



JAMES D'ASTICE



agent feature ◀
By Chris Menezes
Photos by Heather Allison
Love Photography

James with his wife, Agnes, and daughter, Stella.

MAKING WAVES

James D'Astice never set out to be a real estate agent; it was always a backup plan. What he would come to discover, however, is that his personal and professional experiences in life laid a foundation for him to differentiate himself in the industry and become extremely successful—not just as an individual agent, but also as a leader.

James grew up in the suburbs of Chicago, and moved to the city after high school to attend Columbia College. He fell in love with the pace of the city, the lifestyle, the restaurants, and the neighborhoods. He loved exploring the unique neighborhoods so much, in fact, that he has lived in eleven different properties across six different neighborhoods since moving to Chicago.

While in college, James worked as a server in a steak house. When he graduated with his degree in advertising, it was 2009. The job market was scarce at the time, as many companies were scaling back, cutting marketing budgets and jobs due to the recession. So James continued to work in fine-dining establishments while he looked for a job. Meanwhile, his wife, Agnes, obtained her real estate license in 2008, and that sparked James' interest.

“It was an interesting time to get into real estate. It was literally the start of one of the worst real estate markets in modern history. People were leaving the industry, leaving a sinking ship so to speak, and I was climbing aboard,” he says.

His first five years in real estate were definitely challenging. James had to continue working two to three jobs at the same time until he was able to rely on real estate as his primary source of income. However, his experience in hospitality helped to establish the principles that would make him and his team, the Moda Group, successful.

“In the hospitality business, you're guiding people through a dining experience, getting ahead of their needs and really





James with his wife, Agnes, while in Alsace, France.



James' three-month-old daughter, Stella.



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putting their best interest first. As a real estate agent, you're essentially doing the same, just at a much higher level with more impact. Turns out that hospitality translates well in our business. As one of my mentors in the hospitality industry said, 'Service is given but hospitality is felt.' And at the Moda Group, this hospitality-based service model is how we approach our business and the relationships around it—we call that 'housepitality,'" he says.

Instead of splitting his time between multiple jobs now, James splits his time between growing a successful team of six and being a top producing broker to his clients, with being a husband and a new father to three-month-old Stella. Agnes is also a member of the Moda Group as a licensed real estate broker, in addition to being a model and actress; a travel adviser with Virtuoso, specializing in European travel; and a mother.

James and Agnes definitely know how to keep themselves busy. They enjoy traveling to Europe as much as they can, especially to Poland, where Agnes was born. Some of their European travel experiences include driving



James with the Moda Group team - (from left to right) Lauren Herskovic, Patrick Dodd, Agnes D'Astice, Julia Pandorf, and Mike Mabi.

through sunflower fields in Tuscany in summer; touring wineries in Alsace along the Route des Vins; eating at Michelin-star rated restaurants, as well as local gems; hunting truffles in Siena; riding a gondola through the canals of Venice; and hiking through the scenic Tatra Mountains in Poland. Stateside, James enjoys fishing, is an avid musky hunter, loves to golf, and likes to "chef it up" at home.

James is currently broadening his vision for his business. He has always been passionate about helping people realize their goals and making a positive impact

on their lives. He has always given that passion to his clients. But now, he is also taking that same passion and using it to mentor and lead his team members.

"It is extremely rewarding to know that I get to wake up every day and do what I love, knowing that a big part of the growth and success for our agents is due to the structure, systems, accountability, and mentorship I am able to provide. I especially love seeing a new agent accomplish in one year what took me five to accomplish," he says.

“It’s not how big of a splash you make, it’s the ripple effect you make on others, and those ripples turning into waves.”

As James continues to embark on his path as team leader, he hopes to continue to grow his team and empower his team members to become leaders as well. As he says, “It’s not how big of a splash you make, it’s the ripple effect you make on others, and those ripples turning into waves.”

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FEATURES:

Kristine Menas Daley
James D'Astice
Rich Cebulak

SPRING EVENT:

Avondale Bowl
May 8th, 12PM - 3PM
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