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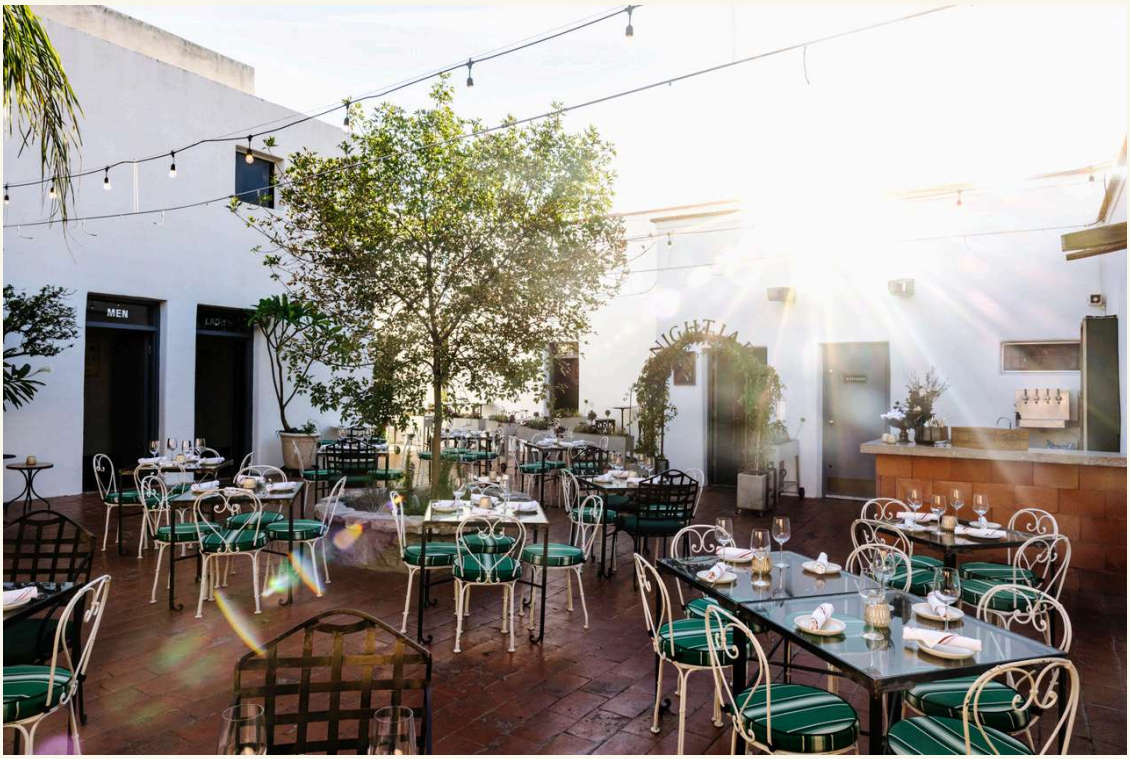


Photo Credit: Anna Smirnova

Meet Sally Kane

From film producer to contractor, Sally Kane is a woman who's held many titles, but "restaurateur" is the one that seems to suit her best. At The Coronet in Tucson's iconic Barrio Viejo neighborhood, she has built a distinct three-in-one venue that highlights the collaborative talents of her, her partners and staff. Keep reading to learn more about her journey or click on the link below for the latest Tucson media updates.

What's New



Coronet Café. Photo Credit: Anna Smirnova

On the morning I spoke with Sally Kane, owner of the three-in-one concept The Coronet Restaurant, Café and Nightjar, she was already in motion, mentally running through the choreography of a Tucson in May weekend. Graduation crowds, a wedding, and the slow, familiar drumbeat to summer, when the crowds thin out and hospitality becomes a test of endurance.

“It’s a really nutty, nutty time,” she said. “In like five days it’ll just go, and then I’ll probably be anxious about that too.”

Yet despite the seasonal ebb and flow of business, Kane has remained committed to The Coronet since opening it in 2014. The work is not separate from her identity; it is an extension of it.

“This place will never feel like it’s not mine,” she said. “It has a voice, and that voice is strong.”

Tucked into Barrio Viejo, The Coronet sits inside a 160-year-old building in one of Tucson’s most historically layered neighborhoods, a place Kane describes not as backdrop, but as living cultural infrastructure shaped by generations of Chinese, Black, Hispanic, Jewish, and working-class communities.

“It’s always been a great neighborhood,” she said. “There’s a serious entrepreneurial spirit here, and a really welcoming quality, if you know where to look.”

That sense of place is woven into everything she creates. By day, Coronet Café anchors the experience with casual counter-service breakfast, lunch, and dinner, alongside a thoughtfully curated market. The shop features keepsakes, jewelry, and pantry goods from Arizona makers such as Tough Kitty Designs, Earthling Jewelry, and Dante Frozola, as well as select finds sourced outside Tucson.

The evening Coronet Restaurant leans more refined, with a menu that shifts constantly and reflects Sally’s broad, global palate. Under chef Mallorie Hart, Kane describes the food as “really, really honest on the plate. It’s complex, but not overly complicated.”

“We just love food,” Kane said. “We don’t feel any boundaries by it. We can make a take on a Chinese dish, or a Turkish dish – it’s just food we love.”



Nightjar. Photo Credit: Anna Smirnova

Nightjar, the adjacent cocktail bar, extends that same sensibility into drinks: ingredient-driven, seasonally responsive, and intentionally restrained, with cocktails often shaped by what is coming out of the kitchen.

“It just moves with the day,” Kane said of her three concepts. “It’s all the same place, just different energy.”

Kane’s story in Tucson begins long before restaurants. Born here, she grew up around the city’s early hospitality landscape. Her father, who moved from Cleveland in the 1940s, helped establish the now closed Rancho del Rio dude ranch and Tack Room restaurant, early fixtures in Tucson’s social and dining history. He died when she was five.

For years, what remained of her memories of her father were fragmentary, family stories she couldn't yet fully place.

Then she found his letters. Written at 19 while traveling through postwar Europe, they are meticulous, almost obsessive, in sharing the details of his journeys.

"They're filled with every meal he ate, the price of every meal, the description of everything on the plate," she said.

One passage stayed with her: her father describing a home lined wall-to-wall with books, and the emotional weight of leaving it.

"He snuck out before dawn because his heart hurt so much by the beauty of it," she said. "He didn't know how to digest it."

For Kane, that idea, of beauty as something almost physically overwhelming, is foundational. It informs how she thinks about space, memory, and hospitality itself.

Before restaurants, she moved through a long apprenticeship in the making: espresso bars in the Bay Area, cooking and dishwashing in Ireland, film production work, and more than two decades as a licensed paint contractor specializing in plaster and historic restoration in Arizona.

The shift back toward restaurants wasn't a single decision, but an accumulation of dining experiences she had at the time.

"Restaurants felt very restaurant-y and boxy and kind of prescriptive," she said. "You come in, you sit, now you eat. I wanted something more porous than that. I wanted to feel a little held."



Photo Credit: Anna Smirnova

In Europe, she said, dining felt expansive. In Ireland, pubs collapsed the boundary between strangers. In Paris, tables blurred together, conversation spilling over.

That idea became the seed of The Coronet, a place designed not just for dining, but for lingering, conversation and community.

It took her more than six years to write the business plan while working full time as a contractor. The document itself became an act of craft: illustrated, narrative, and emotionally driven.

“For me, I was telling a story about a small feast,” she said.

The reality that followed was far less romantic. The first location operated in the red throughout its early years. At one point, the team sold a car to make payroll.

“I’m just tenacious,” she said. “I don’t really know how to stop once something is moving.”

Over time, the business stabilized through a network of partners and shared leadership, and in 2026, The Coronet has very much become a permanent fixture in the neighborhood.

She hears it in passing conversations: guests speaking as if the space belongs to them. For Kane, that is the highest measure of success.

“The biggest thing we’ve accomplished is that the community has a sense of ownership here too,” Kane said.

Outside her businesses, she is part of a growing network of women entrepreneurs, chefs, and artists in Tucson who gather regularly to share meals and support each other’s work.

“That community is really a source of strength for me,” she said. “I hope I am for them too.”

Today, she moves through Tucson with an expanding sense of interconnected purpose, advocating for Barrio Viejo’s recognition, pushing for stronger visibility for small businesses, and imagining future projects beyond The Coronet.

“Tucson is alive and filled with people doing and making things,” she said. “There’s so much here.”



Mango prawns. Photo Credit: Sally Kane

Sally's Tucson Top 5:

1. Friday Pilates – this has become a bit of a ritual for her because it's addicting in all the right ways. She goes five times a week, and she says it helps her stay strong, grounded, and healthy.

2. Tacos Apson – a Tucson institution that truly lives up to the hype. Her favorite taco is the de lengua, a traditional Mexican taco made with beef tongue.

3. Westbound and Kukai at the MSA Annex – she's a fan of anything created by female entrepreneur and friend Rebecca Safford. Plus, The Annex is a walkable community space where she can bring her dogs and connect with neighbors.

4. University of Arizona Campus Arboretum – one of her favorite places to walk her dogs, it also carries deep personal meaning for her; a few months ago when her father-in-law, Hansi, passed, she shared live sprouted oak acorns from a oak tree at the arboretum in his memory.

5. Time Market – This downtown Tucson community gathering place is where Sally conceptualized The Coronet. Over the years, she has popped in to work and grab a bite to eat or bring home. She's especially fond of their loaves of bread and fresh local produce.



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