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THE CREATIVE CONNOISSEUR
MARTHA STEWART

OF HALLMARK CHANNEL'S *THE MARTHA STEWART SHOW*

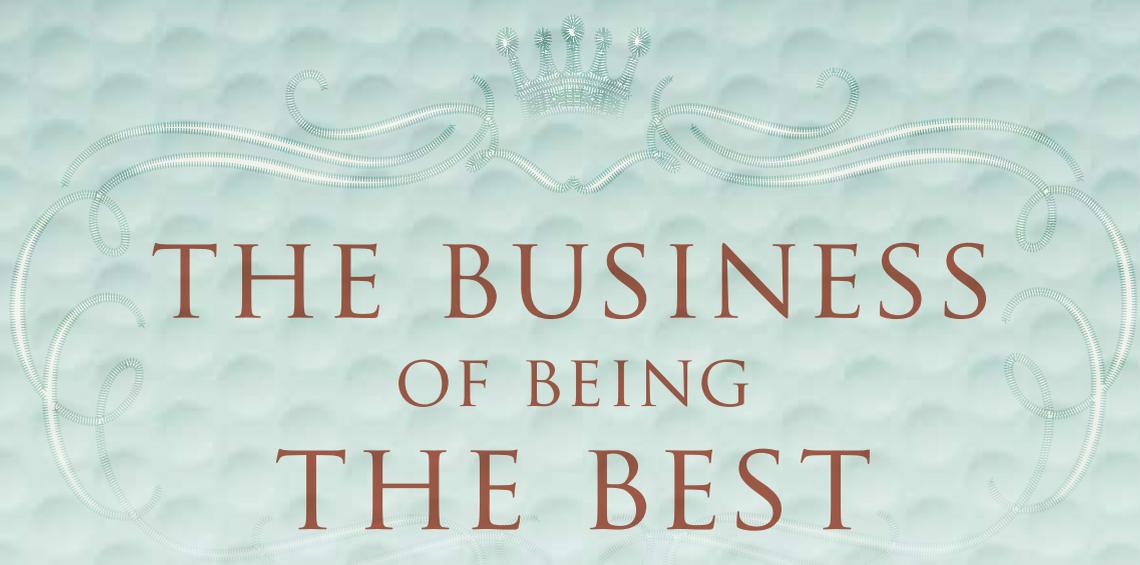


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MARTHA GETS DOWN TO



THE BUSINESS OF BEING THE BEST

After decades in the spotlight, Martha Stewart still serves as the image of perfection for America's homemakers. So how does she do it? Certainly not alone.

By Greg Archer

There are so many things people know about Martha Stewart. She has taken the old-fashioned art form of homemaking and completely shaken the dust out of it. Her daytime outing, *The Martha Stewart Show*, still turns heads (now on the Hallmark Channel). She's certainly not a dawdler. (In fact, when we are first introduced, Stewart is soothing but direct, "Now, what can I do for you?")

But still, few would be able to connect all the threads on the tapestry that is Martha Stewart and clearly see that the Mother of Living Well is really in the business of nurturing and maintaining solid relationships—on screen and off. Let's face it, when you've made it your job to extol the virtues of being the best, you can't really do it by yourself.

"Responsibility and good communication are vital [to me]," Stewart admits of her professional unions. "There are many people that work at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia who have worked here since we started the company. And those relationships are very valuable; their experiences, their interaction is essential to the success of the whole company."

"And our partnerships are all important," she quickly adds. "Home Depot, Macy's, our corporate strategic part-

ners—they are our friends. They are treated like friends, we're treated like friends. We work very closely together to make everything we do as successful as possible. In this day and age, with businesses being challenged, and the economy suffering, you have to be like that. It's about producing the best you could possibly produce ... it keeps us grounded and it keeps us fresh."

Well, that's an understatement. Yes, Stewart has made modern-day living modern—fun even. But over the decades after birthing numerous bestsellers, launching popular magazines and hit television shows, and selling her products on to the shelves of behemoth retailers, Martha and her creatives have managed to galvanize their forces to boldly survive the fickle winds of pop culture.

Landing on Facebook helped. Twitter was better—last time we checked, Stewart had nearly 2.1 million followers. She demonstrated social media panache late last year with the launch of another app: *Martha Stewart Makes Cookies*, which includes 50 recipes divided into eight categories (from "traditionalists" to the more playful "hedonists"). "I'm so excited to bake cookies from a new source that is functional and, more than anything, a lot of fun," Stewart quipped in the app's video introduction. >>>

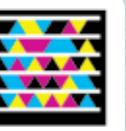


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STEWART'S STANDARDS

Enjoy a little Q & A with Martha:

d!: Trait you admire most in others?

MS: "Non-hierarchy. I like my CEO of merchandising to pick up that piece of paper if she sees it on the floor. Or notice that the windows are dirty. And I mean that, overall. We're here to help somebody who needs help. Non-hierarchy is very important to me."

d!: What makes you laugh most?

MS: "Foolishness."

d!: Favorite TV show guests?

MS: "Anybody from SNL—Andy Samberg, Seth Meyers. But Russell Crowe was a very, very good guest and so was Jonathan Rhys Meyers."

d!: Food you love?

MS: "At the moment, persimmons."

d!: Favorite music?

MS: "Mozart. But at other times, rap—we play it during breaks on TV because it's so much fun. Music is important."

d!: Something people may not know about you?

MS: "That I am addicted to the show *In Treatment*. By watching it, I know that I don't have to go to a psychiatrist. That show is doing a great service to America."

d!: Some of the best advice you've been given about life?

MS: "You know, I think that every day should be an adventure. Do something new every day. Change as often as you can. And always ... be curious."

While her work transcends into the realm of social media, her roots remain on TV with *The Martha Stewart Show*. Even in this new incarnation, it remains a pleasant, up-to-date surprise. Few hosts can appear so uniquely "hip" in playful banter with SNL's Andy Samberg—while making baked Alaska no less—or keep a political conversation with Whoopi Goldberg on the TSA pat downs under control. And luring "Five Fatherhood Tips" out of the likes of Snoop Dogg? Priceless.

"We try to treat guests equally," Stewart notes of her knack for resonating with her visitors. Although, she may have some help in that arena. "Our guests are treated to delicious little snacks when they arrive and we do everything to make everybody feel comfortable and happy," she remarks.

Classic Stewart. Hospitality isn't just a business, it really is her way of life.

"It is my way," she playfully notes. "I'm real curious. And I think people are curious. I think people really need guidance; they need help ferreting through all the information we have out there. We're on information overload. But our audience is very intelligent and we try to teach them lots and lots of good things every day."

It doesn't hurt that Stewart never seems short of ideas, or energy for that matter. Her recent primetime special on Hallmark, in fact, *The Men Who Make Us Laugh*, illuminated her frequently self-deprecating sense of humor as she engaged three famous comedians in candid conversation, SNL's Seth Meyers among them.



Martha laughs as she talks with actor Justin Long on *The Martha Stewart Show*.

Comedy is a precious thing to Stewart and she's proven to be a good sport—daughter Alexis pokes fun at her in clips from old Stewart shows on the popular spoof, *Whatever Martha!*

Another new Stewart TV outing, dubbed *Martha Bakes*, is now feeding the masses more in shows that unearth her personal favorite recipes. (Imagine that list!)

"I really wanted to do a program like this for some time," she beams. "It's me editing my vast repertoire of recipes down to recipes I think other people would love to have in their repertoire."

But there is life beyond her enterprise and those stellar Hallmark ties. Living well is one thing, but "being" well ... that's entirely different. And Stewart cannot help but maintain fierce philanthropic ties in that arena, and others, too. At the top of her list is the Martha Stewart Center for Living at Mount Sinai Hospital, an outpatient Xanadu of sorts that specializes in geriatric care and services.

"I've built that center and funded a great deal of it, and continue to work to make it a very great success," Stewart says. "It really is for aging gracefully."

There's also the topic of education, a big issue she hopes to impact. "I know what a struggle education is now and how very important that is and I am working on a number of initiatives there."

When asked why it's important for her to give back, Stewart is open. "I've been so lucky and very successful at what I do, and helping others is very important. And, I've never said this, but the 'interruption'—the legal struggles I had—set me back a lot, and it's just a shame that they did. Because I could have been doing real good during that time, which I am doing now, but you know ..."

So, what really got her through those tough times?

Stewart chuckles. "Knowing that I am a good person—that I am strong—and ... that I believe in what we do." 

