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# Worth taking the plunge



ANGELA Vitoulkas is the co-founder and director of VIVO Cafe Group, a successful string of cafes, and often spends 14 hours a day at the coalface of the business.

She says she is using her speaking career to encourage and inspire business owners.

**What was your first investment and how did it go?**

It was also my first business, a tiny sandwich shop. I doubled my investment in 2½ years.

**What is your favourite type of investment and why?**

Shares. I can control my portfolio and track my investments. They are transparent, flexible and liquid. Property is a big part of our long-term strategy, though.

**What is the best investment advice you have received and who was it from?**

That business life is all about cashflow. Those were wise words from my mother.

**How do you approach investment risk?**

You must always have a good exit strategy.

**What has been your best-performing investment?**

My core business. My cafes

have been the best performers. Could it be because of me?

**And the worst?**

Zinifex shares in 2008.

**How do you feel about investing overseas?**

Investing overseas is a must, but you need to be aware of the currency risks.

**Where do you get your information about investing?**

My business advisers. I always have more than one.

**How do you feel about managed funds?**

Managed funds lack transparency and I think the fees are too high.

**How would you invest \$25,000 if given it tomorrow?**

I would definitely go for an index fund.

**Do you make extra repayments off your mortgage?**

Always. Provided you have a mortgage that is structured to benefit from extra payments, that is.

**Do you get advice from a financial planner?**

No, I work very closely with my accountant and business advisers, as opposed

to a straight financial planner.

**How do you treat your credit card?**

With respect and scepticism. They are a great business tool when put in wise hands.

**What are your thoughts about life insurance and disability insurance?**

Both are necessary, as life is full of surprises.

**Do you have a personal finance budget and do you stick to it?**

No. I am very disciplined with my personal spending. I have never been out of control or excessive. Much.

**What is the most extravagant purchase you have made?**

I have a shoe problem, which is now a collection summed up in two words: Manolo Blahniks.

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Angela Vithoulkas owns a string of successful cafes. Picture: John Fotiadis