



Selling Peace of Mind

Meet Coastal Concierge, Holly Abbate



CapeWomenOnline spoke with Holly Abbate, the owner and operator of *Coastal Concierge*. Her local business, based in Orleans, helps homeowners solve all kinds of small problems. Her motto is "peace of mind in your free time."

What does a "concierge" business do on Cape Cod?

If you understand what a concierge does within the hotel setting, take that concept out of the hotel and apply it to the local community and you'll understand what we do.

We provide personalized assistance to residents, visitors, and second homeowners. Whether it is seasonal opening or closing of homes, personal shopping, gardening, provisioning, home organization, small event coordination, arranging in-home massage, waiting for repairmen, or other specialized requests, we aim to provide exceptional assistance.

How did you get started in this business?

I've been in the service industry for 20 years. Prior to starting Coastal Concierge, I'd been working in property management and found myself catering to more specific requests from customers. Experiencing some personal changes at that time required me to rethink what I was doing. The realization hit me that it was now or never if I wanted to start my own business!

It seemed there was a niche market evolving where this type of service was not only wanted, but also needed. I took a few business courses to get started and officially became Coastal Concierge in the summer of 2007. Learning to run a business is an ongoing and dedicated process, where learning never ends.

What towns on the Cape do you cover?

We work primarily in the lower Cape area, but have also worked in Barnstable and Truro. I have been asked to go as far as New Hampshire. It really depends on the nature of the job, and whether it will remain cost effective for the business. If I'm unable to fulfill a request, I try to refer that individual to the correct person/business that can help them. The majority of our clients are seasonal, with the off-season business continuing to grow steadily.

We're not exempt from the economic challenges of this particular economy, and that is what has kept us looking for new ways to create specialized services. In addition to offering our services to individuals, we can be accessed through local real estate offices, and also work closely with Ricotta & Associates Real Estate in Chatham.

When is your busiest time of year?

The summer season is definitely the busiest time of year, followed by spring and then the winter holidays. This past spring season I've actually added yet another service to our listings, specifically Estate Sales. Again, we are able to fill that niche by providing service to smaller estates that larger companies are not interested in. These sales are a combination of an incredible amount of work, followed by very satisfied customers, with a measure of fun thrown in!

My favorite time of the year has always been the summer. However, given the nature of my business, it

becomes the busiest and therefore most challenging. I'm learning how to balance my personal life with my job, and knowing how and when to take time off. The fall season is truly my time to breathe!

What is your favorite part of the business?

I find interacting with people ceaselessly entertaining, and the diversity of services we offer supplies an interesting mix. Yet knowing I've satisfied what I set out to do, small or large, is one of the motivating factors for continuing in a service driven enterprise!



What are your dreams for Coastal Concierge?

We are growing at a steady rate, which is comfortable and allows us to concentrate on what we are doing. Quick growth can come at a cost that leaves you with something you didn't plan on, and can result in dissatisfaction for both you and your clientele. So concentrating our growth for the off-season seems to be the plan for the near future.

Do you consider yourself a Green Business?

We are committed to 'green' practice and make every effort to use green, eco-friendly, and recycled products in our day-to-day living in the office, garden and beyond. Of course the nature of this type of service requires frequent traveling, and therefore does not always fall into the 'green' category.

On our website, www.Coastal-Concierge.com, you'll see we offer a "Green Bag" option for our customers. The recycled sailcloth bag featured is one-of-a-kind here on Cape Cod, and is unique to Coastal Concierge! It's designed as a convenience product, supplying the basic items we all need - but sometimes overlook - on our way to vacation. We'll be offering more options later this year using these recycled sail bags.

Additionally, I've developed and am currently marketing a unique "Go Green Bag" for Ricotta & Associates homeowners. This particular package offers that additional level of service visitors are coming to expect here on Cape Cod.

Holly Abbate lives on Cape Cod and is the owner and operator of *Coastal Concierge*.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit her website at www.Coastal-Concierge.com or call her at 508-776-6497.