

I FOUND MY LONG-LOST SISTER ON FACEBOOK!

A California woman goes searching for the dad she never knew – and makes a shocking discovery

Karla Inchigalo always wondered who her father was. In October 2013, years after a family friend had given her his name, she finally decided to type it into Facebook and found a match – a man residing in Florida who “looked just like me,” she says. But then Karla noticed something else in his photos: a woman named Rosalia who shared his last name.

Rosalia turned out to be Karla’s half sister. “I reached out to her,” Karla, 30, recalls. “I said, ‘I know this sounds crazy, but I think I’m your sister.’” She told Rosalia she was

born in Peru, where Rosalia had also lived until she was 7. “At first I was like, ‘There’s no way,’” says Rosalia, 28, “but when I saw her photo, I was shocked. She looked more like my dad than I do.”

A mail-order DNA test soon confirmed they were siblings. It turns out their father – who was in an on/off relationship with his high school sweetheart, Rosalia’s mom – had a fling with Karla’s mom, which resulted in her birth. “He didn’t know he’d gotten Karla’s mom pregnant,” says Rosalia. They grew up in very different circumstances: Karla and her

mom moved from Peru to San Francisco, where she says she was mostly raised by her grandparents. “My mom was pretty absent,” she explains. Rosalia and her parents, who have since divorced, ended up in South Florida, where she says she had a “happy, normal childhood.”

The sisters spent two years catching up via social media, phone calls and text messages before meeting in person. In November 2015, they made plans to finally see each other face-to-face at a hotel in Orlando, Fla. “Karla knocked, and



COURTESY OF KARLA INCHIGALO

I was so nervous I kept running in and out of the bathroom,” Rosalia, who was working for a optical manufacturer and doing fashion and makeup styling on the side, says. When she finally got the nerve to open the door, “We just looked at each other and then she jumped in the air,” Karla recalls. “I caught her and we started jumping up and down in the hallway. It was a moment I’ll never forget.”

Their bond was unbreakable. Karla, a mom of three who’d been working as a surgical assistant, extended her stay by two weeks to spend

more time with Rosalia, and they found they had a lot in common, including the same boisterous laugh and favorite number (22) – and a shared dream to open a clothing store. They were inspired by each other’s passion, so Karla soon relocated to Florida and they pooled their savings to lease a space for their new styling and glam boutique, Athyntiq (pronounced “Authentic”), which opened in March in Boca Raton. Though she

THEY’VE BECOME SO CLOSE
Siblings Karla (left) and Rosalia didn’t know the other existed until three years ago. Now they own a style boutique together in Florida.



SEPARATE LIVES

Both girls were born in Peru and later moved to the U.S. with their families. Rosalia (right) says she loved “being an only child, but now I really love having a sister.”

has yet to meet her dad (the sisters say he’s still warming up to the idea of having a long-lost daughter), Karla feels she’s found more than she could have ever asked for. “That’s my little sister right there!” she says. “I just feel so blessed.”

— Reporting by Daria Murray