

Phil Reid

Vero Beach, Florida



Phil Reid Photography

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Phil Reid:

After 40 years working as a boat captain, Phil Reid, Owner of Phil Reid Photography, decided it was time to pursue his true passion. Originally from Columbus, GA, Reid majored in Photography in college and, for a short time after graduation, owned a studio in Columbus. Not long after, he got the boating bug and headed south to Fort Lauderdale, The Yachting Capital of the World.

"I was first introduced to sailing by one of my photography professors," he said. "I quickly fell in love with it. After college, one of my buddies had a sailboat docked in Fort Lauderdale. I was telling him one day about how much I wanted to get down there to start working on boats. That's when he suggested I could live on his boat if I promised to look after it. It didn't take much convincing. I closed up shop and went for it."

Eventually Reid met the right people and worked his way into the role of boat captain for private yacht owners. Summers were spent sailing the waters off New England. In the winter time, they headed south to destinations like the Bahamas. In 1989 Reid was offered a similar position based out of Vero Beach. He and his wife loved the area and happily made the move north.

"I worked for the same guy for my last 20 years as a boat captain," Reid said. "He and I were pretty close. I promised him that I'd stay until the end. When he passed away, they sold the boat and that was essentially the end of my boating career."

Even though Reid opened his latest studio five years ago, he's only been exclusively focused on the business for the last two years. He's finally at a point in his life where he gets to do what he wants every day and he couldn't be happier. Reid shared that what he enjoys most is interacting with people and producing something they love and can cherish for years.

"When customers come back after a photo session and I use the digital projector to display the images on the screen, they will sometimes start crying," he said. "They're so overwhelmed with how their family is represented in such a beautiful way."

Reid primarily does portrait work. That includes family portraits, high school senior portraits and formal head-shots for doctors, lawyers and other professionals in the community. He does advertise through various social media channels, but admits that getting involved in the community has proven to be the most effective form of marketing. To that end, Reid is an ambassador for the Indian River County Chamber of

Commerce, he's on the leadership team for an effort to turn an old neighborhood into a cultural arts village where artists can live and work and he provides his services to local non-profits at a highly discounted rate.

Reid shared a few thoughts about his unique brand of photography and the importance of preserving history through actual photographs.

"There's competition everywhere," he said. "Everyone that has a good \$500 digital camera these days is a photographer. However, I do things a lot differently and I truly love what I do. I'm also a strong believer in the importance of real photographs. Think about all the photos on people's phones. Where will those pictures be in 50 years? A family portrait is something that kids and grand-kids can have and cherish for years."

Looking ahead, Reid is in no hurry to retire. He's committed to the business for as long as it's fun and productive. The idea of getting up and merely deciding if he should watch Good Morning America or The Today Show is a very unsettling thought for Reid.

Reid offers up some great advice for aspiring entrepreneurs. "Perfect your skills, your marketing efforts and your craft before you give up your day job," he said. "It can be a long time before your business produces the income your day job is producing. At some point, you'll have to give in and accept a pay cut, but make sure you're ready. Regardless, no matter how well prepared you are, you'll have things happen you never dreamed of. Lastly, if you're going to be in business, you have to love what you do. You also have to love interacting with people. If you're not into it, people will pick up on that immediately."

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