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Wisdom in counting beans



ANGELA Vithoulkas is the co-founder and director of VIVO Cafe Group, a string of cafes, and spends 14 hours a day at the coalface of the business.

She says she is using her speaking career to encourage and inspire business owners.

What was your first investment and how did it go?

It was also my first business, a tiny sandwich shop. I doubled my investment in 2½ years.

What is your favourite type of investment and why?

Shares. I can control my portfolio and track my investments. They are transparent, flexible and liquid. Property is a big part of our long-term strategy, though.

What is the best investment advice you have received and who was it from?

That business life is all about cashflow. Those were wise words from my mother.

How do you approach investment risk?

With a good exit strategy.

What has been your best-performing investment?

My core business. My cafes have been the best performers. Could it be because of me?

And the worst?

Zinifex shares in 2008.

How do you feel about investing overseas?

Investing overseas is a must,

but you need to be aware of the currency risks.

Where do you get your information about investing?

My business advisers. I always have more than one.

How would you invest \$25,000 if given it tomorrow?

An index fund.

How do you feel about managed funds?

They lack transparency and I think the fees are too high.

Do you get advice from a financial planner?

No, I work very closely with my accountant and business advisers, as opposed to a straight financial planner.

Do you make extra repayments off your mortgage?

Always. Provided you have a mortgage that is structured to benefit from extra payments, that is.

How do you treat your credit card?

With respect and scepticism. They are a great business tool when put in wise hands.

What are your thoughts about life insurance and disability insurance?

Both are necessary, as life is full of surprises.

Do you have a personal finance budget and do you stick to it?

No. I am very disciplined with my personal spending. I have never been out of control or excessive. Much.

What is the most extravagant purchase you have made?

I have a shoe problem, which is now a collection summed up in two words: Manolo Blahniks.

Angela Vithoulkas owns a string of successful cafes.
Picture: John Fotiadis

