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L.A. Woman

VICTORIA RECAÑO

has built a career on being in the know as a correspondent and celebrity interviewer for hit entertainment show *The Insider*. But with her first baby on the way, Victoria finds herself in unfamiliar territory! *Pregnancy & Newborn* turns the tables to get the inside scoop on her peaking pregnancy, fulfilling family life, and sparkling L.A. career.

BY ERIN BRANSFORD

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Victoria on the set of *The Insider*.

Over girl Victoria Recaño was full of questions for the moms on the set of this month's cover shoot, asking about everything from stretch marks to baby bumps to labor. This natural curiosity lends perfectly to interviewing celebrities and other notables in her role as correspondent for *The Insider*. For her role as a new mom, Victoria exercises this yearn to learn—and the expertise of her labor and delivery nurse mom and doctor dad—as she prepares for what she calls “the best thing I’ve ever done.”

“I’ve felt great and my pregnancy has been a really enjoyable experience,” says the 33-year-old somewhat sheepishly. “I know that’s not what people want to hear, but it’s been pretty easy. I have heard horror stories, and my sister had gestational diabetes [during her pregnancy], so I was prepared for the worst. But all I’ve had to worry about so far is a touch of hypothyroidism.”

“The toughest thing about this pregnancy has been adjusting to being more cautious. I have to remember not to push myself too hard, to make sure that I get enough rest so my body can grow this baby,” says Victoria. She’s been lucky to get lots of good advice

from her parents and sister Angie, who is the mother of two boys. “My mom reminds me to relax and take it easy,” notes Victoria, which sometimes means ducking into a movie preview wearing sweats and a baseball cap or even skipping them altogether. “I go home right after work when I can, have an early dinner, and head to bed.”

What is it like to be pregnant on TV and see your belly growing bigger and bigger on a medium that adds 10 pounds to even the slimmest figures? It can’t be easy, but Victoria seems to take it in stride. The 12-year veteran and Emmy winner has received great encouragement from *The Insider*’s anchor Lara Spencer, a mom of two herself. “We talked about the balancing act of family and work. It requires a lot of juggling, but it can be done. Everyone here has been really supportive and great.”

And at home? When Victoria’s husband Tom Burwell accidentally found out she was pregnant—he came home while Victoria was out and saw the stick had turned pink—he tried to pretend he didn’t know. “We were open to having a baby but weren’t trying. So when I found out I was pregnant, I planned to tell him in a much better way, but I didn’t get the chance.”

Foodie and baby

Victoria is a total foodie: she loves first-rate cuisine and fine dining. But this occasional food blogger and former guest judge on *Iron Chef America* has found that eating can be a real challenge when you’ve got a bun in your oven.

WHAT SHE MISSES:

- Soft cheeses
- Sushi

WHAT SHE’S CRAVING:

- American cheese
- Ice cream
- Pickles

WHAT SHE LOVES A LITTLE LESS THESE DAYS:

- Broccoli—she used to eat it every day with zeal but now has to work hard to enjoy it
- Medium-rare meat

WHAT SHE PLANS TO FEED HER DAUGHTER FIRST:

Broccoli and spinach—“I want to give our daughter a healthy start once she can have solid food. And I look forward to eventually taking her to a 5-star, 5-diamond restaurant to try all of the amazing foods in a gourmet meal.”

CULTURE CLUB

One look at gorgeous Victoria Reaño and you know there's something distinctive about her looks. Those striking features are the result of a genetic melting pot of German, Hungarian, Filipino and Spanish ancestry. When asked what role this ethnic blend would play in raising her daughter, Victoria said it would involve her close-knit family. "We'll share stories and tell her about her ancestors. She'll also be introduced to a lot of exotic and diverse foods from early on."

Interested in the unique customs of various cultures and heritages around the world? Here's a quick tour of just a few different global traditions:

In the **Philippines**, if a woman has a lot of blemishes, it is believed that the baby will be a girl. If the mother glows, the baby will be a boy. An expectant mother is told to avoid eating

mango so she doesn't have a hairy baby, but she should consume fish to make her baby smart.

In **Spain**, it is a deep tradition to name a new baby after a family member. Often son, father, grandfather and great-grandfather all share the same name.

In **Germany**, it is customary that for six weeks after the birth of a child, fire, salt and

bread should not be given from the home. After doing the wash, a pregnant woman should immediately turn over the washtub so she'll have an easy birth.

In **Hungary**, babies get a birthday and a "name day" to celebrate. A name day is determined by the baby's given name and is often related to a saint or other important figure.

The St. Louis native felt pregnant from the start even though there were no visible signs for quite a while—nearly six months. But it was the soft thump-thump of her baby's heartbeat at just seven weeks that really brought home this big change in their lives. "I'm sentimental and so is my husband. He cries at Hallmark commercials. This was a big moment."



With a due date of March 22 (the first day of spring), Victoria and Tom hadn't quite decided on a name for their daughter at the time of our interview. "We love boy names, so I think it will definitely be a boy name even though we know we are having a girl. But we haven't told anyone the names because (a) someone may steal them, (b) someone may give his unwanted opinion of them, or (c) someone might try to change our minds. When we meet her, we'll know what the right name is," explains Victoria, who is planning a natural birth.

When we caught up with her on her way out of town for a much-needed vacation south of the border, Victoria was thinking of her baby. "I checked with my doctor to be sure it was safe to go. With international travel, I think we all worry about certain things. My doctor has been to the same place we're going and said we'd be just fine." And as the jet-setting couple hopped on a plane for their last pre-baby getaway, they were already thinking about where they'll go as a family one day. "I'm trying to convince Tom that her first trip should be to Lake Como. What more beautiful place could we show her?" **P&N**



Victoria gets ready for her closeup.

Being pregnant in Tinseltown

Hollywood is a place that adores celebrities, movies and hard-bodies (whether they're God-given or surgeon-bought). But in this town where you never really know what's real, it was still a surprise when Victoria was asked about the authenticity of a certain distinctive feature: "My voice has become raspier since I've been pregnant. Since I talk on TV every night, I guess it's something people notice. But when a guy asked me if my voice was fake, I began to wonder if I've been in L.A. too long."

Is it hard for big stars and major sex symbols to be prego in La La Land? Read what these celebs had to say:

"It was weird being pregnant in a fishbowl situation. Especially on days when you feel really fat and disgusting and not cute." —Gwen Stefani during her first pregnancy

"Being pregnant and doing comedy is like wearing a giant sombrero in every scene. Everyone is just trying to pretend it's not there." —Amy Poehler, USA Today, September 2008

"I don't know if anyone wants me in their movies six months pregnant. I'll get the fire and I'll want to work again, but right now it's a time to relax and sit back." —Jessica Alba