

Interview with Rana Florida, CEO of the Creative Class Group

By [Paul Johnson](#) on Jul 08, 2014 in [Accommodation](#), [Air Travel](#), [Celebrities](#), [Europe](#), [Food and Drink](#), [Going Out](#), [Hotels](#), [Interviews](#), [Italy](#), [Middle East](#), [Regions](#), [Restaurants](#), [Speciality Travel](#), [Travel Miscellany](#), [United Arab Emirates](#), [Western Europe](#) - Read 1102 times

Rana Florida is the CEO of the [Creative Class Group](#), managing new business development, marketing, consulting, research and global operations. The firm's clients include BMW, Converse, Starwood, IBM, Philips, and Zappos to name just a few. Rana has appeared as a guest on The Today Show and MSNBC and was featured on the front business page of The New York Times. Her writing has appeared in Fast Company and Inc.com and she writes a business advice column for the Huffington Post where she interviewed s President Bill Clinton, First Lady Michelle Obama, Andre Agassi, Jeans-George, Nelly Furtado and several others. Rana is the author of the best-seller [Upgrade, Taking Your Work and Life from Ordinary to Extraordinary](#).



What is it that you do exactly?

I love to get an hour walk or an hour of tennis in daily. Most of my writing is best in the morning, when I'm feeling fresh and engaged. Then around that, I schedule conference calls with clients in the morning, attend meetings on a must attend policy basis only, respond to hundreds of emails. Then I like to wind down the day with reading – anything and everything, mostly curated through my twitter feed, from CityLab, Quartz, The Atlantic, The New Yorker to the Huffington Post, Daily Beast and others. I love to make a home cooked healthy dinner with my husband and try to go to bed before midnight.

What do you enjoy most about what you do?

I love taking our team's big thought leadership ideas and making them applicable to our clients, like Converse, Starwood or Zappos. How can these theories and our data make them more competitive? How can we help them make the right investment decisions on locational choices and how can we help their marketing strategies by targeting the right consumers. We have an amazing data engine and lots of expertise on our team. Understanding our clients' goals and objectives and adding value is really rewarding.

What would you say are the 3 best places you've ever stayed?

[Le Sirenuse, Positano](#) - the hotel pool and bar jut out over the Mediterranean and the twinkling lights on the mountain side are stunning at sunset.

[Villa d'Este](#) on Lake Como is so beautiful and is commonly referred to as "heaven on earth." The property has 25 acres of luxuriously landscaped park and terraced water gardens. The hotel has two historic mansions, one from the 16th century, and the other was built for a queen of England. The floating pools have the most breathtaking views of Lake Como and views of the Alpine foothills. If you sleep with your windows open, you rise to the sound of lapping water and breakfast is served on the terrace.

[Villa Cimbrone](#), Ravello – we were married there and it's absolutely the most magical place on earth. An 11th century villa, terrace overlooking the Mediterranean and magnificent gardens; it's a bucket list destination.

What's been your most memorable dining experience to date?

Dining at the [Al Mahara](#) (The Oyster Shell) at the Burj Al Arab in Dubai. Truly a remarkable setting dining underwater in a huge floor to ceiling aquarium, the gigantic and colorful sea life swim right by your table.

Have you rubbed shoulders with the rich and famous, either through your work or your travels?

My favourite musician Jack White! Richard and I met him in Nashville. He gave us and Mayor Karl Dean a tour of his studio, Third Man Records. Then he invited us into his recording booth to sing a track, which was the oldest recording booth in the US, he had just acquired. We sang

Happy Birthday to Mayor Dean, and he named the record The Detroit Move (because he and I both hail from Detroit) and we walked out with a track we sang with Jack White! [Take a listen](#).

What currently ranks highest on your travel wish list?

Another first class seat on Emirates Airline - it's amazing!! You have an entire cabin to yourself and there is a spa shower on board. So refreshing to take one just before landing.

Thank you for taking part in our interview, Rana. Al Mahara is somewhere I'd love to try myself one day!