

A CANNABIS MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN BY WOMEN

CANNINA

Curious

ISSUE NO. 10



THE POWER OF
COLLABORATION

FUSING ART +
CANNABIS
& FUNCTIONALITY

2024 CANNA
FRIENDLY TRAVEL
GUIDE

HIGHER
ON HER

SPECIAL EDITION
IN COLLABORATION WITH

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Conference





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WE ARE CANNABIS

COVER PHOTO: MAISHA BAHATI, CEO OF CRYSTAL NUGS

EDITOR'S LETTER



EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to this special issue of CannaCurious where we are celebrating the power of collaboration. CannaCurious was created to be a trusted source and an inclusive space for women to get educated about the wellness aspects of cannabis and CBD. What better way to honor that mission than by highlighting the many women of color who are making waves in the industry. In this issue, we have partnered with the **Higher Conference** to amplify the voices of women of color in cannabis and their annual conference. Check out our special section dedicated to some of their stories.

We also get into the power of collaboration with the phenomenal Timeka Drew and talk about the health benefits of curiosity. With a name like “canna-curious”, we had to dive into this research! Also, don’t miss out on the amazing photos by the female creators making the plant beautiful. And lastly, with the summer upon on us, we have a 2024 canna-friendly travel guide to inspire wanderlust.

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XOXO**

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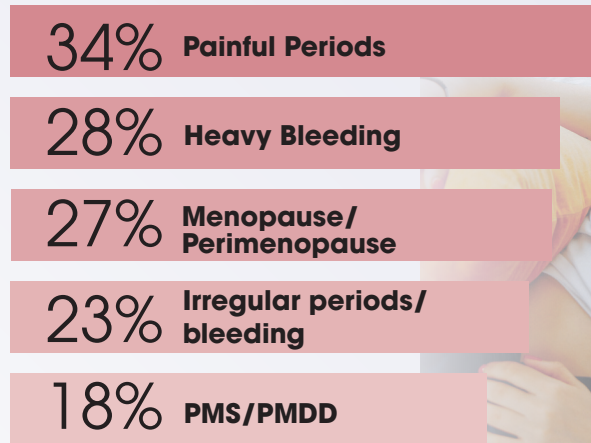
ALL PHOTOS USED THROUGHOUT CANNACURIOS
WERE EITHER CONTRIBUTED OR STOCK PHOTOS.

InSIGHTS

In a recent study by New Frontier Data, female cannabis consumers were surveyed regarding their utilization of cannabis for treating conditions and symptoms specific to women's health issues. Here are the insights...

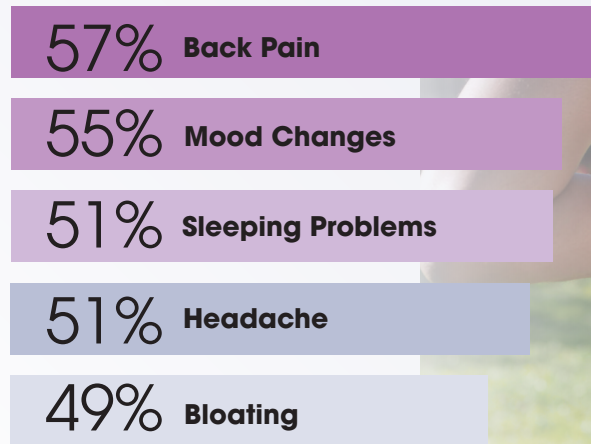
Top 5 female health

conditions women are treating with cannabis



Top 5 women's health

conditions women are treating with cannabis



Top 3 forms used

to manage these conditions



Flower



Edibles



Vapor Products

WE ARE CANNABIS

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WE ARE CREATIVES



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WE ARE CANNABIS



WE
ARE
CHEFS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRISTINA WONG

CHRISTINA WONG, FOUNDER OF
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WE
ARE
ART



RAGE EARRINGS,
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CAROLINE MURPHY



**WE
ARE
LOUD**

CURIOSITY, COLLABORATION, CANNABIS... **AND CATS?**

BY JULIA SERGISON



TEKISHA + DIANA

CO-FOUNDERS CANNACURIOS
MAGAZINE

Curiosity killed the cat. At least that's how we've heard it, right? A poetic warning about inserting ourselves where we're not necessarily welcome. The phrase has a curious history itself, morphing with the passage of time, updating with the modernization of language, and being adopted by various cultures as proverbs after its first version came about in the late 1500s. What we often miss in this most recent form of the idiom is its second half: curiosity killed the cat, *but satisfaction brought it back.*

It's thanks to curiosity that CannaCurious exists. Cofounders Tekisha Harvey and Diana Sanmiguel were both in a transitional phase of their lives when they met for the first time as members of a local coworking space specifically designed for creatives and founders. Tekisha laughed as she told me that she was pretty quickly curious about Diana's work ethic, seeing that she could sit and focus for hours on end, while Tekisha found herself up and about to stretch her restless legs once an hour like clockwork. They had some opportunities to work together and from there forged

a friendship, supporting each other through their respective transition periods by being safe, supportive confidants for vulnerability and growth.

When I asked them a little more about the importance of curiosity in their individual lives and how it led to their collaboration, they each explained their unique experiences driven by their innate inquisitiveness. Their approaches to curiosity are different, yet complimentary. Tekisha is fueled by the *why not* – seeking new opportunities to trailblaze where women and women of color are valuable, knowledgeable, willing and needed. Diana is fueled by the *why* – looking to find purpose in all that’s happened so far and to connect the dots as she continues to move forward. It’s a beautiful yin and yang of understanding the past and exploring the future in order to create even more space for themselves and for women like them.

In 2023, Tekisha was invited by Sheena Roberson, Founder & CEO of Cannabis Noire, to speak at Higher: The First Cannabis Conference for Women of Color in Philadelphia. It was an exciting opportunity for her and for the magazine, and provided the chance to share CannaCurious with a wider audience, while also offering a platform to amplify and support Higher (two birds, one stone if we’re sticking with the idioms, today). The collaboration made sense to CannaCurious, as so many of the participating brands or businesses and the women at their helms share values with Tekisha, Diana, CannaCurious, and its readers. With these shared values buzzing through the panelists, sponsors, and attendees, the power of collaboration cultivated, and continues to nurture, a vetted community of women who respect the plant, benefit from its properties, and want to educate themselves more about it, its history, and about those working hard to destigmatize the bad reputation cannabis still often has. These women are attorneys, marketers, designers, mental health professionals, writers, nurses, scientists – all who are looking to support each other to help reap the benefits of collaboration over competition.

While talking to Tekisha and Diana about their personal journeys with cannabis, Diana shared that



It’s a place for women **anywhere in their cannabis journey** to get more educated and to read actual stories and accounts of how women are using the plant in its various forms to support their own health and wellness.

FEATURE STORY

she didn't know much about it for a long time. Sure, she tried it when she was young and saw it around her community, but she didn't participate. When she and Tekisha first met, there was a CBD company operating from their coworking space. She got curious about it, and wanted to learn more. From a simple curiosity about what a CBD cookie might be able to do for her, and why she should try it, she has become half of a successful partnership filling the void of education and storytelling for the "CannaCurious" and not just the "Cannaisseur."

CannaCurious celebrates the confidence and the accomplishments of women who are already making waves in the industry, but it also offers a space for the women at the opposite end of the spectrum: those just getting started - which might just be even thinking of getting started - with cannabis. Diana radiates warmth and humility while she tells me CannaCurious is for women like her, her colleagues, her friends, even her family. There's no judgment, no prerequisites, no expectations. It's a place for women anywhere in their cannabis journey to get more educated and to read actual stories and accounts of how women are using the plant in its various forms to support their own health and wellness.

What was it about the cat? *Satisfaction* brought it back? At the time that proverb was written, satisfaction was known to mean *fulfillment*. Stay curious, and stay fulfilled. Plus, if the satisfaction doesn't bring you back from chasing curiosity, you've got 8 more lives to do it again. 🌸

JULIA SERGISON IS AN EDUCATOR, WRITER, AND EDITOR CURRENTLY BASED OUT OF SOUTH FLORIDA. SHE'S PASSIONATE ABOUT TRAVEL AND PEOPLE, CONSTANTLY SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND SHARE THE STORIES FROM THOSE SHE MEETS ALONG THE WAY. GET IN TOUCH WITH HER AT JSERGCREATIVE@GMAIL.COM.





FROM CELEBRATING PUBLISHED ISSUES TO HOSTING EVENTS, CANNACURIOS CONTINUES TO EXPAND. NEXT UP.. MERCHANDISE!

Spark

Having a curious mind towards cannabis can have many positive effects on your own health and the progress of society as a whole. Curiosity has been linked in studies that show its benefits of increased positive emotions and satisfaction in life, decreased worry, and overall psychological well-being. Curiosity, when it comes to cannabis, can help you gain a better grasp of plant medicines and their possible advantages. It can also help greatly in de-stigmatizing this intriguing plant.

Lifelong learning is one of the main advantages of having a curious mind regarding cannabis. This continuous learning can instill the habit of challenging and reassessing prior knowledge. Remember the “This is your brain on drugs” campaign? It securely placed the cannabis plant in our minds alongside other harder substances, like heroin and cocaine, which is a drastic comparison. Today, learning about the uses of plants for medicine in indigenous societies can help us re-establish more holistic healing practices.

Canna

CURIOSITY

AND BE AMAZED

Curiosity also encourages empathy and the development of relationships. Through engaging with different kinds of viewpoints on cannabis, we can increase our understanding and respect of various approaches to wellness by talking with others and learning from their experiences. Empathy and open-mindedness can foster mutual support and a sense of community. And the cannabis community is one of the most accepting and generous in sharing of knowledge.

Finally, having some canna-curiosity can also boost your own vitality and enthusiasm. Curiosity has been shown to greatly increase your level of physical and mental energy. Though it could seem obvious, when we are more curious and excited about what we are doing, it is easier to stay invested.

Embracing curiosity about cannabis can not only enhance your own well-being but also advance societal understanding of it. Collectively, we have the power to reshape perceptions about this remarkable plant. Stay curious! ✨

THE POWER OF

CO
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WITH
TIMEKA
DREW



Collaboration within the cannabis industry is critical, especially for underrepresented entrepreneurs and their businesses, for so many reasons. If you want your cannabis brand to expand beyond your state, collaboration can help. Even marketing cannabis, whether on a national or local level, is incredibly challenging due to the regulations and lack of normalization. Collaboration opens a door that allows cannabis businesses to share scarce marketing resources and be exposed to existing cannabis-friendly consumers while building a culture of support within the industry. We chatted with Timeka Drew, an operating social equity license holder, a seasoned cannabis industry executive, and the founder and CEO of **Biko**, a California-born cannabis brand, to get her valuable insights on the power of collaboration in cannabis.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN FACTORS PEOPLE SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN DECIDING TO COLLABORATE WITH A PARTICULAR BUSINESS? WHAT APPROACH SHOULD BE TAKEN?

Value-alignment is key to managing and producing a collaboration where both parties will be happy with the outcome. Both parties should consider what resources they have and what is needed to be able to bring the project to completion. A good collaboration will be beneficial to both parties and will not require one party to carry a heavier load than the other.

Instead of thinking about a collaboration as a transaction that will lead to financial gains, first look at it as an opportunity for community-building and marketing. When a collaboration has a prominent financial aspect to consider, it is important to understand the regulatory compliance and logistics around profit-sharing and payment. Often, if a collaboration will lead to financial gain for a business that has not been disclosed to cannabis regulators, it will need to be reported.

CAN YOU SHARE A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION? HOW DID YOU IDENTIFY COMPLEMENTARY STRENGTHS BETWEEN YOUR BUSINESSES, AND HOW DID THESE PLAY A ROLE IN YOUR DECISION TO COLLABORATE?

Biko has done several collaborations with value-aligned businesses over our three years in the California market. One of my favorites was with a women-led, Sun & Earth-certified cultivator based in Northern California called Midnight Gardens. I had dinner with cannabis icon Nina Parks in the

Bay Area, and she gave me a beautiful Raspberry Parfait strain from Midnight Gardens. She told me that they were having a hard time moving the rest of the batch and wondered if I might be able to use it in my Biko products.

A common problem that cultivators often face is that when they sell bulk flower to manufacturers to sell in completed goods like eighths and pre-rolls, no one knows where the flower is coming from. Even if a consumer wants to support women-led grows, they don't know how because you can't simply buy flower directly from a cultivator. I connected with Midnight Gardens and found that their price was more aligned with what I was paying for flower living in my Red Series product line, my everyday selection priced to be affordable.

In order to be able to support this women-led cultivator, I created a new collaboration SKU, Red Series Select, meant to shine a light on unique outdoor cultivators producing flower that competes with, and even sometimes outshines, indoor grown selections. This product blended our logos and was the first time Midnight Gardens would get recognition for their flower on finished goods in the California cannabis market.



BIKO FLOWER COLLABORATION WITH MIDNIGHT GARDENS

It allowed Biko to tell a story about the importance of supporting female cultivators and sun-grown flower nurtured in living soil. It was a way for Biko to market our values and lift up the work of another small, family-owned business. This partnership was easy because it only required Biko to create a unique label for the collaboration and to purchase the wholesale cannabis from Midnight Gardens.

FEATURE STORY



IN WHAT WAYS HAS COLLABORATION IMPACTED YOUR BUSINESS'S GROWTH AND OVERALL SUCCESS?

My friend Aryana Gathings, the proprietor of **Plant Bitch** (for bitches who love plants!), came up with the idea for the beautiful, 420-friendly independent music festival **Flowers & Flowers**, which Biko sponsored in 2022. I met Aryana at the event and indicated I would love to collaborate on the next festival and perhaps offer a festival-themed product for compliant purchase at the event. I learned that Aryana was working to bring her Plant Bitch brand into the cannabis market, and we discussed a vision to grow the festival and create a solution to be able to do compliant sales on site.

This collaboration led Biko into a new role with the festival in 2023 as a co-producer, and the product that we created was a **Biko x Plant Bitch "Flowers & Flowers"** infused preroll that launched on delivery platform Eaze statewide before the festival. The collaboration helped her Plant Bitch brand become visible throughout the state as a producer of cannabis products and experiences, it helped us market and promote Flowers and Flowers Festival, and it lifted up Biko's dedication to supporting women entrepreneurs in the cannabis space. Through this partnership, I also learned that Aryana is an incredibly talented fashion designer, and she has been utilizing her skills to help me launch Biko's new streetwear line.

WHAT ARE SOME POTENTIAL CHALLENGES WITH COLLABORATION, AND HOW CAN BUSINESSES PREPARE FOR POTENTIAL ISSUES AND HOW TO NAVIGATE THEM?

Finances and timing are both challenges that can turn into issues while executing a collaboration. A project that was not fully considered could lead to costs and logistical

needs associated with it that can be difficult to navigate if they were never discussed. It is important to have some kind of agreement in place with a collaborator. It can be as simple as a "Memorandum of Understanding" that outlines who is responsible for what and how any issues or unforeseen expenses will be handled. How the collaboration is discussed can be a sticking point as well - drafting language around the collaboration and ways to talk about the product or project on social media and in interviews with the press can be helpful. Having a project management document that is shared between all parties and regularly updated or checking in with a weekly call while the project is coming together are also tactics for addressing issues as they arise quickly and effectively.

The cannabis industry changes rapidly - assumptions about cost and timing must always be taken with a grain of salt, and collaborators should always be aware that the best laid plans often shift within this space.

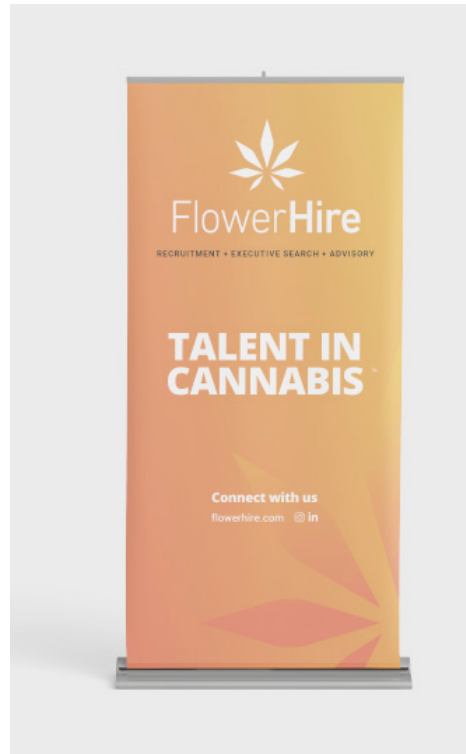
LASTLY, WHAT PRACTICAL ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS LOOKING TO COLLABORATE WITHOUT FINANCIAL INVESTMENT?

First, make a list of everything you could potentially offer someone looking to launch a brand, product, or project in your city or state. For example, as a California manufacturer and distributor, I can offer brand collaboration for placement on retail shelves I am already on, marketing support through our social media channels, placement in ads and mentions in interviews, etc. Then, make a list of what you need (i.e. Biko needs brand recognition and trademarking in adult-use cannabis markets nationally). Sometimes, as is the case with myself as a small brand with a manufacturing license, I will be able to offer the collaboration that you need. I could help launch a brand in California through my Biko brand and a New York brand could help Biko launch on the east coast. Neither party in this case would need to spend money to collaborate. Both parties could simply develop a co-branded label to support the launch and create a marketing plan that serves them both. After the launch, both brands would be able to share the information with their trademark attorneys to create legal protection. We can all be multi-state operators if we are willing to collaborate! 🌸

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PANELISTS ON THE MAIN STAGE AT THE INAUGURAL HIGHER CONFERENCE IN JUNE 2023

CREATING SPACE

FOR WOMEN OF COLOR IN CANNABIS

BY SHEENA ROBERSON

Higher became more than just a concept; it became a mission—a mission to provide a platform where women of color could gather, share experiences, and access the resources needed for success.

NURTURING A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Women of color face unique challenges in the cannabis industry—challenges often overlooked or underestimated. Higher aims to change that. It's about more than just seminars and networking; it's about fostering a supportive community where women can uplift each other, collaborate, and thrive. We prioritize discussions on entrepreneurship, investment strategies, and the latest advancements in cannabis science—all with the goal of empowering women to excel in this burgeoning industry.

Health equity is also a driving force behind Higher. We're committed to leveraging cannabis as a tool for healing and wellness as we acknowledge the systemic disparities that have plagued communities of color for far too long. Workshops and panels at Higher cover the medicinal properties of cannabis, equipping attendees with the knowledge to make informed



“That pivotal moment of **feeling isolated at that conference fueled my resolve.** I realized that if no spaces existed for women of color in this industry, then it was my duty to create them”.



HIGHER CREATED THE SPACE FOR MANY WOMEN OF COLOR IN CANNABIS TO CONNECT IN PERSON FOR THE FIRST TIME.

health decisions. By addressing these disparities head-on, we're working to ensure that everyone—regardless of race or socioeconomic status—has access to the benefits of cannabis.

THE GENESIS OF CANNABIS NOIRE

Before the inception of Higher, I created Cannabis Noire, a consultancy focusing on educating and empowering people of color in the cannabis industry. Stemming from my own experiences navigating the industry, I recognized the need for a platform that specifically catered to the unique challenges faced by communities of color. Cannabis Noire became that platform—a space where voices that had long been marginalized could finally be heard, valued, and empowered.

As the cannabis industry continues to evolve, so does our commitment to inclusivity and equity. Through initiatives like Cannabis Noire, I'm extending our reach beyond the conference walls, collaborating with local organizations to provide education and resources to those who need them most. Our work isn't just about changing the industry; it's

about changing lives—breaking down barriers and creating a more just and equitable world.

Cannabis, often stigmatized and criminalized, serves as more than just a commodity in our community. It's a segue into conversations that are often deemed too uncomfortable or taboo—conversations about systemic inequalities, racial disparities, and the lasting impact of the war on drugs. Cannabis Noire creates the safe spaces these tough conversations can take place, where we can confront the harsh realities of our past and present in order to create a brighter future.

A MOVEMENT IN THE MAKING

My journey in the cannabis industry has been one of discovery, resilience, and unwavering determination. Through Higher, we're not just creating a conference; we're building a movement—a movement that empowers women of color to take their rightful place in the industry, to shatter glass ceilings, and to redefine what's possible. Together, we're rewriting the narrative, one conference at a time. 🌿

A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE

Navigating the Cannabis Space as an Afro-Latina

BY PILAR DEJESUS

As an Afro-Latina woman, my journey through the cannabis space has been one of resilience, growth, and empowerment. From a young age, I felt a deep connection with the plant, recognizing its benefits even before fully understanding them. Growing up in the marginalized community of East Harlem (El Barrio), cannabis became a source of solace and support.

My upbringing was marked by strained relationships, particularly with my mother. Our tumultuous relationship deeply impacted me, leaving me feeling isolated and struggling to find my place in the world. As the darkest member of my Mexican side, I grappled with feelings of otherness and the weight of societal expectations.

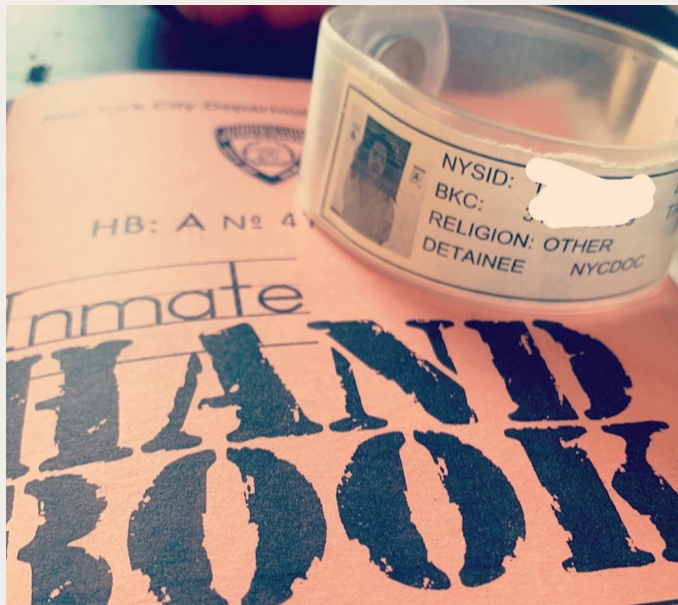
In my early adulthood, I had to navigate the challenges of balancing my love for the plant with career opportunities. Working at the pharmaceutical company, Pfizer for 5 years, I refrained from smoking to adhere to employment requirements, demonstrating my commitment to my career. However, life took unexpected turns, leading to the loss of my job due to a merger and the tragic murder of my brother in 2010.

It was during these tumultuous times that I turned back to cannabis for solace and healing. Coping with the loss of my brother, the loss of employment, and the responsibilities of caregiving for my grandmother, who suffered from Alzheimer's, was not easy. I have faced many personal struggles, including coping with my sister's homelessness and addiction to strong drugs. Her situation, rooted in childhood sexual abuse,



has been a heartbreaking reminder of the trauma that many in our community endure. Reflecting on my own journey of healing, I recognize the importance of speaking out about my own experiences, which include my own childhood trauma that I didn't open up about until later in life. It took decades of continued healing for me to find the strength to speak openly about it. Looking back, I wish I had been more educated about cannabis, as I believe it could have provided better relief for my family.

I joined the Start SMART coalition, a coalition that fought hard for the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA). I chaired the community reinvestment working group and participated in the worker co-op



“Reflecting on my own journey of healing, I recognize the importance of speaking out about my own experiences...**Looking back, I wish I had been more educated about cannabis,** as I believe it could have provided better relief for my family”.

group, tirelessly advocating for policy change. I did this as I worked full-time as a tenant rights advocate, fighting displacement of NYC tenants who are mostly Black and Latino.

During the fight(s), life threw more challenges at me, as I found myself involved in a raid and faced a felony charge, which concluded in November 2020 after navigating through various hurdles.

I co-founded a women of color marijuana worker cooperative the same year, called Hi Mi Madré!, our co-op faced many challenges, which ultimately led to the business not surviving. That experience was a profound lesson in the realities of entrepreneurship, particularly for Black and Latino entrepreneurs, who often lack the necessary resources and support. It was a setback, but it fueled my determination to continue fighting for reparations in the cannabis industry and creating my own business in the industry.

Post legalization in New York, I founded "All That Jive NYC," curating and facilitating community events driven by the transformative power of education. One of my proudest achievements was the establishment of the first NYC block party celebrating Juneteenth and the end of cannabis prohibition. Despite initial doubts, the event has become a staple in the East Harlem community, demonstrating the power of collective celebration and advocacy.

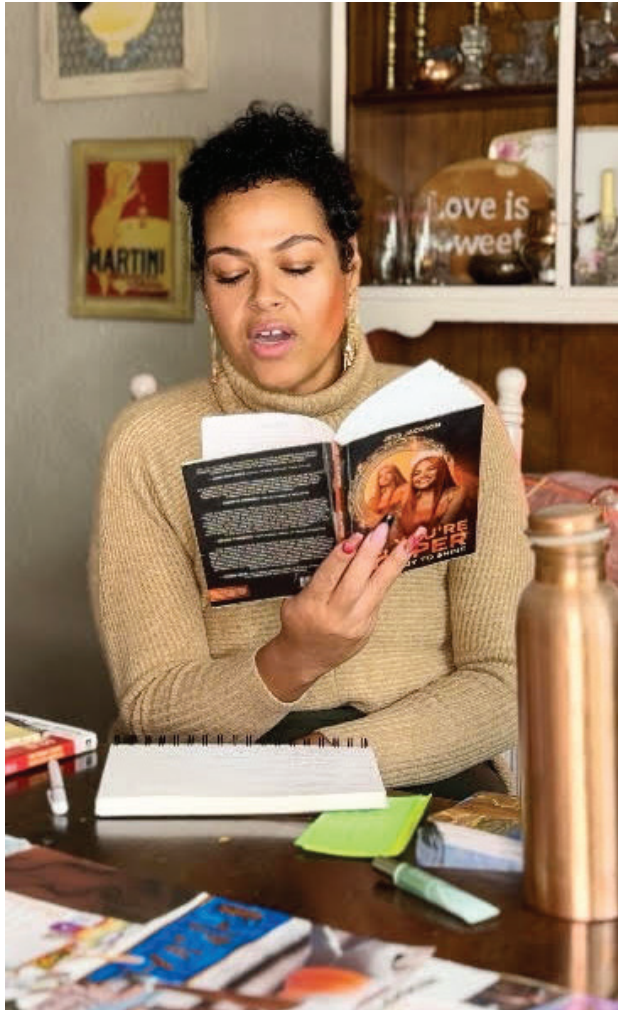
However, amidst the celebration of the end of prohibition, I can't ignore the lack of advocacy and organizing in the NYC cannabis space during the regulation period. It is disheartening to witness self-interest overshadow collective efforts. Through it all, I leaned on cannabis and other plant medicines for solace as I navigated PTSD.

Now more than ever, I am dedicated to providing my community with the tools they need to thrive and heal. With a focus on empowering youth, I strive to address the root issues behind their struggles, including homelessness and trauma. By understanding and addressing their needs, we can guide them towards healing and empowerment.

My journey through the cannabis space as an Afro-Latina woman has been one of triumph over a lot of adversity. I will continue to fight for justice, uplift my community, and inspire others to reach higher and aim for a brighter future. 🌿

UNVEILING AUTHENTICITY

Jess Jackson's Transformative Memoir



Jess Jackson is a trailblazer in the cannabis industry, advocating for the visibility and inclusion of marginalized communities. In her role as the former Director of External Affairs and Social Equity at Common Citizen, Michigan's largest vertically integrated cannabis producer, Jess strategically directed external affairs initiatives related to social responsibility and community benefit partnerships. Managing a 1.1 million-dollar reinvestment portfolio, she led philanthropic efforts, earning recognition from

state regulators for her Gold-Star program design. Now she is sharing her story in her new memoir, “Sis, You’re Copper.”

This work is not merely a book; **it’s a source of healing, empowerment, and self-discovery,** especially crafted for those navigating complex identities and seeking authentic living.



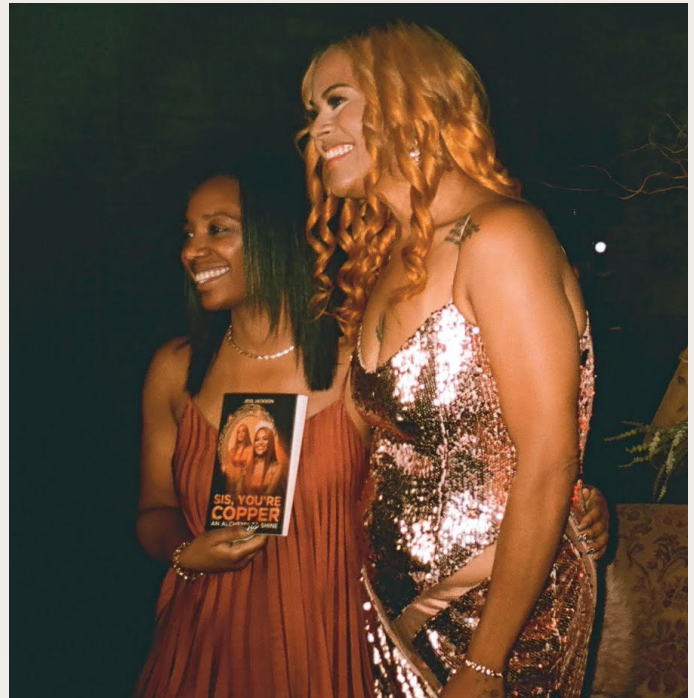
Jackson’s memoir is a testament to the importance of writing from personal experience. By sharing her own life stories and what she refers to as “shot shows”—incidents that have left a lasting impact—she provides a framework for readers to reflect on and reframe their own experiences. By opening up about her own struggles and triumphs, she invites readers into a space of mutual understanding and empathy. This shared vulnerability can be transformative, fostering a sense of connection and acceptance that is often elusive in a fragmented world.

A central theme in Jackson’s work is the role of the ego in human connection and wellness. She posits that while the ego serves as a form of self-protection, it often becomes a barrier to true connection and healing. Through her personal journey involving adaptogenic healing, therapy, and psychiatry, Jackson has worked to dismantle her own ego defenses. Her holistic approach, which she terms “Copper Alchemy,” offers readers practical tools to achieve balance and wellness in their own lives. This methodology is not just about healing;

it's about transforming how we interact with ourselves and the world around us.

"Sis, You're Copper" is imbued with Jackson's guiding principles and wellness tools, tailored specifically for bi-racial queer women from inner cities like Detroit. However, its wisdom extends beyond this demographic, offering valuable insights for anyone struggling with a sense of belonging and purpose. The Copper Alchemy framework encourages readers to reclaim their struggles, create unapologetic boundaries, and identify opportunities for profound self-discovery. It's a comprehensive guide to living authentically and embracing one's unique identity. The Copper Alchemy community is a testament to the power of shared experiences and collective resilience.

"Sis, You're Copper" is available for purchase on her website: JessHuman.com 🌿



3 Must-Attend

Conferences for Women in Cannabis

Attending industry conferences is a powerful way to build new relationships and reconnect with longtime colleagues. For women, these spaces can often serve as safe and nurturing environments for career development, especially as women continue to be underrepresented in the cannabis industry as a whole.

According to a special 2023 report by MJ Biz Daily titled "Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Cannabis Industry," women account for 39% of executives, up from 22% in 2022. This positive trend highlights the growing presence and influence of women in the cannabis sector, making it more important than ever to attend conferences that support and empower this demographic.



HIGHER CONFERENCE

Recognized as the first conference specifically designed for women of color in cannabis, the Higher Conference is an annual event dedicated to celebrating and empowering BIPOC women in the cannabis industry. Founded by entrepreneur and visionary leader Sheena Roberson, the conference operates on principles of diversity, inclusion, and social equity. By providing a platform for education, networking, and advocacy, the Higher Conference aims to drive positive change and foster a more inclusive cannabis industry-minded professionals.

HEALING OUT LOUD

Transformation Through Plant Medicine

BY NICKY BUFFONG



A LIFE-ALTERING DIAGNOSIS

“Mrs. Buffong, you are HIV positive.” These words would forever change my life. While I sat in the Atlanta hospital emergency room in March of 2016 listening to the doctor explain my diagnosis, I was in shock. Dissecting what had led me to this point at 35 years old. I lost my dad and sister in a fatal car accident on their way to my 25th birthday party. Then, I chose cocaine and sex to manage the guilt and grief, which culminated in the diagnosis ten years later.

I waited a year before going public with my diagnosis. Posting a video on Facebook in March 2017 that went viral within a few months was my ticket to freedom. Now that my secret was out, I could begin the work. I researched Dr. Sebi, the Honduran herbalist and healer, and understood the work he had done to heal patients from HIV. This began my plant medicine journey and would later have a huge impact on my life.

GETTING STARTED IN THE INDUSTRY: GEORGIA TO NEVADA

In August of that year, I was introduced to Roz McCarthy, founder of Minorities for Medical Marijuana (M4MM). By December, I had launched the M4MM chapter for Georgia and began my work as an advocate to change laws in the state, which included: adding more diseases to the list of qualifying diagnoses and lobbying for safe access for patients. However, by 2019, I knew I needed to move to a state that provided me safe access to the medicine I needed.

I became a medical refugee and moved across the country settling in Las Vegas, Nevada. I immediately got to work, launching the Nevada state chapter for the M4MM organization, engaging with allied organizations like NORML, Women Grow and Cannabis Equity & Inclusion Community. In December of 2020, I was appointed to serve on the first Chamber of Cannabis Board of Directors. Over the course of the last four years, we have lobbied for legislation to: legalize consumption lounges in the state, double the daily purchase limit; and allow formally incarcerated people to work in the industry. Currently, we are gearing up for legislative session 2025 and have established a policy innovation lab to workshop with the Nevada cannabis community to bring new ideas to elected officials on how to further build a sustainable cannabis industry in Nevada.



THE BIRTH OF HEAL OUT LOUD

After 7 years of learning from some of the best advocates for plant medicine, I decided to build out my personal brand. My form of advocacy is telling patient stories. It starts with my personal journey to healing using plants as medicine. Heal Out Loud with Nicki B was launched in February 2024 on FM radio here in Las Vegas.

Heal Out Loud is an innovative livestream show that dives deep into plant-based wellness, with a particular focus on the therapeutic potential of cannabis. For individuals navigating chronic health challenges, Heal Out Loud is a source of knowledge and motivation for those pursuing relief through a plant-centric lifestyle. I have partnered with Dr. Sebi's oldest grandson, who is continuing the legacy of his grandfather and the concept of removing mucus from the body using his cell food, which then treats any disease.

As a plant medicine advocate, I understand how important it is to understand that food is medicine. Through this platform, I get to use my story to educate my community about the power of plants as medicine. 🌿

3 Must-Attend *Conferences for Women in Cannabis*



LATINAS IN CANNABIS SUMMIT

The Latinas in Cannabis Summit is a one-day event in Los Angeles organized by Latinas in Cannabis, the largest digital and in-person community for Latina entrepreneurs, professionals, creatives, and advocates in cannabis. Founded by Latina cannabis entrepreneur Susie Plascencia, this summit addresses critical issues such as cannabis stigma, cannamotherhood, and the Latina experience in the cannabis industry. Both the organization and its summit aim to dismantle cultural and gender-based stigmas surrounding cannabis use that create barriers to success for Latinas.



WOMEN IN CANNABIS EXPO

The Women in Cannabis Expo was established to connect women from the U.S. and all over the world who are currently working in or aspire to work within the cannabis industry. Despite the increasing recognition of women in various roles within the space—from cultivation and product development to medical research and advocacy—recent data shows that only 8% of women in the cannabis industry occupy CEO and other top company positions. The Women in Cannabis Expo aims to address this disparity by providing a platform for women to showcase their talents, share knowledge, and explore new opportunities.

FROM ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST to Plant Medicine Executive

BY CHELSEA CANDELARIA

My love affair with cannabis began several decades ago. It started with me as a curious biology student at UC Berkeley. My life was changed when I took a medical ethnobotany class taught by Dr. Thomas Carlson. It was the first time a scientist validated my assumptions that cannabis was beneficial. Growing up, many people in my family smoked cannabis but as a DARE kid and Christian I was always told it was bad. Even as a kid I didn't believe the lies because my family that smoked was generally happier after the fact. At that time, (I'm old yall) little was known about the endocannabinoid system or the impacts of cannabinoids on the body. Fast forward post graduation I was hired by a civil engineering firm and began my career as environmental scientist sampling soils, water, and building materials, it was my first dose of adulthood. Like many I was stressed so I turned to weed as a means to decompress and have a good time with my friends. Fast forward a few years later in my career, I was climbing the corporate ladder, working at federal research centers and top engineering consulting firms but something was missing from my wellness routine, I was running, lifting, eating well but was falling apart, I again turned to cannabis to help me get a handle on things.

One summer my cousin, a legacy cultivator invited me up to the property. My life was changed at that moment. I smoked blunts and had my first dab of fresh pressed rosin in the middle of the forest with my family. We worked hard to get the property ready for the upcoming season and just as we were going to harvest, the farm was raided despite being compliant with Prop 215 regulations, this was prior to cannabis going recreational in California. My cousin was locked up on trumped up charges, the farm helped to support multiple members of my family including his children,



mother, and our grandmother. It made no sense to me and being the scientist I am, I looked to find a solution to the problem. While we raised money for his lawyer (using weed), I was still working in corporate engineering. I decided I would try to enter the cannabis industry legally to try to build a pathway for my family. I had absolutely no clue how I would do it, I literally just started showing up, conferences, events, you name it.

I took a huge leap of faith to pursue a real purpose rooted in justice and healing. While the journey has been wild af, it was one of the best decisions I could have made. I learned the hard way early on that this industry is not for the weak, you have to have some real grit to deal with everything that comes with good and bad. I have been harassed by a narcissistic founder, lost money by taking big risks, been stressed + depressed but I have done the coolest shit and found my purpose. I want to thank people like Morris Kelly, Founder and CEO of SF Roots for giving me my first chance at true leadership and Ramon Garcia + Nina Parks for trusting my leadership. I now sit on the Board of The Equity Trade Network with Ramon + Nina and am acting COO of Oakland Extracts, one of the only legacy Black owned extracts company on the market with Terryn Buxton as the CEO, and have launched my own brand Calling Marijane. This work has also led me to psychedelics. I function as Chief of Staff at Oakland Hyphae, Hyphae Labs and Hyphae Leaks. Shout out to the entire Hyphae Team! I don't necessarily recommend anyone leave their corporate job like I did, having a plan is best for your sanity and bank account. My journey is unique, guided by God and purpose if you feel as deeply as I do just go for it but learn from the mistakes of people like me! 🌿



3 Must-Attend

Conferences for Women in Cannabis

While the Higher Conference, Latinas in Cannabis Summit, and Women in Cannabis Expo are three highly-recommended conferences, they represent only a fraction of the popular women-focused gatherings currently on the rise. Each gathering offers unique opportunities for learning, connection, and advocacy, helping to empower women and create a space for them to thrive. As the cannabis industry continues to evolve, the importance of these conferences will only increase, making them essential for any woman looking to make her mark in cannabis.

FEATURED SPEAKERS





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 CBD
 PRODUCT



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 Full Spectrum CBD Oil
restartcbd.com

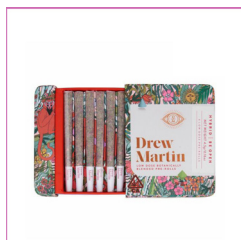


PAPA & BARKLEY
 Hemp Relief Gummies
papaandbarhleyhemp.com



PLAIN JANE
 CBN:CBD:CBG OIL
plainjane.com

FAVORITE
 PRE-ROLL



DREW MARTIN
 Be Open Pre-Rolls
drewmartin.co



DOG WALKERS
 Mini Pre-Rolls
dogwalkersprerolls.com

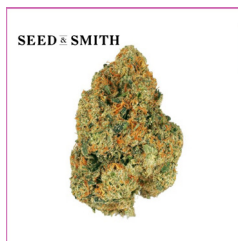


BARBARI + XULA
 Period Daze Pre-Rolls
barbarishops.com
xulaherbs.com

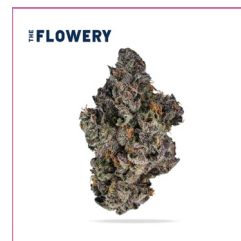
FAVORITE
 FLOWER



MOON MADE FARMS
 Cherry Moon
moodmadefarms.com



SEED & SMITH
 Apricot Scone
seedandsmith.com



THE FLOWERY
 Sunset Sherbert Eight
theflowery.co

FAVORITE
 INTIMACY
 PRODUCT



HIGH PRIESTESS
 Rouse: CBD Arousal Oil
highpriestess.com



FORIA
 Intimacy Melts With CBD
foria.com



HIGH ON LOVE
 Stimulating O Gel
highonlove.co

FAVORITE
VAPE
PRODUCT



BLOOM
Rosin Sour Strawberry
thebloombrands.com



LEUNE
Piña Dream
leune.co



TONIC
Zone CBD Vape Pen
tonicvibes.com

FAVORITE
CBD SKIN
PRODUCT



GREEN BEE BOTANICALS
Quench Moisturizer
greenbeebotanicals.com



POTENCY NO. 710
Gold Skin Serum
potency710.com



HEY BUD
Clay Mask
heybudskincare.com

FAVORITE
EDIBLE



KIVA
CBN "Sleep" Midnight Blueberry
kivaconfections.com



CURALEAF
Jams Sour Green Apple
curaleaf.com



WYLD
Cannabis Infused Pear Gummies
wyldcanna.com

FAVORITE
BEVERAGE



BRELIXI
Elderberry + Hibiscus CBD
Lemonade Mix STICK
brelix.com



RECESS
Pomegranate Hibiscus
takearecess.com



PAMOS
Microdose Spirit
pamos.com

BEST
INNOVATIVE
PRODUCT



ZENCO
Zenco Flow
thezenco.com



CURALEAF
Select Squeeze Strawberry
Lemonade Beverage Infusion
curaleaf.com



REBELLE
Halo Mist
letsrebelle.com

CULTURE



MIJA'S MANERA

FUSING ART + CANNABIS AND FUNCTIONALITY

BY ALESSANDRA INZINNA



When family comes over, many will grab the glassware bong sitting on the coffee table and shove it on a shelf somewhere. Not to be seen. Not to be talked about.

Tina Zumarán got tired of that. Hiding implies shame, and Zumarán has nothing to be ashamed of. She's no longer a daughter who hides her "paraphernalia" from her parents; she's a mother herself, a successful entrepreneur, and a proud cannabis user.

Zumarán gave birth to two babies this year. One is Mija's Manera and one is an actual human (a baby girl!). Mija's Manera sells Talavera ceramic bongs crafted from artists in Puebla, Mexico, who enjoy the natural clay deposits of that area. Talavera is a style of ceramics characterized by hand-painted, ornate designs commonly found on tiles, flower pots, dishware and more. Most will recognize the classic blue and white paint, finished by a milky glaze. Spanish colonizers introduced this style of art to Puebla, Mexico centuries ago, and the craft has since cemented itself in Mexican art and identity.



TINA ZUMARÁN, FOUNDER OF MIJA'S MANERA

Mija's Manera infuses Mexican culture with cannabis, a plant deeply rooted in her cultural heritage. While historically, Mexico was a major source of cannabis in the U.S., shifts toward domestic production have changed the landscape. Despite this, the influence of Mexican cannabis culture remains embedded. Yet, when she walks into the local smoke shop, she sees her culture reduced to caricatures, at most.

“Being a Mexican American is something that I truly am very proud of,” Zumarán said. “And in our culture, we, like other people of color, have been ostracized for the use and admiration of the cannabis plant.”

There’s an element of justice in Zumarán’s business. In a country where black and brown people face much harsher criminalization than white people for possessing cannabis, where those consuming the plant have had to fight stereotyping and relentless judgment from the general public, Mija’s Manera triumphantly rejects that.

The Talavera bongos are too beautiful to stash and hide. They’re centerpieces.

The name “Mija’s Manera” directly translates to “daughter’s way.” It’s a play on some of the slang Zumarán grew up with, mainly calling a woman who smokes cannabis “la marihuanera,” which is seen as a shameful title.

“You don’t want to be a ‘marihuanera;’ you want to be an educated woman who can have a nice glass of wine. That’s seen as elite,” she shares. “But that doesn’t bring me comfort and peace.”

With Mija’s Manera, Zumarán is luring you out of the shadows. Leave your bong on the table. Dare others to pass judgment, and if they do, offer them a rip. Let the daughters have their way. ✨

VISIT [MIJASMANERA.COM](https://mijasmanera.com) TO GET YOUR HANDS ON YOUR OWN CENTERPIECE!





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A 2024 GUIDE TO CANNABIS FRIENDLY DESTINATIONS

BY SHAYNA CONDE



SHAYNA CONDE IN POSTED UP
IN BARCELONA, SPAIN

As a travel and cannabis journalist, I can clock a cannabis-friendly destination immediately. While I have a few favorite cities in the USA, some of my favorite pro-puff havens are international. Here are some of my tried-and-true locations for canna-travel and other places that are on my vision board for 2025. If you're itching for a solo or group vacation, say no more. I got you!

US-BASED DESTINATIONS: THE BAY AREA, CALIFORNIA

What many cannabis travelers might not tell you is that California cannabis is fast outpacing the Amsterdam cannabis scene. While the laws in the US still have some catching up to do, when it comes to quality and innovation, Europeans definitely look to California as a serious competitor. The Bay Area, specifically, has been a flagship in the cannabis scene for years. From August

17-18, 2024, Oakland, California, will be hosting the 20th annual Emerald Cup, one of the largest outdoor cannabis competitions in the world. Across the Bay, in San Francisco, be sure to check out some of my favorite cannabis chefs, like Haejin Chun, who I previously featured in a Food & Wine Magazine article.

PORTLAND, OREGON

Along with being one of the first states to legalize cannabis for adults, Portland also has an entire section of its tourism dedicated to cannabis. Before cannabis, I'm a foodie, and, as it stands, Portland is my favorite food destination in the US to date, so if you get the munchies, come to Portland and bring stretchy pants. Travel Portland, the city's tourism board, has a page on its website that outlines the city's rules, favorite dispensaries, and small businesses that sell signature cannabis. My fa-

avorites are Laurie + Mary Jane's Cheese Crisp Crackers and Green Muse Cannabis, a Black-owned dispensary in town.

DENVER, COLORADO

Colorado and Washington were the first states to officially legalize marijuana in 2014 and the cannabis tourism industry there is thriving. While I've only passed through Denver on my journey to Aspen, I noticed that Denver has countless activities and adventures for weed travelers. From smoke-and-paints and cannabis tours of the city to guided mountain excursions and comedy nights at AD's Mile High Smoke, the only licensed cannabis bar in Colorado, there's a lot to do in this city so making an itinerary beforehand would be wise.



snacks (edibles and gummies) can only be purchased through cannabis speakeasies. These exclusive cannabis clubs require identification and a fee of around 20-40 euros but then you receive year-long entry into the club of your choosing. Here you can not only purchase gummies and edibles, but (depending on the club) there are game nights, cannabis cooking classes, and so much more. These clubs are highly regulated and great for long or short-term stays.

JAMAICA

My mother is born-and-raised Jamaican, and while she may have complicated feelings about our motherland's relationship to cannabis, I find it something to be celebrated. Cannabis is intertwined with Jamaica's story of liberation and wonder, and some tourism companies, like Jacana and Ganja Vacations, have created cannabis history tours. These tours allow you to consume responsibly and (depending on what kind of adventure you want) visit the birthplace of Bob Marley, cook an authentic Jamaican meal with a chef, explore nature, or any other stimulating adventure.

INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS:

PORTUGAL

Portugal was the first country in the world to decriminalize the recreational use of all drugs (including cannabis) in 2001, so for an international trip, it should be high on your list. While I see the appeal of Lisbon, the nation's capital city, personally, I prefer Porto. Located in Portugal's northern coast, Porto is a sensory playground for people who want to vibe outside. From Peneda-Gerês, Portugal's only national park located about 90 minutes outside of Porto, to WOW Porto. WOW Porto is currently my favorite interactive museum in Europe, and it's all about wine. My top experiences there for cannabis travelers are the Chocolate Story (where you learn all about the chocolate-making process and eat chocolate along the way) and The Pink Palace (11 rooms with playful, social media-friendly activities plus a rose wine tasting). While you can't smoke in the building, exploring these experiences with a buzz is top-tier entertainment.

SPAIN

I'm in the process of moving to Spain as we speak and Barcelona's cannabis culture is close to my heart. While cannabis has been decriminalized, my favorite cannabis

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa officially decriminalized cannabis in private spaces in 2018, and now they are on the cutting edge of Africa's cannabis tourism sector. Along with surrounding yourself with Black culture, history, and food, why not catch a light fade as you enjoy your vacation? With an increasing number of cannabis tours and cannabis-friendly lodgings, like on Hibnb, South Africa is positioning itself to be a contender in the international cannabis marketplace. For those who want to get high and wonder, I recommend looking through Nicole Banister's Medium article, Black-Owned Businesses in Cape Town for how to build your itinerary. South Africa is at the top of my list for 2025! 🌿



WE ARE CANNABIS

WE ARE SOPHIS TICATED



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WE ARE CANNABIS



**MAISHA BAHATI, CO-FOUNDER
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