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People

# Our ▶▶ New Life

THREE MONTHS AFTER THEIR DREAM NAPA VALLEY CEREMONY, LISA RAY AND JASON DEHNI OPEN UP ABOUT WEDDED BLISS, THEIR NEW TORONTO HOME—AND YES, BABY PLANS  
BY SANDIPAN DALAL

**L**isa Ray and her banking executive husband Jason Dehni spend their day running their professional commitments, from taping for Top Chef Canada to business meetings. Yet when they unwind at their home off the city's Danforth Avenue, they're every bit of a family unit—cooking “vegetable chilli”, moving around artworks in the house, planning their garden and pandering to their Persian cat Coco. “We have christened the room with the giant flat screen as Jason’s ‘man cave’, while the rest is my terrain,” says Lisa with a laugh. Jason quickly adds, “Everyone tells me, ‘Happy wife, happy life’. So I leave the major decisions to Lisa.”

The surprise guest at their wedding (top right) on Oct. 20, 2012, was Jason's engagement present, Coco, a Persian cat.



“Truthfully, we’ve enjoyed shopping for furniture and conceptualising the feel of the home,” says Lisa (left, in Masaba Gupta) of her seven-bedroom home in Toronto.

Their “warm, welcoming and eclectic” haven is a reflection of their love that has only grown from the time they first met via a common friend to discuss their philanthropy work in 2010. “We have lived together before getting married but it feels different now,” says Jason. Meanwhile, Lisa counts her blessings for having found the man of her dreams. “He’s the bravest, smartest, handsomest, most ethical man I’ve ever known. How could I let him get away?” she says. Truth is that Jason blew her away by his commitment to be with her. Lisa, who bravely spoke out about her inspiring battle with cancer to PEOPLE in May 2010, was also encouraged by his support in raising funds for multiple myeloma research. To add to it, Jason gifted her Coco as an engagement present. “He’s not a cat person but he overcame his hesitation (for me),” she says. Their hope for the future? “We

## Bora Bora Honeymoon

After their Napa Valley “I do” the couple headed to Bora Bora for their honeymoon where they relished romantic canoe meals, swam with lagoon sharks and stingrays, took trips to a local chapel and indulged in Polynesian spa treatments. “Jason is also extremely romantic. I’ve got the perfect package,” says Lisa.



will grow (old) in awareness and support—and love,” Jason tells PEOPLE in this exclusive interview.

### What is it like to be married?

**Lisa:** Blissful and hectic. Post our honeymoon in Bora Bora, I made three back-to-back trips to India and somewhere in between all the travel we moved into our new home—and managed to do a shoot for PEOPLE after living there for only a week!

Jason also started a demanding new appointment, which will take him all over the world. I’m now creating a soothing home environment. I’m passionate about interiors and art, and it gives me pleasure to curate all the pieces I’ve picked up around the world in our new home. The best part of the day is when we meet in the evening and share our thoughts, adventures and heart’s desires with each other.

**Jason:** It feels natural and yet stim-



## TRUE CARING IS MAKING MY TEA AND TELLING ME WHAT IS TRULY ON YOUR MIND”

—LISA

ulating. The desire to spend time together keeps growing. Since we're so busy, we commit to sharing our evenings and weekends together to keep up with each other's lives and dreams.

### How does a typical day begin at your home?

**Lisa:** These days, Jason wakes first. I spent so many years waking before dawn to catch the first light, I feel I owe myself a few years of sleeping in now... besides sleep is therapeutic! Jason is disciplined. He goes for a run and then meditates. Then it's my turn. I have been creating a sacred space in our home where we can connect with ourselves. I prepare a green smoothie for us both, Jason gives Coco some attention, a kiss and a cuddle for me, and we're off and running.

### How has the experience of living together been?

**Jason:** We lived together before getting married, but it feels different now—more secure and yet exciting.

**Lisa:** I'm enjoying this experience, but of course, there are differences. I'm more Belle Epoque Parisian salon in aesthetic, while Jason is post-modern New York loft. So Jason gives me inputs and I make design decisions. He handles the technical stuff and we have christened the room with the giant flat screen as his 'man cave', while the rest is my terrain. We have chosen large furniture items like our bed and dining room set together.

**Jason:** Everyone tells me, 'Happy



wife, happy life'. So I leave the major decisions to Lisa.

### Tell us why this home, and neighbourhood, called out to you when you were deciding on your new house.

**Jason:** Lisa said, 'This is where I want to live,' and I said, 'Yes, baby.'

**Lisa:** Ha! We were driving home after visiting friends in the countryside when I saw the listing for this home,

got a feeling (the best things in my life have started with 'that' feeling) and we drove straight to see it. It was obvious this house was waiting for us. We both love this area—it's close to the centre of the city, but still quiet, green and peaceful. My favourite organic market is close by. In fact, the yoga studio that motivated me to train as a teacher and open my own studio (Moksha Yoga Brampton) is

just around the corner. It feels like the best neighbourhood for this phase of our lives.

### Jason, what are your favourite dishes amongst the ones Lisa whips up? Lisa, are you fond of Jason's cooking?

**Jason:** Vegetarian chilli.

**Lisa:** He cooked for me once. It was our third date and the salmon was undercooked but I found his effort so

endearing. And I had fallen for him, so I ate the half-cooked fish.

### Jason, you promised in your wedding vows to scream 'Babyji' to Lisa every single day. Have you kept the promise?

**Jason:** I have! Sometimes I shake it up a bit and call her 'baby love'.

### How do you relax at home after a busy day at work?

**Lisa:** By reading in the guest room

with our cat Coco at our feet, watching films or documentaries on our monster television and eating candlelit dinners. Jason's method of relaxation is planning the garden. He wants to create an urban oasis for me with an artist's studio.

**Jason:** And Lisa keeps directing me on how to hang the art. That's how she relaxes.

### Rewinding to your courtship, how



**did you meet and fall in love?**

**Lisa:** Jason loves to say that I picked him up online while I say, I manifested him. That kind of describes our different world views. We have fractured but overlapping views on how we met.

A mutual friend in Canadian media thought we should meet since Jason founded a charity called Artbound, which was going to build a sustainable village in Udaipur. The first meeting never really ended. I was lovestruck. He's the bravest, smartest, handsomest, most ethical man I've ever known. How could I let him get away?

**Lisa, you met Jason soon after your battle with multiple myeloma. How did he help you in its aftermath?**

**Lisa:** Jason is a rare man, with a combination of strength, integrity and sensitivity. He never once flinched from the prospect of falling in love and spending his life with a cancer graduate or cancer chick. He did want to be educated on the condition and even knowing it is incurable—and that there will be good and bad days as a multiple myeloma patient—he committed to me. Not just that, he supports all the awareness building I have been doing and lends his expertise in raising funds for research for multiple myeloma. I always dreamed of being with a partner with whom I could grow.

**When are you planning to start a family?**

**Jason:** Soon. Definitely soon.

**Lisa:** Look at him. This man needs to replicate.

**How do you see yourself growing old together?**

**Jason:** We will grow in awareness and support. And love.

**Lisa:** All I know is I'm with the man I was meant to spend my life with, at the right moment of my life. Jason gives me a sense of grounding and yet courage to be myself and allow all expectations to drop away. He's perfect... for me. ●

**Living With Cancer**

"I will always live with it, as multiple myeloma doesn't go away," says Lisa. After her battle with cancer in 2009-2010, she is committed to raising funds for multiple myeloma research. "Crisis can be a blessing and a lesson in disguise," she adds. Last December, Lisa auctioned her wedding saree to raise funds for cancer research in India. She then launched a special capsule line of 10 sarees with messages of hope called LisaRay4SatyaPaul collection that she designed herself. A portion of the proceeds will go to the Living With Cancer foundation in New Delhi.

