

MEMBER PROFILE



Crystal Adamson, CPA, CA

Owner

The BraBar & Panterie

The BraBar & Panterie has been a gem among Winnipeg boutiques since it opened nearly two decades ago. With a reputation built on beautiful garments and exceptional customer service, The BraBar strives to provide the perfect fit in intimate apparel for women of all shapes and sizes.

Crystal Adamson, CA was 14 when she started working part time at the St. Boniface boutique, then owned by her aunt Sharon Phillips. Since then, she has not only grown her expertise in helping women find the perfect fit but has also developed a keen sense of the business. After graduating from high school, Crystal took a year away from her studies and worked with her aunt at the boutique full-time. "It was amazing to see how the business had changed, grown and taken on a life of its own," Crystal says. "It was then I decided I wanted a business degree. After that, I chose to continue my education and pursue my CA designation."

While working towards her designation, conversations about Sharon's retirement and the possibility of Crystal buying the business were beginning to surface. Shortly after Crystal finished the practical experience requirement of the CA program with a small accounting firm, The BraBar was calling her back. "Sharon realized she was going to retire earlier than expected and we made a plan for me to return," Crystal explains. "She really encouraged me to think about what I wanted, but there was never any question. I think taking over the business was the big goal I had always subconsciously been working towards."

Crystal became the owner at The BraBar & Panterie in 2013. Along with developing strong business plans, she also handles ordering merchandise and staying on top of the latest style trends. "I'm very analytical when I look at things," Crystal says. "One of the first things I did as owner was study our inventory turnover. I looked at how each piece of merchandise was performing and realized that we were keeping inventory way too low. I increased the stock and also enhanced our style selection".

Crystal's first year as the new owner of The BraBar was spent cautiously managing and maintaining the business. When the first year was behind her, she found her stride and turned her focus to growing and revamping the business. In July, the current St. Boniface store will move to a new location on Provencher Boulevard. "The Des Meurons location was in need of an update, but we weren't able to use the space effectively," Crystal explains. "We need a better space for our clients. I want people to walk in and say 'what a beautiful store!'"

Crystal has refreshed The BraBar & Panterie branding and logo and plans to revitalize the website in the very near future. The Provencher location will also be introducing swimwear to The BraBar repertoire. With so many new initiatives, Crystal recognizes a prime opportunity for a new advertising campaign. "We've always done really well with word of mouth and I want to build on the great reputation my aunt has worked hard for over the past 19 years," Crystal says. "However, I think there's a younger demographic that hasn't heard about the store yet who would love it."

Crystal credits her financial background for helping her carry out these new objectives in her plan to revitalize The BraBar & Panterie. "When I switched from working at a firm to owning my own business, there were some who thought that I was throwing my education away. I've always looked at it as an extension of my business degree. Every day I use skills that wouldn't be in my repertoire if I didn't have my designation. Your designation really is whatever you make it to be."

Learn more about Crystal and The BraBar & Panterie by [visiting their website](#).