



Derek and Ren





We're Derek and Ren



We're thrilled
**you've chosen to
read our profile.**



We know this is a difficult, deeply personal, and thoughtful decision, and we respect the care and strength it takes to even begin considering this path. **Thank you for taking time to get to know us and imagine what life could look like for your child.** We're confident we'll provide a stable, loving place for them to thrive!



WE LOVE EXPLORING OUR CHICAGO NEIGHBORHOOD!



We've been together for 12 years (married for 10) and live in Chicago, where we love the mix of city energy, historic architecture, diverse cultures and neighborhoods, and strong sense of community. We also spend time at our cabin along the Illinois River and near several state parks. It's our favorite place to unplug, hike, enjoy evenings by the fire pit, and quiet moments together. Our four small dogs and two cats are great with kids and fill the home with plenty of excitement, affection, laughs, and love.

We value communication, curiosity, and creating a home that feels safe, welcoming, steady, and full of possibility. **We knew that becoming parents through adoption would be part of our story since early in our relationship, and we're excited to continue building a life filled with learning, laughter, and new traditions with your child.**



**for being here
and getting to know
our little family!**



HIKING AT MATTHIESSEN STATE PARK

Our Story

We met online in our early 30s, both ready to skip the dating games and build something real. From the start, we connected over a shared sense of humor and an easy comfort with one another. Though we grew up thousands of miles apart, our values, outlook on life, and sense of direction lined up quickly. **Being together felt natural, grounding, and genuinely fun.**



WE LOOK FORWARD TO BECOMING PARENTS!

Our wedding day



What makes our partnership strong is how naturally we complement each other. Derek brings enthusiasm and big-picture optimism, while Ren brings thoughtfulness and steady perspective. **We share core values like humility, respect, and compassion, and we approach both challenges and wins as a team.** As we start our 13th year together, the trust and support we've built feels like a solid foundation for parenthood.

We are excited
**to grow our family
and share the life we love
with a child.**



SEEING DEAR EVAN
HANSEN LIVE!



MICHELIN STAR DINING
ON OUR ANNIVERSARY



HIKING IN
HOLLYWOOD



ADVENTURES
AT DISNEYLAND



VACATIONING IN
CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO



MICHIGAN'S TULIP
FESTIVAL



We enjoy staying active, creative, and curious, and our interests reflect a mix of hands-on projects, movement, and exploration in ways that enrich our daily lives.

Ren has a green thumb and loves to garden and care for our indoor plants, especially propagating new plants from cuttings. He's played volleyball for years and enjoys staying active. Music is another longtime passion, for over 25 years he's mixed music

for national cheer/pom/dance competitions and still loves discovering and sharing new sounds. His playlists are legendary and always set the perfect mood for any occasion!

Derek enjoys cooking and baking, especially experimenting with new recipes. Household projects and keeping a tidy home gives him a sense of accomplishment. He also practices Transcendental Meditation for mindfulness,

gratitude, and to stay centered. Teaching and sharing what he loves brings him a lot of joy, and he's especially excited to cook and bake alongside a child someday.

Together, we love seeing live shows and movies, hiking, exploring Chicago neighborhoods and small towns near our cabin, browsing antique and thrift stores, and trying new restaurants and cafés.

We're excited to share these interests with a child and build a family life filled with curiosity, wonder, creativity, and everyday fun.



Enjoying a neighborhood walk with Lua

By Derek

Ren has a calm but upbeat presence that puts people at ease.

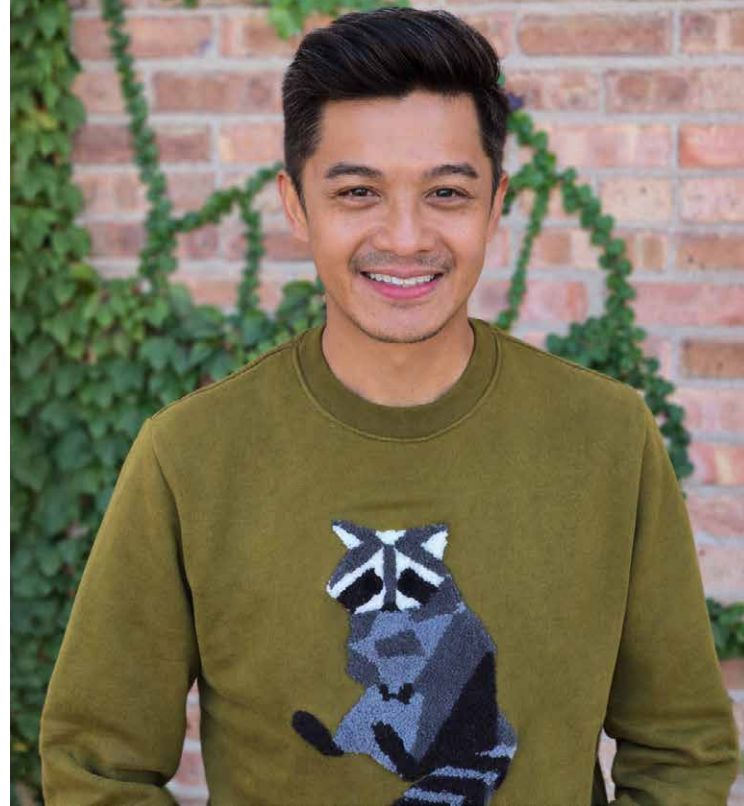
He's playful, funny, driven, and steady, bringing balance and lightness to everyday life. He's engaging, quick-witted, and genuinely interested in others, with a way of making people feel comfortable and seen. One of the things I admire most about him is his even temperament, it brings a sense of calm and reliability to our home.

Ren shows up for the people he loves with consistency and care. He listens closely, offers thoughtful perspective, and stays centered when things feel tough. When someone's having a rough day, he brings patience and humor, helping moments feel lighter without brushing past what matters.

Ren has been an uncle for 30+ years and is wonderful with kids. He naturally connects by getting on their level, being silly, and following their lead. He's great with my brother's kids (ages 11 and 5), cheering them on at sports games, playing games, and reading together. He's especially excited to share the interests he loves and to be present for the everyday moments that make childhood special.

Ren works in project management, which suits him perfectly. He enjoys supporting others, creating structure, and seeing things through to completion.

About Ren



IT'S MIXIN' TIME!



NEIGHBORHOOD WALK
ALONG LAKE MICHIGAN
WITH ASTRO



Ren's

Fun Facts

and Favorites

BUMP, SET, SPIKE!



CAN YOU BE-LEAF REN'S GREEN THUMB?!

Favorite hobbies + seasonal activities

Gardening, indoor volleyball, and pep flags (similar to colorguard).

Favorite foods

Anything seafood! Plus a classic plate of spaghetti.

Favorite sport or team

Indoor volleyball, especially NCAA men's and women's.

Languages spoken

Ilocano (Filipino), Japanese, and some German.

Something I collect

Marvel trading cards. X-Men is my favorite Marvel franchise.

Favorite places to travel

We've traveled together to France, England, and Mexico, plus 15 U.S. states and counting. Overall favorite is France. Hawaii wins the top US spot.

Favorite music + musicals

A true millennial at heart. Lady Gaga on repeat, with a love for musical theatre, especially Wicked, Phantom of the Opera, and Avenue Q.

Favorite place to take a child

Disneyland, a place tied to some of my most magical childhood memories.



About Derek



8,000 FEET UP AT MT. BALDY, CALIFORNIA



By Ren

Derek has a warm, expressive presence that's hard not to notice.

He's funny, insightful, creative, and deeply caring, with an energy that brings excitement and heart into everyday life. What stands out most is how emotionally aware and thoughtful he is. He feels things deeply, and that openness adds sincerity and connection to our home.

Derek shows up for the people he loves with empathy and intention. He's someone who friends turn to when they want perspective or clarity. He listens carefully, asks thoughtful questions, and helps people see situations in new ways without judgment. That awareness makes him a steady, reassuring presence in our life together.

He's naturally great with kids. Derek talks often about becoming a parent and is especially excited about encouraging curiosity, creativity, and confidence. No shortage of dad jokes, I picture him as the "fun dad" who makes everyday moments memorable, full of laughter, and genuinely engaging.

Derek began his career as a professional pastry chef, which reflects his creativity and patience. Today, he works in tech sales, where he's driven and focused. **His role offers parental bonding leave,** aligning with how seriously he takes being present for family and the life we're building together.



WEEKENDS ARE FOR BAKING!

Favorite vacation spot

Paris, France – cute cafés, amazing food, historic art and architecture.

Favorite season

Autumn – Crisp air, cozy activities

Favorite dessert

Strawberry shortcake – with a sweet biscuit, please!

Favorite children's book + author

Peter and Wendy by J.M. Barrie – I collect editions of the original Peter Pan story, including one from 1913.

Favorite sandwich

Peanut butter and banana with honey on toasted sourdough.

Favorite activity to share with a child

Baking – Messy hands, music on, learning and laughing.

Favorite lesson

I hope to teach

Kindness isn't weakness
– It's strength, awareness, and empathy.

Favorite thing I'm known for

Guidance without judgment
– Offering perspective, empathy, and meaningful support.

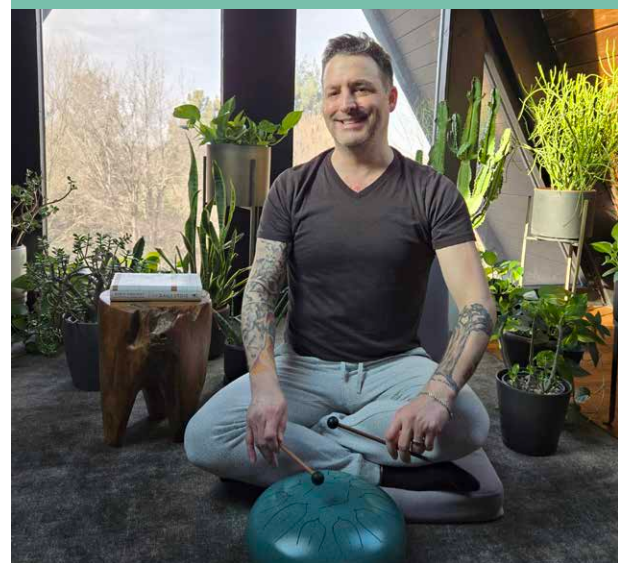
ENJOYING OUR
ROOFTOP GARDEN

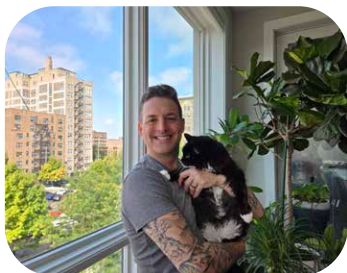


Derek's **Fun Facts**

and Favorites

CABIN MEDITATION NOOK





Our Homes

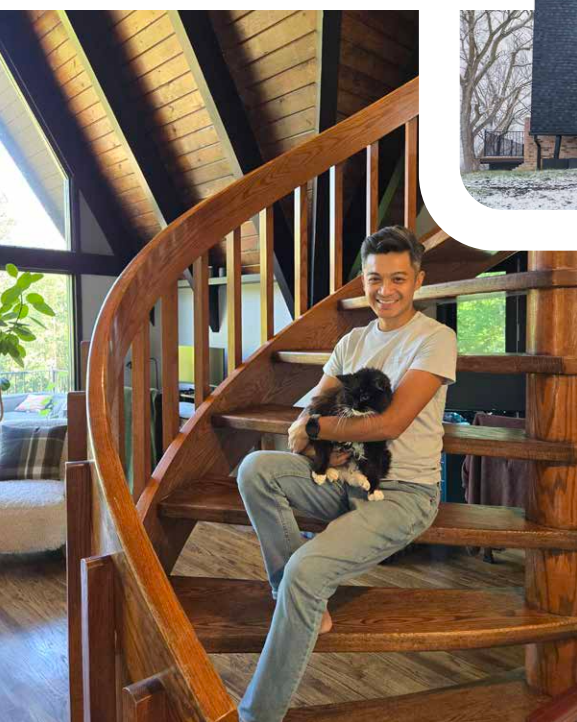
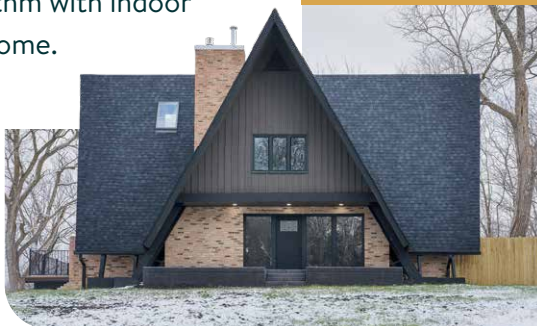
Home to us feels warm, welcoming, and full of life.

We live in **Chicago**, a city we love for its **creativity, energy, and sense of community**. From incredible food and art to beautiful architecture and friendly neighborhoods, the city is a diverse melting pot of culture to explore. Being near Lake Michigan is part of our everyday rhythm, with beach days, long walks, and family-friendly events that keep things lively.

We're fortunate to experience four complete seasons each year, and our pace and daily activities change along with the weather. Spring through fall are spent outdoors exploring and staying active, while winter brings a cozier rhythm with indoor projects and time together at home.



WEEKENDS WITH THE CREW



We also spend time at our cabin in **central Illinois**, where life is slower and **more relaxed**. Surrounded by trees and nature, it's a place to unplug and enjoy a different pace. One of our favorite simple joys is visiting the friendly family of donkeys down the road – something we can already imagine a child looking forward to every visit.

We picture a child growing up with the **best of both worlds: the excitement and opportunity of city life paired with the space and perspective that comes from time in nature**. Together, these places create a balanced, enriching environment where curiosity and confidence can grow.

Our Furry Family Members



Bensen

3 years old

A cuddle bug who loves playing fetch.



Astro

3 years old

A calm, gentle boy who loves to snuggle.



Minnie

2 years old

Happiest pup ever. Wants all the belly rubs.



Bon Bon

19 years old

Sweet, affectionate, loves ear scratches.



Rhys Whiskerspoon

3 years old

A purr machine. Playful and silly.



Lua

16 years old

Lazy old girl and an A+ cuddler.

Our Favorite Adventures Together

Paris, France



London, England



Cabo San Lucas, Mexico



Hawaii (Kauai, Kailua-Kona)



San Francisco



Friends and Family

Our family and friends are a meaningful part of our lives and form a caring, dependable village we're excited to welcome a child into. **We have a strong center here in Chicago, with close family and friends nearby, while others are spread out, creating opportunities for travel, new experiences, and shared adventures.** Ren's family stays connected in thoughtful ways. We support Ren's mom both financially and emotionally, and they're especially close, checking in often and making sure she feels loved and included. His siblings stay in touch through calls and FaceTime, making an effort to remain present even from a distance.

Derek's family and extended circle are woven into our everyday life. His brother and family live nearby and are among our closest supports. We spend a lot of time together at kids' sports games, school events, and celebrating holidays and milestones, including with Derek's brother's in-laws, whom we consider extended family. **Between family and longtime friends, there are kids of all ages around us, bringing plenty of energy, laughter, and experience.** What we value most about our village is how natural it feels. There's humor, openness, and real care. Our child will grow up surrounded by people who are excited to show up for them.





SILLY TIME WITH
OUR NIECE



CELEBRATING OUR
NEPHEW'S BIRTHDAY



When we picture life with a child, we imagine a home where they feel safe, supported, and loved every day.

We want our child to feel free to be themselves and to experience joy, imagination, silliness, and laughter. We hope they grow up knowing they're valued, encouraged to stay curious, and supported as they discover who they are.

The values that matter most to us as parents are empathy, honesty, kindness, curiosity, and personal responsibility. We believe kindness is strength, and guidance works best when paired with encouragement and clear boundaries. Our goal is to be steady, loving parents who lead with consistency and make room for mistakes and growth.

We're excited to share the things we love with a child, from cooking and baking to music, travel, and time outdoors. Just as important, we're excited to learn from them and grow alongside them.

Showing up as parents means being present, emotionally available, and engaged in both big moments and little everyday ones. We believe open adoption is a meaningful way to honor our child's story, weaving their family and cultural traditions together with our own, building a relationship rooted in trust, love, and self discovery.



Thank you

**for taking the time to read
our story and consider us as
parents for your child.**



We know this decision carries so much care, emotion, and thought, and we truly respect what it takes to be here. We don't take that lightly, and we're grateful you spent time getting to know us.

If chosen, we promise to raise your child in a home filled with patience, encouragement, and unconditional love. We promise to listen deeply, to stay present, and to support who they are becoming at every stage. We'll celebrate their strengths, help them through challenges, and show up consistently, even on the ordinary days that matter just as much.

We believe deeply in open adoption and see it as a meaningful way to honor not just your child's story, but yours as well. We want your child to grow up knowing where they come from, feeling proud of their story, and understanding how deeply they are loved by everyone connected to it. **We're committed to weaving your child's culture, history, and family traditions into our everyday life in ways that feel natural, respectful, and genuine.**

Above all,

**we promise to give your
child a life of potential
where they feel safe,
valued, celebrated, and
deeply loved.**



**Thank you again for getting to
know us and for considering us as
part of your child's journey.**

