

UNIVERSAL

A One-of-a-kind ENDEVour

If you had to name the Jewish personalities behind for San Diego's recent growth, Dana Shertz would inevitably be at the top of the list. The charismatic and charming Shertz, a New Yorker to the core, is COO and Partner of EnDev Enterprises, one of the city's most influential development firms.

"EnDev stands for entertain and develop," the energetic Shertz tells me, waving his hands around as he leans back in his desk chair. "The entertainment side is the clubs, the development side could be a real estate project."

What EnDev has done, with their current properties, is a fitting tribute to their name. They have developed San Diego, built it up, with venues that entertain at a new level.

"Since there are only five partners [at EnDev], we as a team are trying to define a role for everyone so that we don't have to do everything," he says. "But at this stae, we kind of do because it's just a few of us and we have a stake in the thigns that we do. We are very opinionated East Coast guys that have to have our fingers in everything."

Very opinionated, perhaps. Very intelligent, most definitely.

EnDev's first property was Side Bar, which was the first bar in the Gaslamp to offer bottle service. One block away, they opened Stingaree, a 2000-capacity nightclub labeled one of the top 10 new bars in the country by MSN. Above Side Bar, the Witherby was opened: a high-end private event space named after epic San Diego banister Alex Witherby, who, in Shertz's words, was "an epic party monster."

EnDev's other properties include Ciro's Pizzeria, Top of the Cove, and Larry Abram's Bar West (see p. xx). But it is a



Shertz describes Universal as a nod to upscale West Hollywood venues like The Abbey or East/West. Not a single detail has been overlooked in the plans.

"It's a place where you can sit outside with fire pits or a place where you can sit in a booth in the back and hear some great music and enjoy great food... a place where, if you were gay, you could bring your grandmother there for brunch or your daughter for lunch and still feel completely comfortable."

Don't think Universal will be so tame, though. When night falls, Shertz envisions a full-scale club, complete with a DJ booth, a throbbing dance floor, and of course, a VIP section.

When asked how he thinks San Diego has changed over the years, he smiled before

14,000-square-foot space at the corner of answering.

Vermont and University in Hillcrest, still

under construction, that really has Shertz “You know, the downtown scene has never excited.

been the reason that people come to San Diego. They come to go to Sea World, they come for the zoo and the great weather. But I think that’s changing... all

That property will be called Universal.

“One of the things that happened,” Shertz these places have opened up, there’s a lot says, “it that Stingaree was voted that fourth more going on. And we like to think that most popular gay lounge and nightclub in we are bringing a little more glamour and San Diego.” He grins. “And of course, we sophistication to that party.”

don’t have a gay night, it’s not gay. We like

it, and we like to think we are gay friendly, **Universal** is slated to open this fall at 1210 but why then we thought, why isn’t there University Avenue in Hillcrest. For more anything like Stingaree, an upscale lounge information on the site, EnDev and their and restaurant in Hillcrest?” other properties, go to www.endevllc.com.

For feedback, contact
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