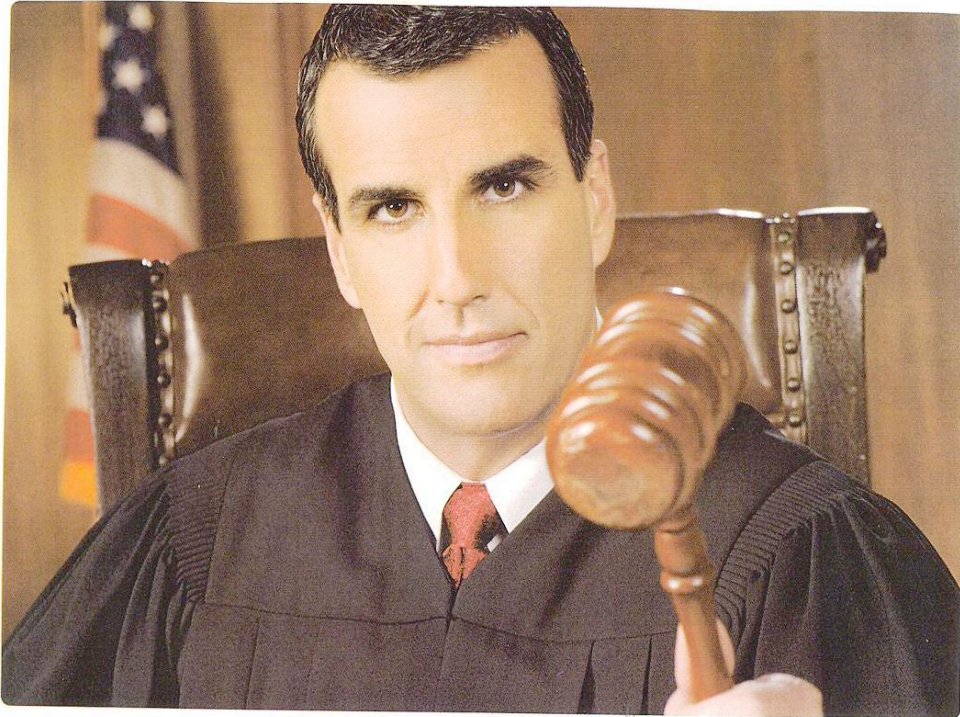


# MIAMI LIVING

Spring-Summer 2008

## PEOPLE



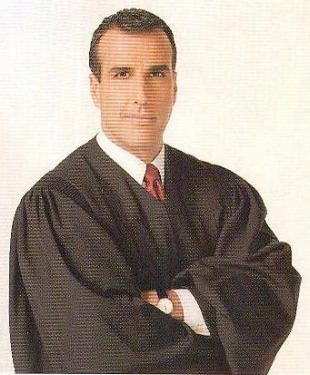
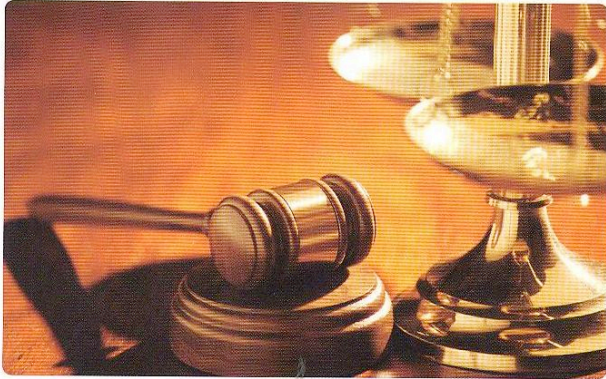
## All Rise for Judge Alex You want something done? Ask a busy man. . . .

Words by Vanessa Pascale

These past couple of months **Judge Alex Ferrer** has jetted off to Orlando, Tampa, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Dallas, and New York promoting his hit court TV show *Judge Alex*. The Miami resident garners the most impressive résumé of professions, touting the titles pilot, police officer, lawyer, judge, television judge, realtor, and movie-star hopeful. "I'd love to get into movies, but nobody's knocking on my door," he says with a laugh. Over breakfast with the Honorable Judge Alex I discovered that the characteristics that judges presumably personify, namely being reserved, stern, and unapproachable, were not the case (no pun intended) at all with this easy-going and affable ruler of the law.

Judge Alex is as humble as they come. The mere mention of his many achievements from a brief bio I perused prior to the interview elicits an interjection. "Oh, we made all that up. None of that's true," he says jokingly. Modest? Just a little. Of the careers he's pursued, one of his professions alone would be enough of a life goal for most people. But not Judge Alex. "I never had a goal. I'm not quite that structured. When I became a cop I never planned on being a lawyer, when I became a lawyer, I never planned on being a judge, and I never planned to be a TV judge. I get bored," he replies casually in between bites of his breakfast.

A desire for fascinating jobs is evident, but a position that's both challenging and consistently fresh is what he needs. During his tenth year on the bench, as the youngest judge in Miami, **Twentieth Television** approached him. "At this point I'd done a lot of high-profile cases that were covered nationwide, so they'd done a lot of video footage of me," he says. Coincidentally another huge opportunity was up for the taking, a seat on the appellate court, "the pinnacle of any judge's career," says Judge Alex. In competition against the most "well-respected, high-caliber" lawyers and judges, Judge Alex was the only candidate who received nine



unanimous votes after interviewing, making him the obvious front runner.

"On the other side was entertainment, which I'd never done and could last one year. I'm going, 'This is crazy. I could really be giving up a seat on the appellate bench,'" he recalls. Judge Alex took a chance and decided to do the show. Fortunately, his risky move paid off. Three years later the show is going strong as taping for the fourth season began this February. "A lot of great shows are coming out this year. Every year we try some different things. We do a lot of animations/re-creations. It's hysterically funny," he boasts.

Having his own TV show definitely holds his attention. "I get entertained and surprised every day. They [the people on trial] make you appreciate the friends and family you have when you see what they do to their family and friends," he remarks. Trying eight to ten cases from all over the country for three intense days in a row has fulfilled his appetite for a challenge. "Unlike other TV judges, I do it according to the law in the state where the case originated." He has three days to read the law of the state the case is from, up to 40 cases. "By the third day I have the mental capacity of a spoon. It's a lot harder than being a state judge, where you're only dealing with one law. But it's also more fun," says Judge Alex.

One of the benefits of doing the show is the spare time it allows this husband and father. "I do all my taping in a very short period of time. My kids are 15 and 17. When I'm done I have a lot free time to spend with them. It's just perfect," he says thoughtfully. Indeed, family continues to be a driving force in his success. "I was raised

by parents who had the drive to make life better for their kids. My parents left good positions in Cuba to come here and start over. They worked multiple jobs to support us here; my father would run to a shoe store and sell shoes during his lunch hour. If he sold a pair of shoes, it would help," he remembers. "At age 15, I'd go to school 'til two p.m., and worked at a friend's dad's gas station 'til eleven p.m. By that point we didn't have to work, my parents had advanced enough that we were in the middle-class. I think that's what was ingrained in me—you work."

*"I don't know what I want to be next," he remarks with boyish charm. "I'm pretty sure I can't be President because you have that pesky constitutional amendment over here."*

Out of high school, Judge Alex received his pilot's license. Though he considers it "a great hobby," he couldn't see it as a career. Being around police officers while working at the gas station attracted him to police work. At 19, Judge Alex joined the force. "I think a lot of guys like the idea of playing cops and robbers on the big scale, which is what it really is—with better toys. I loved it," he says fondly.

"The best advice my parents ever gave me was, 'Keep studying. You might want to

be a cop now, but you might change your mind.' So I did," he recalls. He continued police work through undergrad and law school, then became a lawyer. "I found that being a litigator wasn't as gratifying as police work was. When you're a lawyer you're always somebody's hired gun. After years of being a lawyer, I said, 'I bet being a judge would be as gratifying as being a cop was because, again, you're trying to do the right thing,'" he says on how he decided to become a judge.

Heavily involved in his field, he partakes in mediation and arbitration work, teaching other judges, and legal consulting. Judge Alex is a regular on *The Live Desk with Martha MacCallum*, as well as a commentator on CNBC, CNN, Fox News Channel, Court TV, and MSNBC, providing his legal take on celebrities, entertainment, and so much more.

A go-getter to the core, Judge Alex stays productive. "I just got my real estate license. For no reason other than I always thought it would be a good idea." What's next for this overachiever who persistently excels in everything he does? "I don't know what I want to be next," he remarks with boyish charm. "I'm pretty sure I can't be President because you have that pesky constitutional amendment over here," he says jokingly. Right now he's enjoying his highly rated show and the other projects he fills his time with. "I keep busy—but there's always time for movies." He flashes a movie star-like smile. Mr. Spielberg and Mr. Scorsese, Judge Alex Ferrer is waiting for your call.

*Want to know more about this go-getter? Visit him at [judgealex.com](http://judgealex.com). *