don't let prospective clients get away.
Capture every lead by adding us as
an extension to your law firm!

 Alert
Communications



Accounting for Law
Financial Peace of Mind for Lawyers

Need help with bookkeeping?

[Start Now](#)

Personal Injury

Daya takes on new role as fiction, cookbook author

By AdvocateDaily.com Staff



The stylish yet purposeful young woman on the front cover of *Law Girl's Bump in the Road* could be an avatar of Toronto personal injury lawyer **Jasmine Daya**, who recently self-published the novel under the pen name Leia London.

Daya, who is managing partner with **Fireman Daya & Co.**, based her inaugural work of chick-lit fiction on her own experiences as a final-year law student who suddenly found herself pregnant, with the baby due at the exact time she should have begun work as an articling student.

"My friends were enjoying their last summer of freedom, but for me, everything changed. I was heavily pregnant and scared about the future," Daya tells [AdvocateDaily.com](#). "I started writing a journal, and I tried to make it entertaining for my unborn child in the future."

That was more than 12 years ago, and one marriage breakup, a second marriage, two more children and a hectic law practice later, Daya finally found time to write the story that had been in the back of her mind all that time.

She had a publisher lined up, but wasn't crazy about the contract and decided she'd rather do it alone.

"The book is not about making money," she explains. "It's about the sense of satisfaction of having completed it. And I want to inspire young people — especially young women — to pursue their dreams. They *can* have it all!"

In addition to the novel, Daya writes a blog, [jdinthekitchen.com](#), about cooking for her family, and is poised to release the first in a series of Indian-cuisine cookbooks that she is co-authoring with her mother.

"My mother is a wonderful cook, she is very creative," says Daya, "but she doesn't write anything down." A couple of years ago, Daya sat down with her and they came up with a plan to share their ideas for simple, deliciously spiced, family-

friendly meals. Their cuisine is Indian with an East African influence, as Daya's parents lived there for several years before coming to Canada in the 1970s.

The first book, *Appetizers and Chutneys*, is due out in May.

"Writing a cookbook is not as easy as you might think," Daya says.

"You have to test and test, and measure, and write it all down so people understand. Every Friday I leave the office early and work with Mom on her recipes. It's a fantastic opportunity to spend quality time together. She is extremely busy too, and it has enabled us to really connect."

Daya feels she has the perfect work-life balance. She concedes she is an extremely high-energy person, but stresses that organization is the key to achieving this.

She wakes up at 6:15 a.m., but stays in bed until 6:45 a.m. reading her emails and social media. Then she and her husband get the children up, fed and dropped off at school.

Daya arrives at her law office between 7.30 and 8 a.m. The first thing she does is make two to-do lists — one of the day's work priorities and one of personal tasks. Daya sticks to them closely — they are the key to getting everything done, she says.

She goes home from the office at 5.30 p.m. sharp, as dinner time with her family is sacrosanct. For two hours she is cooking, eating and talking with them about everything that happened in their day.

"When I'm with the kids I'm really with them — this is quality time," Daya says, adding cellphones are not allowed at the table.

At 7.30 p.m. she is back at work, on her laptop or on the phone — and occasionally back at the office. She turns in at 11 p.m. "I need seven hours' sleep," Daya says.

She says she's skeptical about claims by Martha Stewart and Donald Trump that they need only three or four hours' sleep a night. "In the past, I've tried getting by on four to six hours, but I was always tired."

It's this combination of realism and determination that enabled Daya to launch her law career just a month after her first child was born.

"It's important to pursue your passion in life," she says. "When I am doing well at work and pursuing my hobbies and interests, I feel happier and more fulfilled and in turn, I feel like I am a better mother."