

• retailer to retailer •

Dragonfly DuLou

by Ashley Trent



Los Angeles is the West Coast's vibrant hub of activity for the young and the hip. Not surprisingly, the city's artistic eccentricity trickles into every aspect of its retail stores, and six-year-old Dragonfly DuLou is a shining example of this charming phenomenon.

Located in the Los Feliz neighborhood, Dragonfly DuLou is a lively children's boutique owned by Lana Chirco-Baltz and Kirk Baltz, both of whom were previously involved in creative professions. After having children, the couple seriously explored the idea of opening a retail shop that reflected their own values. "We very much wanted to create a combination retail store and fun spot that really focused on healthy, natural family living and conscious parenting — a place where new families could hang out, shop, have fun and share experiences," explains Lana.

Named for Lana and Kirk's children, Dutch and LouLou, Dragonfly DuLou caters to the needs of kids and parents on multiple fronts; the shop boasts a thoughtful collection of clothes, toys, strollers and other items, and in addition, it hosts a variety of community cultural events and classes, such as the popular CPR and How to Raise a Bilingual Child classes. Essentially, Dragonfly DuLou is a place where kids and parents can actively participate in one another's lives.

Much of the inspiration for Dragonfly

DuLou came from Lana and Kirk's own parenting experiences; they were driven to share their discoveries with other parents who share similar values. "As parents, we want the best for our kids and like to share what we find with the community," explains Lana. "Our goal is to bring the best of everything we provide to the community, whether it's a class, teacher, latest fashions and toys for babies and kids, or the coolest diaper bag for moms and dads."

Dragonfly DuLou certainly hits the nail on the head in terms of appealing to the clientele of Los Feliz, which is home to many professionals in the film and music industries; Lana and Kirk place high importance on appealing to these parents' individuality and sense of style. "We wanted to first create a boutique that offered clothing moms and dads wished came in their own sizes, art that could be hung on any wall in a home and music that wouldn't drive you nuts after hearing it three times in a row," says Lana. "There's no reason toys, clothes or accessories a customer would like to purchase for a little one or an entire family can't be hip, functional and affordable." Many of the imaginative toys and funky clothes in Dragonfly DuLou are the creations of L.A.- and New York-based designers, notes Lana.

And in health-conscious California, Dragonfly DuLou fills the need for natural and organic children's products and helps families create eco-friendly

“Our community gives to Dragonfly DuLou so we in turn want to give back.”

- Lana Chirco-Baltz, owner

lifestyles. “We have always carried green items, because we believe in sustainable living and providing healthy, natural and organic products for families,” says Lana. “We know if something is going to go into the mouth of a one-year-old, it better not have any harmful materials, dyes or chemicals. We research by trying out products ourselves first.”

The much-loved music-related happenings at Dragonfly DuLou not only serve as fun in-store events, but also as an opportunity to provide free entertainment for the community. “Being in L.A., we are lucky to be surrounded by many talented musicians and artists. As those artists begin to grow their own families, many of them turn toward children-friendly creative projects and venues, which is where we come in,” says Lana. “We don’t believe in the gooey, cheesy kids music that drives parents crazy, so we take the opportunity to showcase extraordinary

bands that play real music for whole families to enjoy, many of which are from our same neighborhood, like Egg, Ellen & Matt and Lucky Diaz to name a few. We were also proud to have Dan Zanes with us for a special in-store performance, which was wonderful! Bottom line is it has to have some substance and be accessible to parents as well as their kids.”

It is through their careful selection of products and events that Lana and Kirk maintain excitement within their store and neighborhood. The couple has no doubt that Dragonfly DuLou will change continually to reflect the needs and personality of the community. “We have a large returning and regular customer base and take pride in keeping things fresh, new and always evolving, just like the kids we all love,” says Lana. “It’s this kind of attitude that keeps the good word out there and new friends and families coming back for more.”



Baby & Kids e-newsletter



Industry News
Delivered Each Week To Your **Inbox.**

SIGN UP TODAY AT
www.babyandkidsmagazine.com

Go to www.babyandkidsmagazine.com for reader service

Lovable Friends™
Great Selection & Better Value
www.lovablefriends.com



www.babyvision.com
sales@babyvision.com
(845) 473-6780 ext. 5#

a brand of
BabyVision™
...caring for your little star

NY Showroom
112 West 34th Street
Suite 1703/1704
New York, NY 10120

layette bath bedding gift feeding footwear travel hanging

Go to www.babyandkidsmagazine.com for reader service
august 2010