

LAS VEGAS *Business and Pleasure*

Last month, Ashley Haywood, the founder and owner of Fairview-based Embrew Tea, took a business trip to a trade show in Las Vegas. The Crier asked if we could tag along by sharing photos of her trip.

Haywood, who we profiled in our April 2022 issue, has been slowly growing her business. In October, she received an NC IDEA MICRO grant, which funds young companies looking to expand, and this inspired her to go to Vegas to participate in her first retail trade show.

The Winter Fancy Food Show, like other trade shows, is held in a large exhibit space, where vendors rent space (usually called a “booth”) so they can easily meet with buyers from all kinds of companies—and vice versa. At this show, there were thousands of attendees from all over the world, representing more than 40 product categories.

If you’ve taken an interesting trip—for business, pleasure or both—let us know about it!



Ashley Haywood (right) and Jessica Coffield, her marketing manager, at the show. “It was such a fun event,” said Ashley. “I never imagined having an adult Disney-like experience—riding in a Tesla underground to the West Hall each day, wearing a candy lei, and noshing on Nashville hot chicken skin snacks, all in one trip!”

Arriving at the Winter Fancy Food Show



Exciting and New

Many new products are featured at trade shows. And Ashley’s tea made the cut at the Winter Fancy Food Show. She was able to connect with retail buyers for small and large specialty food stores, such as TJ Maxx, and many gourmet and specialty grocery stores.



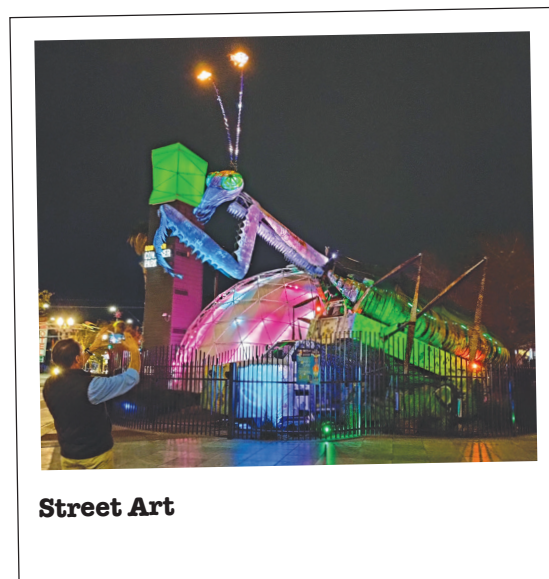
Getting Exposure

Ashley was interviewed twice at the show. First, above, by the Specialty Food Association, which runs the show and featured her on their live stream of the first day of the show, and then by a journalist doing trendspotting for the show.



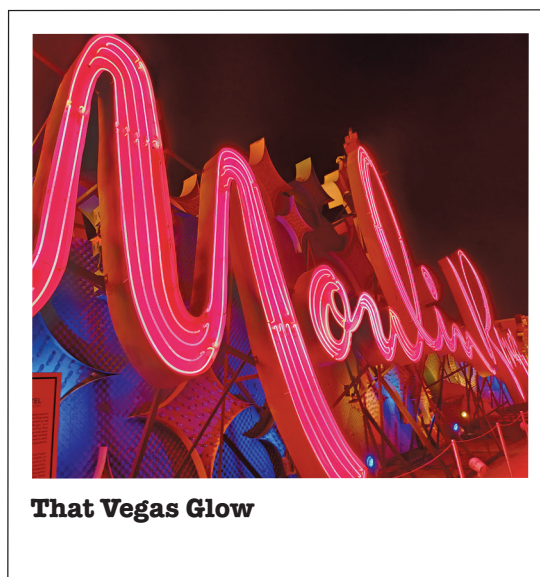
When in Vegas

It wasn't all work. “I went to see the magician David Blaine. He jumped off a six-story platform into a pile of boxes. And he burned up a \$100 bill from the audience after reading the serial number, doused it in water and drank it, and then pulled the intact bill out of his mouth with the same serial number on it. It was wild!”



Street Art

The Mantis is a 40-foot tall, 30-foot-wide moving sculpture built by aerospace engineer Kirk Jellum and his team. The sculpture spouts flames that reach six stories high, and it also speaks over 20 different languages. “It was quite a sight when we stopped there on our foodie tour!”



That Vegas Glow

“We also went to the Neon Museum, where they retire vintage Vegas signage.”



Big and Bright

Haywood stopped by the Downtown Vegas Fremont Street Experience. The canopy is the largest video screen in the world: 1,375 feet long, 90 feet wide and suspended 90 feet above the street.