

Baby on order

A child wish? In the U.S., no problem: In California companies provide surrogate mothers, egg and sperm donations. The business is booming - even with clients from overseas.

Taylor was in second grade, when his world was shaken. My mother gets a baby. And they will sell it, "he told then, seven years ago, excited his teacher.

"It was difficult for him. He simply could not understand," says Shannon Hallman, pushing over the abdomen. She is now pregnant again, for the second time in Fremdauftrag, and this time, she says, are all very excited.

Everyone, that is, in this case: her husband Randy, Taylor and his sister - and of course the parents of the babies. The photo of the two men, here in high summer to collect their first child, is framed in the living room. "This is our children," said Hallman, she laughs and it radiates: "We have it right lieb gewonnen."

The Hall Mans live in Simi Valley, a small town in the mountains of Southern California, a simple bungalow. They do not live in abundance, Randy works in a factory, Shannon supervises two small children as a mother one day.

And they also deserve to pregnancy. Approximately \$ 30 000 brings the job as Leihmutter. But that money alone was not decisive, so much they could in nine months in a normal job deserve.

"I'm just incredibly happy to be pregnant," said Hallman. Even the objections of her husband, she rebutted by their enthusiasm - because he was initially did not enjoy. "This is probably as a male thing. Territorial claims. Do not want their child of a woman the other austrägt," she says. True understanding, it has not.

About a year ago Hallman met for the first time and Morten Morten, two gay Norwegians with a strong desire to have children. An agency from Los Angeles brought both sides together, doctor and lawyer from Oslo and the California workers woman: an unusual combination. Only clarified the agency people they have medical and legal questions. Then they went Hallman and the two fathers desire alone lunch.

It was not an easy meeting, although all now well understood. Of course it is difficult, no matter when learning about sensitive issues to discuss: What if the Leihmutter - for artificial inseminations, this is often the case - with triplets or quadruplets pregnant? Are then both sides for partial abortion (in the U.S. speak of "selective reduction")? And as you go in case of a serious hereditary disease of the embryo?

"I am not God. It is their baby. They bring their time, their money and their lives. If they have a baby with special needs can not raise, it is not up to me upon them," said Hallman. It goes to church every Sunday. Never before has there someone complains

that they are gay austrägt a foreign child. The pregnancy is exactly according to plan: First, the egg of an anonymous donor mixed with the sperm fertilizes the Norwegians, then the embryo was implanted Shannon Hallman, for mid-August is the birth notice.

When it comes to desire babies, is America more than ever the land of unlimited possibilities. There are companies that provide surrogate mothers, and those who egg donors with infertile women or gay wannabe fathers together. Sperm banks offer a colorful catalogue of donors, service-oriented ordered by skin color, appearance, education and emotional profile. Fertility clinics may be obtained free of sex selection and help embryos without serious hereditary diseases.

And often agencies, which all the components together and also occurring pfundschwere treaty for care.

Package 120 000 to 200 000 U.S. dollars cost of a baby, when egg donation, artificial insemination and Leihmutter requested or required. This may, for example, the contracting influence on the dietary habits of Leihmutter and after the birth expect that their mother's milk is delivered via FedEx.

The customer base is so varied and colorful as society as a whole. In addition to traditional spouses with a belief problem for some time care is also lesbian and gay couples for a huge demand - babies from such constellations in America "Gaybys". Even single women who are the children's wish without partners to meet their own, increasingly play a role - for example karriereorientierte New York, at the last minute but still a baby. In scene circles is of "single moms by choice".

Finally, globalization also brings lots of new business into the country. Strict laws in Europe and elsewhere gave the fertility tourism has long been a flourish. Now the weak dollar causes a real baby boom: Some U.S. agencies are already 40 percent of its business with customers from overseas, its advisory seminars in London, Frankfurt and Paris are best visited regularly.

One of the main suppliers of the scene is based in California, where the legal situation in the liberal belief baby. Here, in Los Angeles, Andy runs his firm Vorzimer Egg Donation Inc. (example: egg donation GmbH). The man, mid-forties, type smarter lawyer, before bids can hardly save: 40 000 women have been alone since 2005 with him as egg-donor advertised, many of them probably in the hope of quickly earned money.

But as easy as it seems, it is not - and not only because the vast majority of candidates who satisfy the tests does not exist: Only one of 28 is the right age, healthy, genetically sound and capable enough eggs per cycle to produce.

Vorzimer minutes may be upset over competitors in university newspapers and advertising switch 18-year-old student fees of up to 50 000 dollars per egg donation.

"This is a disgrace," he says, the young girls had no idea what goes to extreme hormone treatments they zukomme.

Trisha is 24, has made great Rehaugen and flashing white teeth. "I am a lucky lady and have always a smile on the face," she writes in her online profile.

Scarlett, 27, loves dancing, playing piano and reading, especially books by Oscar Wilde. In addition, they look like contemporary films from Spain. Its outstanding features include, according to profile, "full lips, slender legs, almond eyes."

Trisha, Scarlett and hundreds of other women have their profiles online. The offer is so rich as confusing. Blonde hair, gray eyes, black skin, white skin, Christians, Buddhists, waitresses, bank employees: Everything is here. The Internet site of Egg Donation Inc. is a kind of MySpace and match.com the baby industry, focal point for all those who want a child, but naturally none can get.

It is not easy to get the right egg for the baby's own desire to find. Couples who have gone this route, tell with a mixture of aversion and self-irony of this experience, of long evenings in front of the computer screen, of endless discussions, of the attempt, emotionally, intellectually and visually connect to recognize between themselves and the donor .

Kennenlerntreffen are possible. But not all feel comfortable with that, many prefer to avoid.

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Sherman Oaks, a wealthy suburb of Los Angeles, palms, recalls with its fine gardens to the set of "Desperate Housewives". The woman at the interview at the M Street Coffee, is slim, indeed almost model-thin, brown hair falls casually over their shoulders, eyelashes, eyebrows are plucked carefully gepinselt and the face is perfect geschminkt.

Sarah, 24, has just completed their training as a nurse stopped, she lives with her boyfriend Jeffrey in the neighborhood, they do not drink, smoke, in bars and night clubs, it does not. "I'm a girly girl," she says, was so mean as much: I am a real girl.

In addition, it is in the fifth month pregnant. Surely, however, Sarah is not. And, of course, is pregnant also the wrong word.

Last October, a couple from Houston in Texas for the donor with the number 20299 decided. "The two have agreed on a charity event to know their church," says Sarah. Both of them are working in research, the woman as a laboratory assistant - they do not know more about the anonymous wannabe parents.

And vice versa? Maybe in the Texanern like Sarah questionnaire that she prays and Beyond to believe. The donor nurse, the mother austragende and aufziehende laboratory assistant: That fits. Or simply gave the appearance of the rash?

Sarah was at the same time as the recipient of the pill prescribed: This is the cycle of the two women synchronized. A ten-hormone treatment stimulated the production of eggs. Then they traveled for a week to Houston to the attending doctors of the recipient. 20 eggs were taken. 15 were mature. 13 were with the seeds of Texaners fertilized.

That was on Friday, 14 December. Sarah's job was done. She was tired from the anaesthetic, went to the hotel and slept for the rest of the day. The next morning they flew back to Los Angeles.

20299 donor's wishes to not later by the child can contact, so should their last name not even in the press. And their "child" is again a wrong concept.

"I'm not the mother," says Sarah: "It may well be my genetic material. But the mother is the woman who großzieht the baby."

Contracted is already stated that they have no responsibility and no rights, not in terms of the baby in Houston and even the perhaps eleven or twelve embryos in the process may have caused. The Texan is now the pair. It can freeze and for future babies. It may give another couple. It can destroy them. "The can do whatever they want," says Sarah.

What keeps them?

"It is okay for me," she says. Then make them a break. "So I just prefer not to know."

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The Huntington Reproductive Center is a fertilization clinic in Los Angeles, is one of the largest in California. Doctor Susan Sara Jari and its ten colleagues arrange about 3000 in-vitro fertilizations a year - a long-proven commodity business. But their practice is also a future laboratory, the doctors here suggest ways of the world either unknown or rather highly controversial.

For example the freezing of ova: The technology has recently made great strides. "This issue is very big in coming," says Sara Jari. Above all, young, unmarried patients are interested in why they care so betimes for the future and must not later Torschlusspanik advised. Fertility control is in the hospital jargon.

Or the rate of embryos. Almost always is that Sara Jari their patients for a number of fertilized ova to a greater selection. After fertilization, the embryo grow about three to five days in the lab. Then they are divided into four quality classes, fine ordered by A, B, C and D. embryos whose cells are most clearly receive the highest grades.

Before the winner is implanted, further tests. The human cell contains 24 different chromosomes. "In so far 12 of which we can embryo abnormalities and genetic diseases are looking for," says Sara Jari. In her practice is now more or less a standard procedure to embryos as undeliverable. "I know that from an ethical point of view to discuss long," says the deutschstämmige doctor, "but I do think that we so much suffering and early infant can prevent."

The sex may already in the test tube. However allow the Huntington's physician not all patients free choice between boy or girl. Only parents who already have a child may freely decide. "We call it 'family balancing,'" says Sara Jari.

The remaining embryos are usually frozen. An estimated one million embryos being stored in refrigerated tanks of the U.S. fertilization clinics.

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Kramer Ryan was about ten years old when he began drängendere always questions about his father. Questions which his mother Wendy could not answer.

She had her child in 1990 with an anonymous sperm donation begotten. My former husband was infertile. One year after Ryan's birth, he disappeared from their lives. Since mother and son live alone in a small town in Denver, Colorado, where Wendy a job as a financial consultant.

The search for Ryan's biological father was a project that their lives completely durcheinanderwirbelte. It began with searches on the Internet about eight years. Wendy Kramer durchkämmte the network, placed classified ads in Yahoo groups with the name of the seed bank, which they then used, and with the donor number: 1058th

It was all inconclusive.

The only thing the single mother learned this: Because the outside are even more people on the move, children and young people who in search of their origin.

So they developed a special Internet site to the Donor Sibling Registry. Actually, it was as a small information and Personals thought, as an informal contact point for all those who from a sperm, egg or embryo donation may have caused. It would be nice, she thought, when Ryan in this way or half brother or half sister would. Almost 20 000 people from all over the world have now registered, have their contact information in the database, the name of the used ova or sperm bank and donor number.

Two-, three times per day in this way can be found wild strangers to each other and find that they are half-siblings. Rare there contacts between donors and their progeny, but that happens. Altogether more than 5000 new links has already given.

And even with the Kramers itself, there were long waiting for news. In March last year, a family from the state of New York their data in the siblings Bank.

Hit! Ryan had a half-sister. Within an hour the two mothers were on the phone, shortly thereafter, Ryan and Anna, then 16 and 13 years old.

"We have just said hi and started talking," says Ryan, "it was incredibly cool, just a crazy experience. After all, we share half of our DNA."

In the summer of both families met for the first time in New York, to walk in Central Park Man likened the appearance of the two - the eyes and jaw same position - told from living in Colorado and in the countryside near New York. "We were very quickly like old friends," says Ryan.

However, the new family was not yet complete. Ryan, now 18 years old, knows of another half-sister in California. E-mails went back and forth until their mother got wind of it and forbade any contact. Another customer pair of donor 1058 with the Kramers wanted information on possible child and hereditary diseases to exchange the two daughters, now aged around 11 and 14 years, but nothing like this could mitkriegen, they do not know that a sperm donation .

Messages were also at some of the seed bank. A total of nine children are being assigned to the donor 1058.

From the man himself but missing until today every track.

"How should it be things that are at once such a large biological kinship? Simply is not," said Wendy Kramer, "it is absolutely overwhelming."

With the help of the Donor Sibling Registry have clans with 30, 40 or 50 members. Some are located all over the world. The largest group consists of 105 half-siblings - all come from the same producers.

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Cappy Rothman is perhaps the most important pioneer of American fertilization industry.

His seed bank is America's largest. 1977, the year of foundation, served a broom chamber sperm interim storage. Meanwhile leave 30 000 semen vials per year Firmenhof the California Cryobank, Inc.

The offer is almost inexhaustible and is frozen in nine huge metal tanks. Each of them, Rothman expects proud, summarizes 20 000 ampoules, each vial contains 60 million sperm. A billion, oh what, trillion-capacity, he says. "So you can still bear witness to centuries babies," says Rothman.

Previously, artificial insemination was a purely medical event. In general, couples simply wanted a donor to the infertile husband saw as possible, the doctors met selection as Doctor Rothman alone.

Meanwhile it was a global service industry. Over 250 donor applies solely Cryobank in their catalogue. Customers worldwide will be as good as any wish fulfilled.

Each request, which means most: young, healthy, attractive and intelligent. "Our branch is located in Cambridge between Harvard and MIT. Palo Alto, we are directly opposite the Stanford campus," says Rothman. Elite semen from elite universities.

75 U.S. dollars paid to the doctor for every "acceptable ejaculate", also received the sperm donors vouchers for the cinema or for Starbucks to reward; students, which he takes in his catalogue, he expected two to three visits per week over a period of approximately one and a half years .

"Society has changed," says Rothman, and thus increased the demands of its clientele. Already 57 percent of his clientele consists of lesbian couples and single women who are on your own desire to meet their children.

Unfruchtbare men and their wives want the issue seed bank usually quickly and displace disapprove.

Lesbians and single women on the other hand, the realization of Rothman and his customer service, appreciate a wide selection at the sperm purchase. They want to offer the most comprehensive picture of donor semen - from his character, family and educational background. "There is so much like the search for a life partner," says Rothman.

He is just trying to greater diversity in its catalogue. For firefighters, police and medics, he felt there could be a good demand: They enjoy in the United States at least since the 11th September hero status. And next he wants to artists, musicians and dancers as donors.

"We always think of something new," says Rothman, "if we meet our customers ignored, we would be a terrible service."

FRANK HORNIG