

# NEIGHBORS

*i love  
smile so  
your  
much.*

## MEET THE PEDERSENS

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OFF HIGHWAY 71

GET THE SMILE YOU DESERVE



# *These Newlyweds are all Smiles in the Hill Country*

## **DR. PEDERSEN AND CAROLINA PEDERSEN**

BY CARRY GOLDSMITH | PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLAIRE SMITH, LITTLE CORNS PHOTOGRAPHY

**He's a Harvard-trained dentist with Illinois farm-town roots. She's a Colombian-born therapist who put herself through school. Together, they're building a life in the Hill Country, one smile at a time.**

Dr. Evan Pedersen didn't grow up with Texas sunshine and live music on every corner. He grew up in a small town in northern Illinois, the kind of place where classmates rode tractors to school and snowdrifts regularly reached over his head. "Winters were long, and everything moved a little slower. I always knew I wanted something different."

That desire for change eventually led him to sunny Florida for college, Boston for dental school, and finally to Texas, where he's now planted roots with his wife Carolina, their dog Sebastian, and five cats. In Spicewood, Evan runs ØRIS Dental Studio, a dental practice he built from the ground up.

Evan's path to dentistry began with a love of learning and a steady drive to excel. He was valedictorian in both 8th grade and high school, then graduated summa cum laude from the University of Central Florida with a degree in Molecular and Microbiology, finishing a semester early. His acceptance into Harvard School of

Dental Medicine (one of the most competitive dental programs in the country, with only 35 students accepted annually) was fueled by his passion for science, art, and human connection. "The day my grandmother saw me graduate was one of the proudest of my life."

### **A Shift That Changed Everything**

Carolina and Evan met while working at a large dental office in Delray Beach, Florida. "She was poised, professional, and unfortunately for me, immune to my first few attempts at charm." One day, she happened to trade shifts with a coworker and ended up working a slow Saturday alongside him. "Let's just say the air

conditioning wasn't the only thing keeping things cool. She played it casual, but I'm pretty sure she knew what she was doing."

Their relationship grew as Carolina finished her studies in psychology and marriage and family therapy. She eventually joined Evan in Texas, and the couple was married in May 2025

The background features a variety of tropical plants. In the top left, there are several monstera leaves in shades of green and dark blue. On the right side, a large, detailed monstera leaf is prominent, along with a palm frond. At the bottom, there are more green leaves, some with yellow and white patterns.

**A  
SMILE  
YOU  
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SMILE  
ABOUT**

**ØRIS**

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in Riviera Maya. It was a beautiful ceremony, until the weather decided otherwise. "Right in the middle of our vows, a surprise rainstorm rolled in, the mic stopped working, the wind picked up, and we had to sprint inside just before the skies opened up. They say rain on your wedding day is good luck, and we'll take it."

### Starting Fresh in Spicewood

Evan moved to the Austin area before Carolina and quickly knew he wanted to make a life here. After years of practicing dentistry in Florida, he wanted to do things differently. The process came with delays, long nights, and plenty of lessons learned. But it was worth it. The studio now offers advanced technology, including digital smile design and augmented reality glasses for patients to watch shows during treatment. Every part of the space reflects Evan's personal touch, from the layout to the calm atmosphere.

"I wanted to build something that prioritized people over

numbers," he says. "That's what my dental practice is all about. Doing dentistry with intention and heart." But what truly sets the studio apart is the feeling.

And one of the most popular features of his office? His dog, Sebastian. "Sebastian has been with me for over 11 years, since he was the size of a gerbil," Evan says. "He comes to the office every day and has unofficially been our 'Employee of the Month' since we opened." (Yes, there's a plaque.) Patients love him, and Evan admits that being able to bring Sebastian to work may have been one of his biggest



motivators for opening his own practice.

### A Shared Commitment to Helping Others

Carolina's story is one of perseverance. She moved to the U.S. from Colombia to be with her mom, but didn't know English and had to start from scratch: working, going to school, and slowly building a support system. "It took a lot of patience and motivation. Some of my friends didn't have the chance to go to college, and I knew I had to take the opportunity seriously."

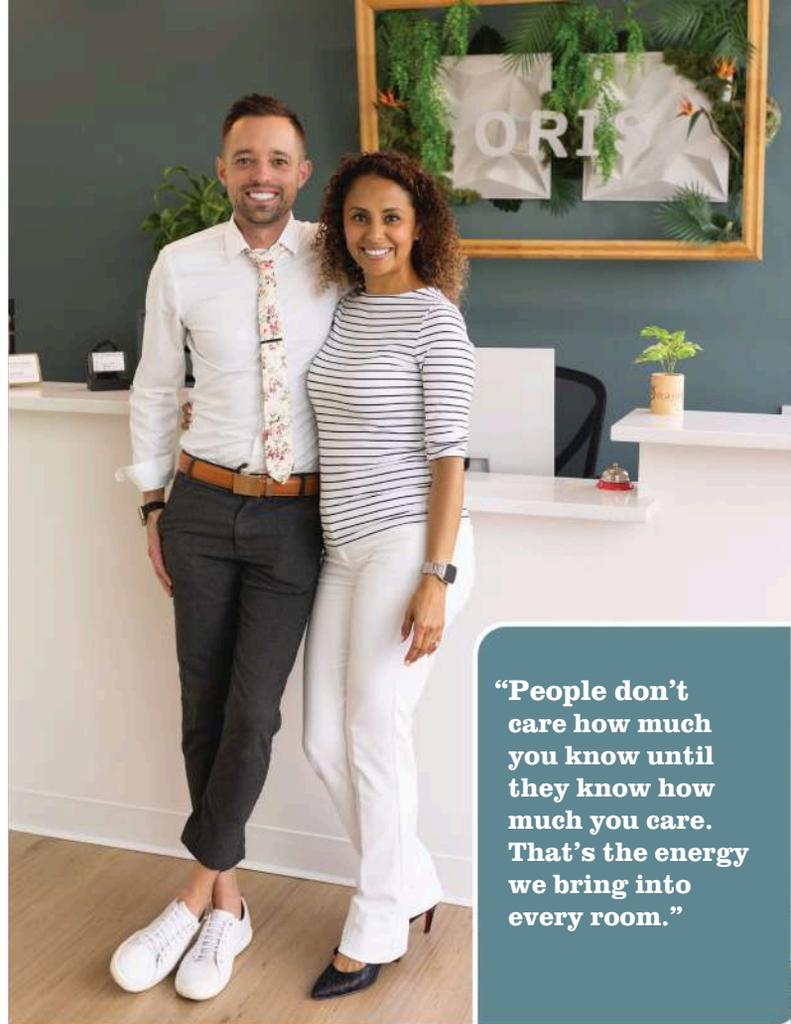
She earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in Florida and now works as a licensed therapist at a private practice in Austin. Her focus is on veterans, couples, and adults, and her office incorporates holistic care like acupuncture alongside therapy. "We receive grants to support veterans, and that's something Evan and I both care deeply about."

That shared value of service shows up in their personal lives, too. ØRIS Dental Studio has supported local efforts like Taste of Lake Travis, AIM (Adults Independent & Motivated), and charity events through Zao Church. They've even taken on individual cases for those in need of a fresh start.

### Daily Life, Pets, and the Trails

Outside of work, Evan and Carolina spend much of their time outdoors: hiking local trails, camping at state parks, swimming in the Colorado River, or tubing down nearby rivers. If the weather allows, their dog Sebastian is right there with them. They're also taco truck regulars and always on the lookout for the hottest hot sauce, a pursuit inspired by Carolina's Colombian roots.

One memorable camping trip at Emma Long Park stands out: thrilled to have a waterfront site to themselves, they later realized everyone else had seen the forecast. Temperatures dropped 30



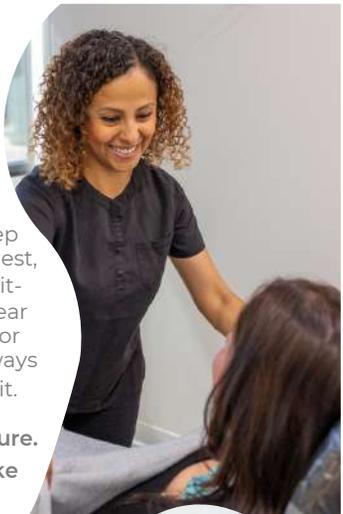
"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. That's the energy we bring into every room."



## Summer's Better with a Smile You Love

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## Meet DR. EVAN PEDERSEN

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degrees overnight, making for a cold but unforgettable experience that they still laugh about.

At home, things are just as active. They share their space with five cats: Penelope, Piper, Olivia, Matilda, and Chula. Two were adopted, and the other three were born under their house and quickly became part of the family. Both Evan and Carolina are avid readers, and Evan enjoys painting in his spare time; his watercolor artwork decorates the walls of his dental practice. Carolina is a dedicated runner, although she's currently recovering from a post-marathon injury. Still, she doesn't miss a day on the trails and finds peace in staying close to nature.

**What's Next**

For Evan, the most rewarding part of his job is helping people feel confident again. "Helping someone out of pain is powerful.

Helping someone smile again is life-changing."

He's passionate about giving patients clear, honest information—no pressure, no jargon. "I want people to walk away thinking, 'That actually made sense.' Dentistry can be personal and precise. That's the kind of experience I want people to have here."

As for the future, both Evan and Carolina are focused on growing their connection to the community and continuing to do work that feels meaningful.

"We're grateful for how warmly the Spicewood community has embraced us," says Evan. "Every morning, our team reviews the day's schedule and genuinely lights up. That's rare and special."

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*My name is Claire and I am a Lifestyle Photographer based in Spicewood. I pride myself on capturing honest, emotive and fun filled images for families who value connection. I love to capture families, newborns, brands and events.*

*Now booking for Spring and summer sessions*

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