

PRIMIE LIVING

MAY/JUNE 2012

GET
lost

FALL OFF THE GRID IN STYLE
AT THE WORLD'S MOST REMOTE
LUXURY DESTINATIONS

34

22 *mothers
of invention*

WHEN INSPIRATION KNOCKED, FIVE
DYNAMIC HOUSTON WOMEN ANSWERED

28 *beachside bliss*

DISCOVER SURF, SAND AND SEA AT YOUR
NEW HOME AWAY FROM HOME

57 *journey to
new zealand*

IN THE "LAND OF THE LONG WHITE CLOUD,"
NATURE'S AWE-INSPIRING BEAUTY AWAITS



NYDIA FLORES

For most Americans, tequila is regarded as a party drink, diluted with salt and citrus, and served in millions of sweet, celebratory margaritas, or tossed down in shots. Nydia Flores and her husband, Ignacio, hope to alter that notion a bit.

The Sugar Land residents and natives of Monterrey, Mexico, saw the U.S. tequila market reshaping what, for the Floreses, had long been a quiet and dignified tradition in their native country. So, working hand in hand, they last year launched a premium tequila called "Izkali."

Initially, the couple is testing Izkali Tequila in the local Houston market before expanding their sales into other regions. The real story of invention, though, is how the Floreses have carefully sidestepped the many obstacles to introducing a liquor product in this country, and how they're finding a foothold in what is a very crowded tequila market.

Their story goes back more than 20 years, to 1990, when the Floreses became distributors of non-alcoholic products sold in liquor stores. Over the years, they introduced many items to the Houston market, learning the ins-and-outs of marketing and distribution.

"This was a new venture for us, though," Nydia Flores says, of their plunge into the liquor development and marketing business. "Having been born in Mexico, both Ignacio and I recognized that tequila is the 'spirit' of the country. The culture is very family-oriented, friends and family getting together. There's always a tequila spirit before or after dinner, sipped and savored, not as a 'cocktail,' per se. We started thinking about how important this tradition is in the Mexican culture and how, in the

U.S., tequila hasn't historically been regarded as a premium spirit. We were interested in bringing a little of what we knew from our heritage into the market here."

Ignacio Flores did a lot of the necessary research and product sourcing in Jalisco, Mexico, while Nydia began putting together a marketing and branding campaign stateside.

"There are many high-priced tequilas on the market, but our goal was to introduce a quality tequila that sold at a reasonable

price," she explains. The results thus far are outstanding, winning the Floreses trophies in national liquor competitions.

Naming the product was critical, Flores says. After much trial and error, they consulted scores of their closest friends and family before seizing on the name Izkali.

"It means 'life' or 'to be born' in the ancient Aztec language Nahuatl," Flores explains. "We thought it was a perfect name to capture our feeling and our philosophy about the product."

Following their introductory market testing, the Floreses hope to broaden their tequila distribution throughout Texas, and then take it nationally.

"We want to help people discover a quality tequila that can be enjoyed in certain social settings," Flores notes. "Like wine, tequila has many different characteristics depending on where it's grown and how it's processed and who's involved in the processing. Because of this, Izkali is unique among them."

