



Maria Alvarez Simmons

March 18, 1960 - December 17, 2019

Maria Alvarez-Simmons, age 59 of Altamonte Springs, FL joined her husband, father, and stepson in eternal life on December 17, 2019, after a remarkable and inspiring fight against stage four metastatic breast cancer. She passed peacefully surrounded by her survivors, her daughter and mother, but not before having one last sarcastic disagreement with both of them.

Born in Havana, Cuba, on March 18, 1960, Maria immigrated to Evanston, Illinois with her parents, Juan and Rosalina, in 1962. Her time spent there taught her to love the Cubs and Da Bears, and to despise living in snow. After a few short years, the family moved to Hialeah, Florida, where she completed school and began taking her one-woman comedy show on the road. Her first major tour stop was with Ryder Systems, Inc., working various jobs and traveling around the United States, all while successfully stalking and convincing the love of her life, George, to marry her and spend a lifetime together filled with laughs, cries, and synchronized snores. She then received her greatest gift and best friend, daughter Nicole, in 1990. It is still unknown how she was able to carry a 10-pound baby so well.

In 2001, Maria decided she was over south Florida traffic, and moved her family to her second tour stop, central Florida. It was here that she became a prominent leader in local government, transforming the art and music scene of the cities of Casselberry and Maitland, respectively. She was devoted to supporting local artists in any way she could, whether that meant giving them a spot on the stage, buying their art to display in her home, or buying their CD to play in her stereo. Maria was known for making everyone she met feel welcome and safe with her bright and sincere smile, creating a massive fan club of jazz fans, artists, and musicians. She supported the arts until her very last breath, and greatly appreciates Starbucks for their tall, non-fat, no whip three pumps of mocha coffee drink that kept her going all those years.

Her third and final stop began at Publix, where she worked as a bakery clerk, Aprons cook, produce clerk, and pharmacy technician before arriving at her greatest joy, floral.

She created countless floral arrangements, corsages, boutonnieres, and balloon bouquets for hundreds of happy customers for the 4 years she was a florist, even creating her own company with her daughter to serve more of the community.

This tour stop took a dark turn on July 15, 2015, when Maria was diagnosed with stage 4 metastatic breast cancer. Her and her daughter's lives were irrevocably changed that day, but it didn't stop them from living their best lives. Maria and Nicole packed a lifetime of memories in the last four and a half years of Maria's life; visiting multiple states, snagging last minute concert tickets, taking all the car selfies, eating just about everything their eyes landed on, gossiping over coffee and iced green teas, and making fun of Nicole's poor choices in dating after her tears were dried. If they weren't driving around town, Maria and Nicole could be found on their recliners, playing Cookie Jam and taking cat naps in between. They were each other's best friends, confidants, and greatest supporters. Regardless of what people may say, Nicole was not held back from anything, nor did she miss out on anything, by choosing to spend the majority of her time with her mom. In fact, she sees it as the best gift she could've ever received, and the reason why her heart will be forever broken without her mom's presence. Her spirit, sarcasm, and love of travel will stay with Nicole as she continues their adventure around the United States.

In lieu of flowers, please do the following, along with an act of kindness for others, and for yourself, in memory of her. Take the trip, apply for the job, enjoy the rain with a warm cup of coffee. Continue living a life that makes YOU proud and happy to be alive.

As always, I'll let Maria have the last words - "be honest, help others, and most importantly, laugh a lot."

Comments



“ Maria was just a sweetheart - the end

Barbara Franklin - December 25, 2019 at 01:09 PM



“ This is a beautiful tribute. I worked with Maria at Ryder many years ago and was very excited to see her again after a long time through my FB friends. In all her pictures she was always happy, always smiling and always with Nicole. What a great legacy! I am very thankful I was able to reconnect and witness her and Nicole's beautiful story even if for a little while. Thinking of and praying for the family.

Marta Trias - December 22, 2019 at 10:20 PM



“ Thank you - Nicole

niiiicole - December 23, 2019 at 06:37 PM