SHARTSIS FRIESE

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Suzy Orza

PARTNER

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Suzy Orza is a trial lawyer and experienced consumer and commercial arbitration counsel known for her practical judgment in resolving contract and business disputes for companies and individuals, whether in court or in arbitration.

Much of Suzy's practice focuses on contract disputes, including those arising from terms of service, partnership and shareholder agreements, and commercial agreements. These disputes often involve breach of contract, tort, and unfair competition claims. Suzy has defended companies in hundreds of consumer and commercial arbitrations before the American Arbitration Association (AAA), including mass arbitrations, giving her first-hand insight into how these disputes unfold and how to bring them to a cost-effective close.

Suzy has successfully tried cases to conclusion before juries, judges, and arbitrators. Each side of her practice reinforces the other: her arbitration work gives her a sharp sense of what claims are worth and how to resolve them efficiently, even in large numbers, while her trial experience demonstrates to opposing parties that she will take a case to trial if needed. As a result, clients get an early, clear-eyed view of their case's strengths and risks, so they can negotiate favorable resolutions or proceed to trial with confidence.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Litigation

Contract Disputes

Fiduciary Duty, Shareholder & Partnership Disputes

Trust & Estate Disputes

Environmental Compliance & Litigation

Consumer & Commercial Arbitration

EDUCATION

University of California, Hastings College of Law

University of California, Berkeley; B.A., psychology

BAR ADMISSIONS

California

ACCOLADES

Selected for the *San Francisco Business Times*' 40 Under 40 Class of 2026

Recognized by *Best Lawyers in America*® "Ones to Watch" in Commercial Litigation, 2026-2027

Selected for inclusion in *Northern California Super*

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Disputes among business owners are a significant part of Suzy's practice. She represents partners and shareholders in fiduciary duty and business divorce disputes, including contested buyouts, valuation disputes, and claims of self-dealing or mismanagement. Her trust and estate practice includes actions challenging the validity of wills, trusts, and other estate planning instruments; breach of trust and breach of fiduciary duty claims; and elder abuse actions. She takes both types of matters through trial when they cannot be resolved.

Lawyers "Rising Stars", 2019-2026

Suzy also has experience litigating environmental and regulatory disputes.

Clients have included technology companies and other large public and private companies, as well as small businesses, individuals, and departments of the State of California.

Suzy brings to her practice the perspective of a year in federal chambers. She was the first legal extern to complete a one-year term with the Honorable Jeffrey S. White of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. She practiced at Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP before joining Shartsis Friese in 2018. Before beginning her legal career, she danced professionally with the San Francisco Ballet.

Activities

- San Domenico School
  - Board Member, 2023 – present

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