



For more than 15 years, Dion Antic has been entrenched in the Chicago nightlife scene. In the ever-changing world of restaurants and bars, Antic has remained a constant. At the helm of his development company, Food & Drink, Inc., Antic continues to open establishments seemingly destined to become Chicago hotspots.

Antic's origins in restaurant development can be traced back to working with his father, a contractor, laying marble and granite. Antic started accompanying his father to job sites at the age of 10 and quickly developed a curiosity for building things from the ground up. As he got older, Antic developed popularity with his high school classmates for another reason— he threw the best parties. The hospitality business seemed like the next logical step.

At the young age of 19, Antic began running his mother's bar, Chicago's Halftime Haven. He continued to work and manage numerous bars throughout Chicago, including Obsessions and Cairo. Although his managerial work provided him with valuable experience, Antic was not satisfied with merely running an establishment— he wanted to create one. Possessing an uncanny ability to understand what was needed to fill a niche in the market and relying on his contracting experience, Antic opened his first bar, Sanctuary, in 1989.

Since Antic could not afford to hire a designer, he was forced to learn design through necessity. Fortunately, his frugality paid off. After Sanctuary, Antic opened The Ugly Bar & Café in 1990, followed by one of his most popular restaurants Iggy's— a funky, late-night dining destination open till 5 a.m. on Saturday.

Antic continued with a string of successful restaurants and lounges, each an indicator of his acute sense of style and design. His list includes Ripple, Liquid Kitty, The Pepper Lounge, Olive, Toast, Celluloid Movie Bar, Velvet Dog (Kansas City), Kashmere (Kansas City) and in 1995, one of the country's first cigar bars, the original, Harry's Velvet Room.

The popular eatery Toast was built after he had his first child. His wife was already his working partner at Iggy's, but Antic wanted a place for her to work that wouldn't keep her out into the late hours. As a result, Toast is only open for breakfast serving gourmet fare. Toast now has three Chicago locations and is quickly growing into what may become one of America's hottest new chain concepts.

Antic continued to expand his creative vision with Fahrenheit (F). Opened in 1999, this spacious, airy dining room and luminous bar, with pale blue and dove-covered walls and soaring, 12-foot-high banquettes set fresh standards for design in the new millennium.

Not wanting to let a good thing go, Antic reopened his immensely popular Harry's Velvet Room in a much larger and more glamorous space located at 56 W. Illinois in May of 1999. Harry's continues to be Chicago's premier champagne lounge offering exquisite cuisine paired with fine wines and champagnes.

The year 2000 was a busy year for Antic. He opened Bar 13, an accumulation of pieces of his past thirteen venues creating a warm and inviting neighborhood lounge. He also opened Deville, an American contemporary French restaurant driven by the food of Patrick Conconhan, and not only purchased but



fully redesigned a Chicago legend, the Get Me High Lounge, in a matter of sixteen days.

In 2001, wanting to explore his hand at fast food, Antic and his culinary team created Killer which served fried shrimp, wings, and burgers— all with a gourmet twist.

In 2002, next door to his wildly successful Bar 13, Antic created Rock-A-Tiki. This tiki bar had creative elements including a DJ perched in a lifeguard tower, walls adorned with bamboo matting, and velvet Elvis'. Rock-A-Tiki, hosted many events, including "Elvis Land," the ultimate in Elvis karaoke hosted by renowned Elvis impersonator, Mark Huspen.

In late 2002, Antic opened Superlounge. It offered clientele three different bar areas, seven private VIP rooms, and, for the first time, a prepaid Superlounge card based purchasing system allowing customers to fund their accounts and earn frequent buyer points and higher levels of VIP status.

In 2003, Antic moved his Chicago landmark Iggy's to a new Bucktown location. Foregoing his late hour licensing and settling to serve dining only until 2 am, Antic reinvented Iggy's to create a 3-level, outdoor dining, 300-seat new version of an old legend. Antic reaped the rewards of his move, including the resurgence of many of Iggy's first customers who had since moved to the Bucktown area and started families. Antic started his first kids menu and made Iggy's accessible not only the late night diners, but to all.

To help with the 2004 presidential election, Antic, along with Steve Trexlar from Jam Productions and Hubie Greenwald of Mas restaurant group, organized a free election night concert featuring Poi Dog Pondering, DJ Jessie De La Pena and DJ Madrid. This event was held in conjunction with the Daily Show, Comedy Central, and The Onion and was attended by over 1,500 people.

In 2005, Antic reinvented the annual Iggy's bike show by moving it to Chicago's Goose Island. It became a two-day music and motorcycle festival with performances from Foghat, Ratt and Store Bought Rebels. Over 6,000 attendees were able to view, touch and sit on a wide array of custom choppers built by such greats as Paul Yaffe, the Detroit Brothers and Exile Cycles.

Antic, has also opened several small businesses including Scooter World, located in the heart of Wicker Park, selling high-end Italian scooters and motorcycle apparel. In 2005, Antic opened Him, a boutique featuring high-end denim for men, and offered its clientele Playstation, a foosball table and free beer. Later that year, Him was feeling lonely so Antic opened Her, a boutique featuring high-end women's clothing.

Antic has three daughters, Madeline, Isabelle and Gena Vieve. He has been happily divorced for ten years, and in 2007 Antic ran an unsuccessful campaign for Mayor of Chicago.