

Alpana Singh

TV Host, Restaurateur, and Wine Expert

Alpana Singh beat the odds and achieved her goal of becoming a Master Sommelier at the age of 26, the youngest woman and the only South Asian in the world ever to do so. Born and raised in Monterey, California, Alpana Singh's strong work ethic and ease with people of all ages stemmed from a youth spent working in her family's ethnic grocery store. Later, while waiting tables in college, Singh fell in love with wine and discovered that it united her varied interests in traveling, history and food.

Singh shares her inspiring story of rising from the daughter of Fijian immigrants to becoming a successful entrepreneur and television personality all while navigating a male-dominated profession. She gives groups a glimpse of the back of the house as she teaches them how to taste wines "blind," purchase bottles like a professional, and pair with meals for any occasion.

At 19, Singh began her path in the business with a job as a wine salesclerk at Nielsen Bros. Market in Carmel, California. By 23, she had landed the sommelier position at the world-renowned Everest Restaurant in Chicago. Just three years later, Singh earned the title Master Sommelier. This distinguished accomplishment, along with her effervescence, experience and energy, was magnetic, and it wasn't long before Singh found herself in the local spotlight. For ten seasons, she served as the host of the Emmy Award-winning restaurant review television show, *Check, Please!* on Chicago's PBS station and returned in 2018 after a 5-year absence.

In 2006, Singh released *Alpana Pours*, a unique lifestyles book that shares her social observations of wine, contemporary women and relationships. A humorous and real look at the sometimes-absurd interactions between men and women plays out in an entertaining book of tips for hosting and entertaining.

In December 2012, Singh opened The Boarding House, a wine-driven concept in the River North neighborhood. In February of 2015, Singh opened her next restaurant, Seven Lions, on Chicago's iconic Michigan Avenue. Her most recent venture, the namesake restaurant, Alpana, opened in Chicago's Gold Coast in 2022.

Singh is a member of the Advisory Council for the Illinois Restaurant Association and Choose Chicago where she serves as Treasurer on their Executive Committee. She played a significant role in bringing the James Beard Foundation Awards to the city of Chicago in 2015 and is an avid supporter of [Deborah's Place](#), an organization that assists and empowers women facing homelessness.