

DEANNA & ANTONIO

OUR ADOPTION STORY



OUR BEGINNING

Deanna's Perspective

Our names are Deanna and Antonio. Our love story began 13 years ago when we met online. In 2008, I flew to Cuba, where Antonio lived, and met the man I had been speaking to every day for the past 9 months, along with his family. In 2009, I flew back to Cuba where Antonio ultimately proposed. Two years later, Antonio arrived in California where we married, right after his arrival the same day, in a private ceremony with just the two of us. In 2016, on my 40th birthday, we were fortunate enough to have our formal wedding with our closest friends. In 2021 we will be married 10 years.



WHO WE ARE

Antonio's Perspective

Deanna is 44 years old and I am 39 and we are total opposites that complement one another so well. She's the outgoing talker who will start a conversation with just about anyone. She's from Ohio but has a southern heart. I, on the other hand, am calm, quiet and have been told I have an old soul. I keep her calm and she pushes me out of my comfort zone. The thing we love to do together the most is laugh! I may be quiet, but I've been told I have great one liners. Deanna on the other hand is hilariously sarcastic and loves making others laugh! We find joy in playing and teasing one another. We also love to travel, even if it's just a few hours away for the weekend. We enjoy going to the beach, picnics in the park and various activities with our network of friends. However, as much as we love our outdoor activities, we're also fans of hanging out in the house chillin' with Netflix.



OUR FAMILY BACKGROUND

- ▶ Antonio is the oldest of 3 children, raised in Havana, Cuba by his parents, aunts and uncle. His parents divorced when he was young, however, he was able to spend time with both parents consistently.
- ▶ I am originally from the Midwest, the youngest of 5 children raised by a single mother. My parents divorced when I was 5 years old. At the age of 28, I moved here to California to pursue my independence. Meanwhile, because we live in California, we aren't able to see our immediate families as much as we'd like. However, we have "adopted" a family here of supportive friends.



OUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

As we said, we've adopted a group of friends as our family here in California. We are surrounded by a wonderful group of people we call our "Village". They are our support network that consists of singles, married folks, young and old from all different races, religions and backgrounds. They are who we rely on and the ones who have our back. We learned a very long time ago that blood doesn't make you family, it only makes you related. We've been blessed enough to choose our family that has such a diverse background, allowing us to surround our children with culture and history from numerous countries.



OUR HOUSEHOLD

Although we don't have any children in our home permanently, we do have a former foster child that stays with us from time to time, often for weeks at a time, due to the good relationship we established with her birth family. She is an adorable, smart, rambunctious little 4 year old that lights up any room she's in. This child may not be our biological daughter, but she most certainly is family. We are an inclusive couple, and because we embraced her biological family, she now has two families that adore and support her. She knows we are seeking to adopt and is super excited to be a "big sister" when the time comes. Last, but not least, we have three other little "kids", our dogs.





WHY WE ARE ADOPTING

While Antonio and I were still dating, I was diagnosed with severe endometriosis. That diagnosis made us aware that having children may be a challenge for us. However, in 2014 that initial challenge became a reality when I was diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer and had a hysterectomy. This reality has confirmed for us that adoption will be the only way we can grow our family. The good news is that I have been cancer free for more than 5 years now!! We are grateful and blessed to be healthy and strong!

We became Foster Parents in 2016 and have since had several children come through our home, but they have all reunified with their birth families. Now we are pursuing private infant adoption in hopes that this is the avenue God has provided for us to grow our family. We are a family of Christian faith and believe that God has our child or children out there somewhere and we will have the family we very much desire. We believe God has a plan for us and knows the desires of our hearts. We have the love, time, stability and resources to expand our family and provide a healthy living environment for any child.

