



House Music: How Vanilla Ice Went From Hip Hop And Reality Star To Savvy Real Estate Mogul

ESTATENVY breaks down the hip hop star rise to real estate fame.

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It's nearly impossible for anyone old enough to have listened to the radio in 1990 to hear the name Vanilla Ice and not get the hook to Billboard chart-topping "Ice Ice Baby" stuck in his or her head. But today, Vanilla Ice (real name, Rob Van Winkle) has emerged as a force in the real estate industry with more than 15 years renovating and flipping houses. His passion and success led to The Vanilla Ice Project on the DIY Network, currently filming its 8th season set to premiere in July 2018.

So how did the former hip hop star and frequent reality TV star find this second career?

“I did 'Ice Ice Baby' when I was 16 years old,” [Van Winkle told Miami New Times in November 2015](#). “If you would have asked me what I was going to be doing another 16 to 20 years down the line, I would have never guessed construction — but it goes to show you: Expect the unexpected; get in where you fit in. I found another passion, and I haven't stopped since.”

On [the Vanilla Ice Real Estate website](#), [Van Winkle told DIY Life](#) that he bought houses in L.A., New York City and a ski resort house in Utah during his early 20's when he spent three years on tour around the world. Upon returning from the tour and realizing the lack of time he spent in his homes, he decided to sell them.

“When I sold the homes, I made money on every single one of them — hundreds of thousands of dollars. I thought, “You’ve got to be kidding me. It can’t be *this* easy.” Of course, that’s when real estate was really good (in the 1990s),” he told [DIY Life](#).

That unintended first foray into house flipping kickstarted a lifelong passion. But it wasn't until he converted his home in Miami from what he described as feeling like “living in a nightclub” that [Van Winkle got into renovation and decoration, as he told TIME in January 2013](#).

“I started educating myself. I went online, looked at a bunch of pictures, design magazines. I learned about earth tones and throw pillows and fireplaces and how to make it warm and cozy. It took a year and a half to do the whole house, but after it was done, I was amazed at how awesome it came out,” [Van Winkle told TIME](#).

Photo courtesy of [The Vanilla Ice Project's website](#).