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MAGAZINE





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JULY IS FOOD & DRINK!

July is beyond action packed this year! Wow. Not only is America celebrating 250 years, but the Village of Millerton is also celebrating its 175th, while we over here at *Main Street* are celebrating all of that plus our "Food & Drink" issue. There's so much to celebrate!

The "Food & Drink" issue was the first themed issue that we ever did. That feels like a million years ago but more accurately was 12 twelve years ago. This is also one of my personal favorite issues because it's just so colorful and delicious! This year is no different, and we have had so much fun putting this issue together. My hope is that just maybe you read about a new eatery or ... would it be a "drinkery"? ... that you want to try out. Or if not that, you'll learn something new about a place that you already love – or everything in between.

We'd be remiss if we didn't address America's big 250th celebration, so I took it upon myself to do a little something for this. Something maybe a bit different. But I felt it was fitting. I hope you enjoy the piece. Likewise, we'll be celebrating Millerton's 175th anniversary right after July 4th. Our office has proudly been located in Millerton since this magazine first published, so we're excited to celebrate in the village that we've become a part of. If you're so inclined, you should check out the extensive list of celebrations that Millerton has been planning and that will take place this July. There is definitely something for everyone.

On a very different note, I'd like to share the sad news that we received last month. Brandon Kralik had been a contributing writer for us some years ago, focusing on artist profiles. He sadly passed away in Hawaii in late May. Brandon left a lasting impression on me. He was an amazing human, so kind and humble, incredibly talented, and smart. We had the best conversations in the short time that he lived in our area and that he contributed to this magazine. In the years since he moved away, he and I kept in touch sporadically, and it was always lovely to talk with him. He was an accomplished artist himself, and his paintings were spectacular. He will be missed by all those who knew and loved him.

As we celebrate many things this month, I think above all else that we should celebrate life. Celebrate joy, the good things, and the gifts that life gives us. Happy summer to each and every one of you. Thank you for reading, and please remember to support our advertisers!

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



JULY 2026

Happy 250 America!

Photo by
Olivia Valentine

the
FOOD
&
DRINK
issue

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PUBLISHER, EDITOR, WRITER, & DESIGNER: Thorunn Kristjansdottir

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Abby Audenino | Barbara Peduzzi | CB Wismar | Christine Bates | Dominique De Vito | Ian Strever | Jesse DeGroot | Jim Calvin | Leora Armstrong | Olivia Valentine & Caroline Markonic | Regina Molaro | Whitney Joseph

COPY EDITOR: Viveca Gardiner. **PHOTOGRAPHERS:** Lazlo Gyorsok & Olivia Valentine

ADVERTISING Ashley Kristjansson, 518 592 1135 or info@mainstreetmag.com

CONTACT

Office 135 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY 12546 • Mailing address PO Box 165, Ancramdale, NY 12503
Phone 518 592 1135 • Email info@mainstreetmag.com • Website mainstreetmag.com

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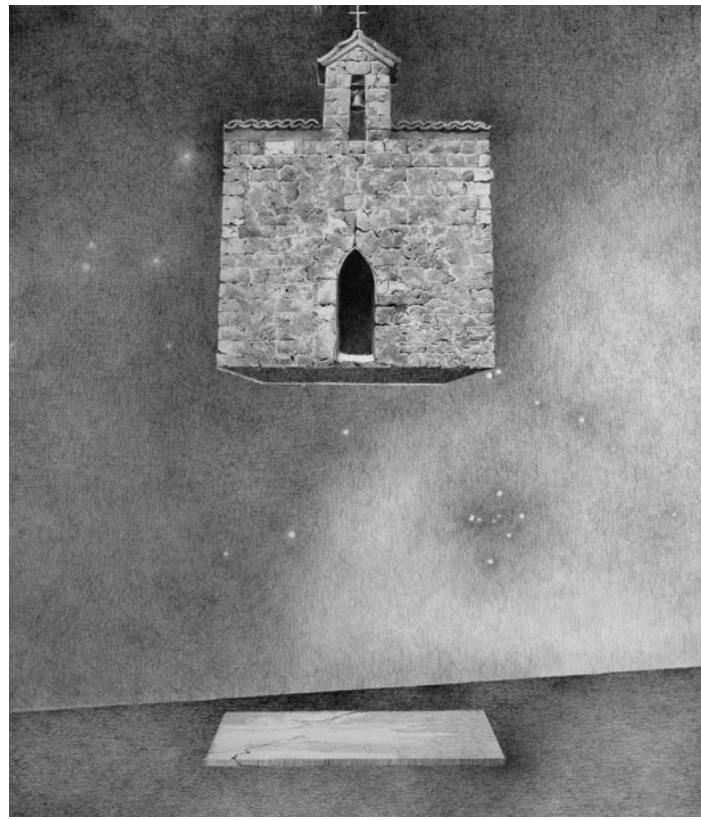


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LOOKING THROUGH THE UNDERGROWTH

AMANDA
JONES

By Leora Armstrong
info@mainstreetmag.com

The roar of the waterfall is the first thing that greets you as you step into Amanda Jones' studio, set beside the river in a converted mill house in Salisbury, CT. The space feels like a woodland that has folded itself indoors: the room is filled with delicate paper sculptures of flowers, leaves, and trees – every branch inhabited by insects, seeds, and birds. You move through carefully, looking closely as flowers climb the walls, their roots exposed and entwined with the creatures below. It is almost impossible to believe that everything is made from paper.

"I have to ship my work, and currently it's all paper, which makes transport complex. I was nervous unpacking this new work, wondering what had survived. I box everything myself, cushioned in paper with plenty of air around it when I move studios."

Jones grew up in Cape Town, South Africa, before moving to Europe – first England, then eventually Florida. She now divides her time and studios between Salisbury and Florida, with her husband Dave. Her ceramic women are elegant, watchful presences, that seem to follow the viewer around the room as light and shadow shift across their

forms. Large oil paintings, often depicting women, serve as backdrops throughout the studio, each built up through multiple translucent layers applied with extraordinary delicacy. Surface, both its depth and texture, is central to her practice, as is the three-dimensional installation work, where every angle is carefully considered. Whatever the medium, Jones brings the same exacting attention to detail.

What are your earliest memories of making art?

As a child, I just loved color. My favorites were red and yellow, and they always had to go together. The earliest image I remember being truly proficient at was drawing trees: pulling up the trunk, drawing in the branches, adding the leaves – and it looked like a tree. There was real detail to it.

That's so interesting. I recently spoke to someone who observed that if you ask a child what they love doing and then ask that same person decades later what they ended up doing, it is often precisely what they loved as a very young child. Was anyone in your family artistic?

My grandfather was, he worked exclusively in pencil, and he also professionally retouched photographs, working on portraits to refine them, adding a little color or softening

details. So, I grew up around that. My grandmother was enormously creative with textiles, always sewing, knitting, and crocheting; she adored it. As a child, I spent hours making things with her, using little swatches of fabric and buttons, whole boxes of buttons, like a treasure chest.

I grew up with boxes of buttons too! So, when did you begin making work seriously? Did you train formally, and who were your early influences?

I went to college in Cape Town to study graphic design. As a child I was instinctively drawn to Van Gogh, and as a teenager I fell for Paul Klee, Mark Rothko, and Henri Matisse, artists who made those gravitational, elemental shapes I loved. I also learned shorthand and typing, which were requirements for most jobs at that time, which eventually led me to a position at a large building restoration company. I oversaw the corporate identity work, and since the company was constantly acquiring new businesses, there was always a new logo to develop. They also produced quarterly magazines, which I assembled myself, taking the photographs, writing the copy, and putting the whole project together. In 1984, Dave and I married and left South Africa. He was working for Apple at the time, and when Steve Jobs decided to pull out of the country, under considerable pressure from Stanford over apartheid, the company moved us to the UK.

And how did you find life on a different continent?

The UK didn't feel that foreign to me, honestly. I grew up seeing myself as more English than South African. My grandparents were English, and my mother considered herself Scottish. We had Christmases with fake snow and paper icicles in the heat of a South African summer, so I'd always had this longing for England. Luckily, I was able to keep working for the same company, which had a London office, commuting two hours each way from Buckinghamshire, which meant a great deal of book reading. I loved it. We lived in a village called Nash, our first home together, attached to the Victorian Gothic village hall. It was there I began to garden seriously, which still feeds my art practice. Through the company I worked on the façades of the Old Bailey and the Houses of Parliament, photographing the restoration work from the roof of Westminster Cathedral and the Public Records Office. Extraordinary old buildings filled with stories.

Especially with all that carved stone and wood, by Augustus Pugin who was a pioneer in Gothic Revival. I can see where your sense of three-dimensionality was



Ceramic bust. 2019.

nurtured. Grand buildings are real art forms. So, when did you begin painting?

I have always painted. While working in graphic design I also undertook book illustration – cookbooks and children's books through a Cape Town publisher. When we moved again, this time to Paris for Dave's work, I began painting in watercolors and continued freelancing in graphic design for Apple and others. Eventually we moved back to Scotland to The Meldon Hills near Peebles, a very old house with floorboards dating to the 1600s and a real weight of age to it. There I started working in oils. I built another garden there. I love my gardens, but they're always hard to leave.

My childhood was nomadic, which I enjoyed, and we always seemed to live in buildings under restoration. My father was involved in much of that work, so moving comes naturally to me. From Scotland we went to Amsterdam for two years, into an old school building, and then to America in 1993, first to Silicon Valley, then eventually Florida. Through all those years of travel, I have continued my art practice.

What drew you to this part of New England?

After ten years in Florida, we decided we needed somewhere cooler in the summer. We thought initially we might move back to Europe, so we went to France, spent a week looking at houses, and found several we loved, but on the flight home Dave said to me, "I can't do this. I can't manage an international career and a home in another country." He suggested I look at New England instead. A friend, Rebecca Ward, told me she had a listing she thought wasn't for me: "built for dwarves," she said, but we came up and fell completely in love with the river. We essentially bought a bridge



with a small house attached. The mill house was already here, so we restored the old house next door, bringing it closer to its original state, and built a new barn. But it's all about the river, the stone, the movement of the water. It has an energy to it, like a corridor to the ocean. It's nothing like a lake; its moving water is alive. A lake can sometimes feel heavy to me. But here, wildlife passes through daily: a bear with cubs, beavers above the waterfall, otters, and herons hunting the brook trout. This place is constantly alive, and that's invigorating, and it is pulled into my work.

What motivates your practice?

A deep curiosity about space and form. I am fascinated by anything and everything that creeps, crawls, slithers, or is simply just there to be observed. I have been known to spend weeks studying a single tree snail, tracking its course through the vegetation and patio to prevent a sad and crushing end! My mind needs to be exercised, not exorcised! I'm always exploring, constantly trying new work. When I'm really in the zone, I can be in the studio from seven in the morning until six at night. It's complete chaos – my husband can't bear to be in the room. But I'm so focused I just keep going, keep editing, and then finally I clean up, which is its own kind of catharsis. When you're cleaning, you're thinking, "I could use that again,"



Top: Amanda Jones in her Salisbury studio.

Above: *Flowers with moths and Butterflies*. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint.

Opposite page:

Left: *Moths*. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint wood.

Middle: *Chapel*. 2006. Graphite on paper.

Right: *Flowers*. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint.

Continued on next page ...

“this needs to go,” or “I need to look harder at this piece.” It’s all part of the process. Editing is the hardest part.

I also love working with interiors. Each new studio is a fresh playground, and the work carries on. Gardens are grounding in a different way: they’re structural, and they require form, shape, and color. I’ve always felt the outside is part of the inside; a garden is simply another room.

I understand that completely; you can go to bed feeling elated and wake up the next morning to find a piece hasn’t quite worked. Making art is unforgiving. Is there a particular project or series you’re most proud of?

I made a series of pencil drawings beginning in 2008, buildings I had visited or remembered, always interpreted from a photograph I had taken. Each drawing followed a consistent format: a point at the top and a point at the bottom, with a small world contained within. They often featured a constellation in the night sky. The series was a memorial to my younger brother, who died too young. He had a difficult childhood and never really had the freedom to explore the world. He eventually moved to Scotland, became a brilliant chef at a small hotel on the east coast near Findhorn, and then, just when he had found his life and was doing what he loved,

was killed in a terrible car accident. I wanted to share with him some of the things I had seen and loved.

That is a deeply moving project. Do you have advice to give a younger artist?

Focus, persevere, keep working, and never become complacent. Always keep it fresh. I’ve also made another series of paper houses, stacked and tapering, each one decorated with flowers. Their narrative drew from Norse mythology, the two ravens of Odin, who were his eyes and his ears. With the works on paper, the themes have evolved organically. I began with buildings, then the buildings started to be decorated, and from that came the three-dimensional insects and flowers, which led to everything I’m making now.

Is there a collaboration or project you still dream of?

For a future project, I would love to create a large-scale garden installation entirely in paper. That would be something. These pieces here are from the garden, with flowering fritillaria and sycamore seeds cascading down the wall. I’d love to make a series of mobiles as the pieces respond to the slightest breath of air or movement in a room. This single cicada required around 25 individual pieces of paper. Creating it took an enormous



amount of work. I used a fly-tying tool, designed for tying fishing flies, to hold and manipulate the tiny details. I often say I need to be an octopus to make some of these pieces!

So deceptively simple. I love the way you build a narrative into your works. If you could have any artwork in the world to live with, what would you choose?

A Brancusi sculpture. I love the forms, the way he made these totemic pieces, the line, the angle – the utter simplicity. And Nick Cave’s work; his installations are phenomenal, particularly the one at MASS MoCA. Staggeringly wonderful.

Stepping out of this secret garden with beetles and butterflies winding through the undergrowth, a small snail keeping watch, everything shifting almost imperceptibly with the faintest movement of air, each piece suspended like a thread of gossamer, you suddenly remember that all of it is paper delicately made and yet so alive. Jones brings the woodland to life inside with her intense observation and attention to detail. I highly recommend seeing her work in person. ●

To learn more you can visit Amanda’s website, amandabortonjones.com, check out her Instagram @amandahjones1959, or email her at amandahjones@mac.com. Amanda Jones’ artwork is currently on view at Bunny Williams, 100 Main Street, Falls Village, CT.



Top: Grasshopper. Held in fly tying tool. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint.

Middle: Snowflakes. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite, wood and paint.

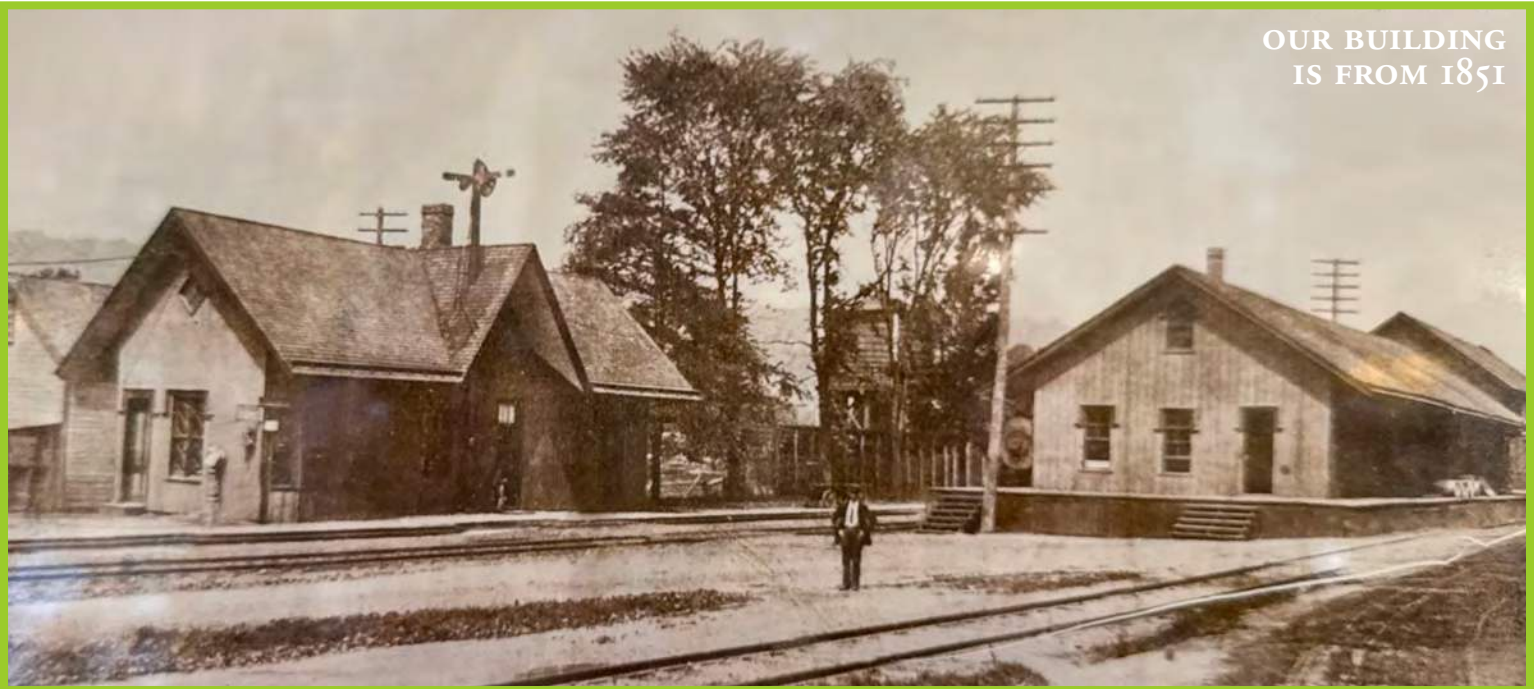
Above: Moth with Sycamore Seeds. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint.



Roly Poly Bug. 2026. Paper, glue, wire, graphite and paint.

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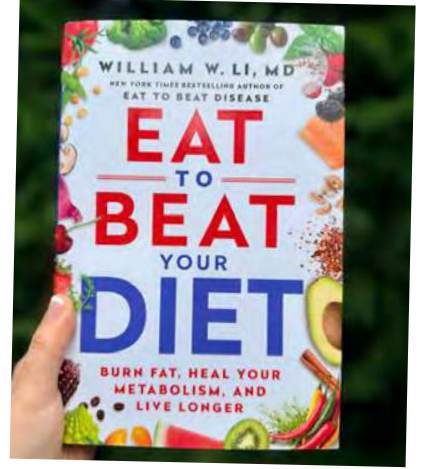
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JULY MUSTS

to eat



Holy Cow Ice Cream. Holy cow that was delicious! Holy Cow in Red Hook, NY, has been a local staple for as long as I can remember. And honestly, it's kind of a throwback with their unchanged decor, cash-only, and affordable prices. Case in point, the two ice creams in the picture were \$6, it's hard to find reasonable prices like that anymore. Holy Cow runs like a well-oiled machine and customers know the drill with how to line up, order, hand over their cash, and enjoy their ice cream outside at the picnic tables. As for the ice cream, it is one of my absolute favorites in the region because I personally love soft serve, and Holy Cow is one of the two best (the other is Grasslands in Lakeville, CT). Holy Cow also offers Flavor Burst flavors along with Razzle options, but they also have extensive hard ice cream options in addition to all kinds of sundaes. One of their yummiest offerings are their house made ice cream sandwiches and ice cream cakes. Make sure to swing by this summer and find your favorite.



to watch

Washington. With America's 250th anniversary celebration this month, Netflix has been very busy releasing quite a few documentaries for the past few months, leading up to the month of July, featuring American historical figures. I've watched a couple of them, including the three episode one featuring President George Washington. I've found Washington's rise to power to be fascinating, and I actually learned quite a few things about our first President that I had either long-forgotten or that I never knew. The recounting of events and facts by prominent historians mixed in with historical documents and great acting of reenactments makes this not just an informative documentary, but a riveting one as well. I highly suggest checking out Netflix's selection that range from Presidents Washington to Jefferson and Lincoln to Grant.



TO READ

Eat to Beat Your Diet by William W Li, MD. As it turns out, you can eat foods, some of which you might already love "like tomatoes, blueberries, sourdough bread, and dark chocolate, your body activates its five health defense systems to fight cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular, neurodegenerative autoimmune diseases, and other debilitating conditions." Who doesn't like the sound of that? In this book, Dr. Li reveals a new approach to weight loss where he shares how healthy body fat can help us lose weight as well as have huge impacts on our overall health. "Eat to Beat Your Diet shows readers how adding the right foods to your diet can heal your metabolism, reduce unhealthy body fat, and result in the kind of weight loss that can increase your lifespan and help you thrive." In this book, Dr. Li shares a four-week meal plan, food substitutions and swaps, grocery shopping tips as well as recipes.

To do



Millerton's 175th anniversary celebration. This July, the Village of Millerton, NY, is celebrating its 175th anniversary and they have a jam-packed schedule of events. There's sure to be something for everyone and you won't want to miss out. Here below is a brief list of the highlights, but for a complete list you'll want to check out villageofmillerton-ny.gov/175th/. Things kick off on opening day, July 11 and run through the 19th. A few events on the 11th include a craft vendor market, Climate Smart town-wide flea market, the NECC farmers market, a free screening of *A League of Their Own* at The Moviehouse, bike decorating, as well as the 175th celebration parade. Phew, that's a lot, and it wasn't even everything. The following days will be filled with the likes of basketball and corn hole tournaments, a special dinner at the Millerton Inn as well as a lawn party on a different day, and a comedy show at Eddie Collins Memorial Park. Millerton's 175th Fair at Eddie Collins Memorial Park will start on Friday the 17th and it runs through the weekend. On the Fair's opening day there will be a drone light show and you don't want to miss it. The final day of the celebration will include the last day of the fair as well as a big car show at Northeast Ford. Definitely check out the website or find "Millerton 175" on Facebook, or just come to town and participate. It's sure to be a great time for all. Happy birthday to Millerton.

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A Roadside Tradition

ROUND III, MILLERTON, TOWN OF NORTH EAST, NY

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

Late in the afternoon between serving lunch and dinner, the Culver team sat down at a table for an interview with Main Street about Round III, their family-owned and operated restaurant. Located on Route 22 about four miles south of the village of Millerton, with bucolic views of former cow pastures, Round III is that increasingly rare family-run, sit-down restaurant. It also is the oldest continually operating restaurant in the largely rural Town of North East.

Locals remember when the Perotti dairy cows next door stopped traffic on Route 22 on their twice-daily path crossing the road to pasture graze and ambling back to the dairy barn, with vehicles patiently waiting for the last cow to cross.

The restaurant offers “simple food,” according to senior family member Dale Culver and homemade cakes, muffins, cookies, and blueberry scones. Breakfast is served all day long. Round III is open from 7:30am to 8:30pm every day of the week. It’s a place for the people who have always lived here and also welcomes everyone from celebrities to truckers and travelers just passing by.

Why did the Round Tuit become Round III?

My mother purchased our family restaurant over 40 years ago from its second owner, the Sands family. She developed her cooking skills feeding the hands on our family farm. Originally named “The Gateway,” the restaurant was started by Jake Shofeit, the former mayor of Millerton, in the 1950s. Eventually, my mom needed my help, and now the third Culver generation has a lot to do with things. We wanted to change the name to

reflect their importance. My son Dave Fletcher is here and his wife and their two kids, ages 9 and 14, help out as well.

Do you have a philosophy about your food?

We make simple food at affordable prices. If done right, people enjoy it and don’t have to pay \$50 a plate. We watch our prices. A classic cheeseburger with fries is only \$10.99. We use fresh ground beef for our burgers, and the fries are hand cut Idaho russets. Since Skyla joined the family, we have added homemade scones, cookies, and cakes. She’s always trying new things and often sends the first versions to her Nana and family in Kentucky to get feedback.

Most restaurants make their money on alcoholic beverages, but you don't serve alcohol. How come?

This is a family restaurant, and we’ve never had a liquor license. The insurance cost and the liability are just too great. We do have 55 different hot sauces for a change of pace.

You have a giant ice cream cone and take-out window. I've never heard of Gifford's Ice Cream.

We are one of the few restaurants around here to carry it. It started on a holiday weekend about ten years ago, when we had trouble getting deliveries from our regular ice cream suppliers. I read in a trade magazine that Gifford’s Ice Cream had won awards in four ice cream competitions, and I dialed their 1-800 number after hours. A pleasant man who was cleaning the office answered the phone and said he would relay a message. I asked whether it would be possible to get a delivery. He said if you don’t get a call back by 9:15 tomorrow, then call them and tell them that JC said to take your



order. When they called they said they couldn’t help me, but when I mentioned JC they took my name and address and, in short order, a freezer was on its way from Maine: “Please have a fork lift ready to unload it.”

Four days later the ice cream arrived. JC Gifford, the guy cleaning the office, is the fifth-generation president of Gifford’s ice cream company which is located in Skowhegan, Maine.

What's the most popular flavor?

We currently offer 21 flavors as well as 15 flavors of milkshakes. Everyone loves peanut butter caramel, cookie dough and, of course, vanilla.

Who are your customers?

Any day you’ll find people just passing through on their way back to the city or to catch an early Metro-North train at Wassaic. Local regulars, including members at Silo Ridge in Amenia, are really the key to our business. Some of our regulars are over 100 years old.



Above, top: Nine-year-old Leah is the youngest member of the Culver family to help out at Round III. Top left to right David Fletcher, Skyla Lawless, and Dale Culver.

Above: The author sampled Round III’s cheese burger and fries for \$10.99. Delicious!

All photos by Christine Bates.

Continued on next page ..

My mother always advised me not to ask if one part of an older couple doesn't come in: "Wait for them to tell you." Sometimes we have celebrities, and they thank us for treating them like normal people. No, I won't tell you their names. We don't label our customers as people from "the city" or "weekenders," which creates division. We treat everyone the same.

What has been the biggest change to affect your business?

Recently? Seth Churchill, one of northwest Connecticut's preeminent fine home builders, purchased the Perotti farm house and dairy barn next door. What a transformation! Grass has overcome weeds, the old dairy barn has a beautiful new roof and paint, and the dilapidated historic house has been renovated. He has made our location more visible and made it look much nicer by cutting down overgrown trees and clearing brush. And you couldn't ask for a more generous and kind man than Seth.

Millerton has a lot of restaurants. How do you handle the competition?

Restaurants should want everyone to do well and work together, not do well at the expense of anybody else. We enjoy knowing Four Brothers and the Harneys for example. We never advertise. We hope our work speaks for itself.



Skyla Lawless, the baker at Round III, with a loaf of freshly made bread and her own sour-dough starter named "Doughlene."

You've been involved with the Town of North East as the respected chair of the planning board for over 15 years.

The chairperson is just another member of the seven-member board. We're all volunteers who contribute our time to the community. Our purpose is to help guide applicants through the approval process as established by our zoning regulations.

What is your goal in life?

I just want to get up every day and be a useful person. I share a common view with many of the residents of Silo Ridge community that encouraging kids to read, learn history, and just be kind is important. If people can read and learn, they can help themselves. I want everyone to do better.

How have you overcome difficult moments?

In 1998 on Veteran's Day, November 11, our building caught fire and the community helped us get back in business 29 days later. Fire trucks from Millerton, Amenia, and Sharon all got here quickly. Food inventory was taken from our freezers and stored at McEnroe's farm market without even asking. Everyone came to help and stayed to help.

In 1993 our father was killed in an automobile accident just down the road, and we had to regroup. Growing up on a farm you learn to make do with what you have and figure things out.

Last June 16, we got hit with a microburst or mini twister that tore the electrical wiring off the building and dropped trees all over the driveway. Total disaster, yet in 15 minutes our neighbor Seth came with his machine and started clearing trees and debris. Next Ginnochio Electric immediately responded with several men, machines, and a generator and went to work. In less than three hours between Seth and Ginnochio's crew it was like it never happened. These are the people that make small towns shine.



Lasagna with garlic bread for only \$13.95? And the juke box with Fleetwood Mac and Annie Lenox records blasts if you put in a dollar.

The Silo Ridge community and Lee and Gail helped save our business during COVID. They all wanted to know how they could help us survive, and they helped immensely. We are forever grateful. They help us help many who need help in the community. I wish everyone could realize what good people they are. They never look for credit and are some of the nicest people you'd ever meet. We're so lucky.

What changes have you observed in our community?

There are fewer young people and a lot fewer local jobs since the K&E Factory and the Wassaic DDSO closed. Also there used to be more late-night activity and music events like the Grey Fox festival.

It used to be that people could be friends and agree to disagree. People need to get along and find out what connects them, not what divides them. I remember Mr. Hedges, my Ag teacher, who said that if we students knew his religion or his politics, that meant that he had failed us as a teacher. This would help greatly in today's environment. He wanted us to

learn how to think, not tell us what to think.

What's the best part of running a restaurant?

It's all the relationships you make over a lifetime. We have changed tires, jumped dead batteries, driven stranded motorists to get help, and mailed lost items to their owners in many states and at least five different countries so far. My mom always believed we should help in any way we could. All of these little things we hope help make the world a little better, a little brighter and keep that small town, big community feel alive. And the added support of the Silo community would make my mom very happy. •

Visit Dale and his Round III family at 5523 NY-22 in Millerton, NY.



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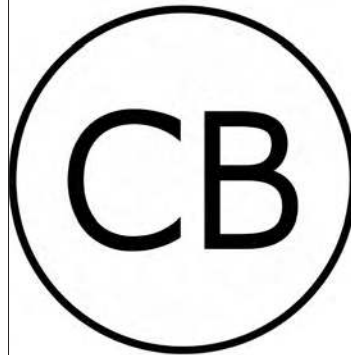
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RED, WHITE, AND BLUE

Cheesecake-stuffed strawberries



By *Olivia Valentine with
Caroline Markonic*
info@mainstreetmag.com

If you have big plans for the Fourth of July, we hope you'll add these easy no-bake cheesecake stuffed strawberries to your dessert table. They're simple to assemble and require no oven time – only a few minutes whipping the cream and cream cheese. Honestly, isn't that a win right there!

Best of all, they fit perfectly into the red, white, and blue theme of Independence Day celebrations. With the strawberry season in full swing, now is the ideal time to take advantage of those beautiful, juicy, bright-red berries that are showing up at farm stands and markets everywhere. Or check out the numerous local pick-your-own farms in the area. There are too many for us to list! Heading to our local farms to pick fruit is one of our favorite weekend activities.

For our filling, we are keeping things simple with a creamy, vanilla-almond cheesecake mixture that complements the sweetness of the strawberries without overpowering them. But don't be afraid to get creative and make them your own. A

little grated lemon zest adds a fresh, summery brightness, while crushed Oreos or graham crackers adds a little crunch and more sweetness. If you love sweet-and-salty desserts, try folding in some crushed pretzels for a bit of contrast. You could even swap out the blueberries that we topped them with and substitute kiwi, black raspberries, a drizzle of melted chocolate, or sprinkles! Go wild! Our recipes are made to be tweaked to your own likes and desires.

I have to give a shout out to Millerton, NY, where I reside. As you may know or may not know, the village is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year. There is a lot going on from July 11–19. You can check out the Village of Millerton's website villageofmillerton-ny.gov for a list of festivities planned for the entire week.

As always, enjoy!

Ingredients

2 lbs fresh strawberries
1/2 cups powdered sugar, divided
1 cup heavy or whipping cream
8 oz cream cheese, softened
1/4 tsp vanilla extract
1/4 tsp almond extract
Fresh blueberries (optional)
Crushed graham crackers for dusting (optional)

Directions

In a large bowl, whip the heavy cream with 1/4 cup powdered sugar and the

vanilla extract until stiff peaks form.

In a separate bowl, beat the softened cream cheese with the remaining 1/4 cup powdered sugar and almond extract until smooth and creamy.

Gently fold the whipped cream into the cream cheese mixture until fully combined and light in texture.

Wash and dry the strawberries, then slice them in half. We left the stems on, which isn't necessary but looked pretty. Using a small spoon or melon baller, carefully scoop out a bit of the center of each strawberry to create space for the filling.

Transfer the cheesecake mixture to a pastry bag fitted with a star tip and pipe into each strawberry half. If you don't have a pastry bag, a small spoon works almost as well.

Garnish with fresh blueberries and a dusting of crushed graham crackers, if desired. •

Olivia and Caroline are enthusiastic foodies and bakers who are constantly in the kitchen, as well as explorers who create their own adventures in our area – and did we mention they are mother and daughter? Follow Olivia on Instagram to see her many creations at @oliviauvalentine.

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AN IMMIGRANT'S PERSPECTIVE OF 250 years of America

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. ...

– The Declaration of
Independence, July 4, 1776

To think that 250 years ago, a group of men gathered to write The Declaration of Independence and declare that “these United States” were now independent from England. Since 1492, immigrants have come to this country in search of a new life, of freedoms, riches and adventure – in search of the American Dream. That is still true, as immigrants arrive every single day.

I am one such immigrant.

Our methods of arriving might differ slightly from the time of Christopher Columbus or George Washington (I arrived by airplane in 1989), but a lot of us come here in search of what millions of people before us have come here for.

From an immigrant's perspective

I'd like to pose a question: how many of you have actually read the Declaration of Independence? I'm genuinely curious. I read it when I was in elementary school, and I read it again just now. It is quite fascinating. I encourage you to take five minutes and read it as well, especially as America celebrates its 250th anniversary.

It has always intrigued me that America's forefathers stated the things that I included in the quote at the start of this article. To declare that we each have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ... for the time, that was so forward-thinking. And I believe, as a result of this mentality, America has become synonymous with freedom.

I'll state right here and now that this is not some political commentary. I came here as a child and have partially grown up in this country, embracing its history, culture, and ways while meshing it with my Icelandic culture and heritage. I am, in so many ways, living the American Dream. Sure, I have my political beliefs, just like you have yours. We may not agree on everything, but that's neither here nor there. I respect everyone for their beliefs and hope that everyone will respect mine, for we are each living our own American Dream.

As I reflect on America's 250th anniversary, I wanted to share some thoughts on America from an immigrant's perspective.

A great history

I am a student of history. For as long as I can remember, I have loved history and found it fascinating. I even went so far as to double major in college, graduating with a BA in history. My ultimate focus became the era of World War II, but a lot of my early memories after arriving in America are related to learning about this country's history. I still remember field trips to a one-room schoolhouse outside of Kinderhook, NY, as well as to the homes of President Martin Van Buren and President Franklin D. Roosevelt; learning about the Native American tribes that once lived right where we

live today; and all of the stages of exploration and expansion that this country has seen. I will add that not all of that history was good, nor was it all bad. It feels as if it is the stuff of storybooks though, so to know that these things actually happened is even more amazing.

I remember in my eighth grade first period English class, Mr. Clark made us recite the entire Gettysburg Address in front of the class. To this day I can still begin it: “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

About 20 years ago, I had the distinct honor to stand on that hallowed ground where President Lincoln had stood when he gave this speech on November 19, 1863. If you've never been to Gettysburg, you should make a point of going. I believe that there are a select few places in this country that every American should make a pilgrimage to, and Gettysburg is one of those places.

My parents and I were visiting friends in Maryland, and being the student of history that I am, I told them that on our way home we would need to stop in Gettysburg. As we walked towards the battle fields and watched the reenactments, we were fortunate enough to meet a park ranger who proceeded to spend an hour speaking to us and one other family, outlining the entirety of the Battle of Gettysburg along with how the geography shaped decisions, and ultimately how this battle shaped the war and the future of America. My parents and I were totally enthralled by the recounting of this piece of history, but further, to be standing

on the same ground as the men who fought – the men who made history – it was remarkable.

We then walked to the memorial where the Gettysburg Address is forever memorialized overlooking the battlefield and cemetery. I stood there and read the whole speech, feeling as connected to President Lincoln as one can ever hope to feel.

It was truly a moment that will forever live with me.

A day that will live in infamy

Much like my day in Gettysburg, there was another moment in time that is forever etched into my soul. Some 15 years ago I toured Pearl Harbor in Oahu, Hawaii.

As previously stated, not only am I a student of history, but World War II was my focus, and I dedicated a large portion of my school years to studying it. This was a war, and a series of events, that will forever impact humanity. So for me, having studied every facet of this time in history, to physically stand in a place where pivotal events happened ... I can't begin to describe to you the emotions that went through my body.

I have yet to visit mainland Europe, and so I have not stood in any of the places this war touched there. But I have seen many parts of the war in my home country of Iceland, a place you might not think the war would have impacted much. But you'd be wrong. Still today you can walk into the bunkers that were built into the hillside by Reykjavík airport, where the British, and later the Americans, looked out onto the harbor to patrol for Nazi airplanes, boats and subma-

Continued on next page ...

rines. At the base of Hvalfjörður, a very deep fjord, still stands the old Allies submarine base.

When I visited Oahu and entered the visitor center at Pearl Harbor, I felt very excited yet incredibly humbled. We received headsets for a self-guided tour that led us through not just the memorabilia and museum, but also the events of that fateful day. Jamie Lee Curtis narrated the tour, because as she explained, her father had served in the war. Curtis's narration was truly moving; it was informative and fascinating, yet very sad. The culmination of the tour was boarding boats that took us out to the Pearl Harbor National Memorial that's situated over the USS Arizona.

As soon as we exited the boat and walked onto that pristine white USS Arizona Memorial, not a sound could be heard beside the movement of the ocean. Walking toward the Shrine Room, which is at the back of the memorial, and looking into the waters below, where it just barely skims the top of the smoke stacks of the USS Arizona, was one of the most emotional moments of my life. Facing the marble wall in the Shrine Room, which is engraved with the names of 1,177 sailors and Marines that died during the December 7, 1941 attack ... words truly cannot describe the emotions that run through your mind, body, and soul.

At that moment, I recalled President Roosevelt's words: "Yesterday December 7, 1941 a date which will live in infamy, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan." Like visiting Gettysburg, it was incredible to stand in that very place where the attacks happened and see the USS Arizona mere inches away me. There are some places that every American should visit. Just stand there, quietly, and soak in the significance of what happened. It is life changing.

Other places of significance

I have also visited Washington, DC, where I saw the White House, the Lincoln Memorial, and Reflecting Pool. To be in the place that this

country's presidents and people of significance as well as everyday citizens have all stood ... it too puts things into perspective. It reminds us that we are all here, in this country, sharing a past, present, and future.

As I stood with my brother, with the large statue of President Lincoln in his memorial at my back, and looked out at the Reflecting Pool, I thought about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his delivery of the infamous "I Have a Dream" speech on August 28, 1963 in that very spot.

In that speech, King referenced the words of this country's founders:

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our Republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men – yes, Black men as well as white men – would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. ...

We continue to this day to discuss equality, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. I hope that we can all find these things within ourselves as well as within our society. And it is my humble opinion, as a modern-day immigrant, that we as Americans should all take a moment to learn more about this country and its history. I will again encourage anyone and everyone to go stand in a place that was significant to this nation. We are literally surrounded by these places right here in Dutchess / Columbia / Litchfield / Berkshire counties, or make a trip to one of the places I mentioned or to the thousands of other places of importance in this nation.

We Americans take pride in our heritage, culture, and country. I say embrace that by learning more or visiting these places. And when you're there, stand there – quietly – and let the significance sink in.

Becoming a citizen

I want to share one more significant moment in time with you. About eight years ago, my parents, brother, and I became American citizens after years of having green cards.

Our decision to finally become citizens was multi-faceted, and on the onset felt overwhelming (the application is over 20 pages long, plus you have to supply additional documentation, followed by an interview and a test). But it honestly was a very easy process. We quickly realized that the American government simply wanted to know if we were good people, contributing members of society, paid our taxes, didn't have criminal records, and did not have any association with terrorist organizations. (We are. And we don't.)

Some time after submitting the paperwork, we received dates for our interview and citizenship test. The test is essentially 10 questions from a list of 100 questions, drawn from American government, history, and geography. Frankly, it is stuff that every American should know, but shockingly not everyone does.

My brother and I already knew the answers to almost all of the 100 potential questions, having learned those topics in school here. But studying for the test was a nice refresher nonetheless.

Our interviews and the test were very stressful because there was so much on the line. And even though the immigration office is a very serious place, we found all of the staff there and our immigration officers to be very kind, helpful, and welcoming.

The citizenship ceremony (which took place a few weeks later) was one of the most amazing and moving things that I've been a part of. Our ceremony took place on a beautiful September day in downtown Albany. There were literally people from all corners of the world being sworn in as American citizens that day, including a Tibetan monk who must have been in his eighties. Hearing some of the stories shared, as well as the words of the judge who swore us in ... let me just tell you that it was an incredible and emotional day.

For most Americans, you are born here and may not even think about what it means to be an American. But as someone who made the choice to become a citizen, it is both an honor and a privilege. One that I do not take for granted. When my family and I swore our allegiance to the United

States of America, we renounced allegiances to any other nation, and we swore that we would protect this nation and uphold the Constitution above all else.

I am a proud American. I will also always be proud of my country of origin. That is the way of immigrants. America is a melting pot of cultures from around the world, and we are all proud of where we have come from, and are also proud to be where we are.

Here's to 250 years

I'm not sure how you're going to celebrate this Fourth of July, but I will continue pondering what it means to be an American. I have been thinking a lot about not just what the past 250 years mean to this nation, but also about all the years prior to that too. As I shared, I just re-read the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and the "I Have a Dream" speech. I have also been watching many Netflix documentaries that have been released recently about America's leaders as well as CNN's special called "This Land".

This country, although a young one, is diverse. It is rich in culture and history. It is proud. I love all of these things about it. Of course no one and no thing is perfect, but here's my hope: I hope that we will all continue to celebrate our freedom and that we will all continue to pursue our happiness – both as a nation and as individuals.

Personally, I am also excited to continue to celebrate this nation by visiting as many of its beautiful and pivotal sites as possible. Yosemite and the Grand Canyon are on my list, amongst others.

So this July Fourth, after you have a hot dog, wave the American flag, and watch the fireworks, perhaps consider taking a moment to read the Constitution, watch a documentary featuring a pivotal person or time in history, or plan a trip to visit a place that has shaped this country. You won't be sorry. In fact, you'll feel even more connected to this place that has shaped who you are.

Happy birthday America, here's to 250 more. •

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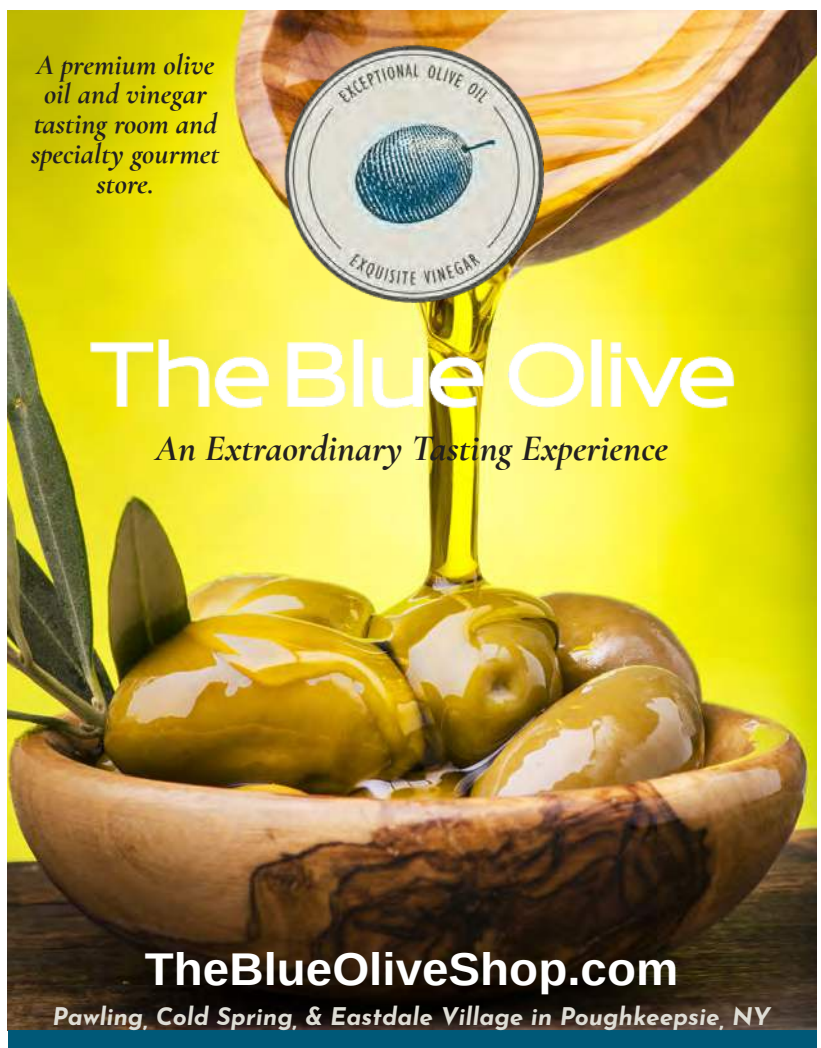
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Orders Up at Oakhurst Diner as Millerton toasts 175 years

By Whitney Joseph Shavelson
info@mainstreetmag.com

There's something heartening – and uniquely American – about stopping by a local diner for a plate of comfort food and a cup of joe. If the eatery in question happens to be among the dwindling number of original Silk City diner cars in the US, the experience definitely ticks up a notch or two in my book. Those not familiar with the term would likely recognize the iconic structure on sight.

A Millerton mainstay

The Oakhurst Diner at 19 Main Street in Millerton, NY, stands as a shining example. Manager Jessica LeJeune points to a plaque inside commemorating the historic diner's origins.

"I'm not sure when they opened the diner, but I do know the diner itself is an original Silk City diner from Jersey. We still have the original plaque from the Silk City Corporation. We still have the original refrigerators and the original pastry case," she said. "We definitely have regulars who are used to it, but there are a lot of people from out of town who are like, 'Wow, this is so cool!'"

The Oakhurst Diner is catalogued with diner historians as Silk City No. 5871, built in 1958.

LeJeune said owners Paul Harney, John Panzer, and Justin Panzer work diligently to preserve the Oakhurst's historic roots, while exerting a lot of effort to keep the diner modernized and efficient.

"We do updates fairly often," said LeJeune. "We try to keep redoing the inside, we've had the booths reupholstered as they get worn, and we just redid some of the bathrooms. It

definitely takes a fair amount of work to keep it looking nice."

Located just off Route 22, Oakhurst welcomes all entering the village. Emblematic of American culture thanks to timeless TV shows like *Happy Days*, films like *American Graffiti*, and paintings like Edward Hopper's *Nighthawks*, the diner anchors Millerton's Main Street. It's been that way throughout its many iterations, according to Millerton Mayor Jenn Najdek.

"From the time I was young enough to remember, I went to the diner," she said. "In my 30s it was your typical greasy spoon diner; it was great. I feel like that was when things started to shift; it wasn't just a local place anymore. The old families and people who lived here and would go out to dinner, they left. Somebody else took it over. ... I think it became Oakhurst after that. It's always been a diner, though, for as long as I can remember."

The diner has had several monikers: the Millerton Diner, Village Diner, Coach Ali's Millerton Diner, and most recently, Oakhurst Diner.

The mayor said, "the type of diner has shifted" and one change she heartily endorsed is its expanded patio, which adds roughly 50 seats come summer, according to LeJeune, who said at full capacity, inside and out, the diner accommodates nearly 150 patrons.

"It gives people a chance to sit outside and be part of it all. It's downtown and central, and it makes Millerton look super busy, which is great," said Najdek. "I'd rather see it busy with people walking all over the place and riding bikes than have closing storefronts and nothing there, going back to the horse and buggy."

A community founded on transportation

Millerton has rarely stayed stuck when it's come to movement. In fact, momentum helped found this tiny rural village with a population of less than 900 that's celebrating its 175th anniversary this July.

It was civil engineer and railroad contractor Sidney Miller who pushed to extend railroad service into what would be named Millerton in his honor back in 1851.

Local lawmakers were so grateful for the railroad they named the village after Miller. Prior to the railroad's arrival and the village's formation, the roughly one-square-mile area was part of the Town of North East, with land dedicated to farming, iron production, and local settlements.

Within a quarter century, Millerton was the junction for three distinct rail lines: the New York & Harlem Railroad, the Dutchess & Columbia Railroad, and the Poughkeepsie & Eastern Railroad, connecting New York City, Poughkeepsie and the Hudson River, Connecticut, Boston, and agricultural communities peppered throughout Dutchess County.

The economic boom continued and Millerton thrived. Once an unknown dot on the map, commerce quickly opened to local farmers wanting to ship dairy, grain, livestock, and produce far and wide. Merchants could stock shelves with new products while people could travel at speeds they'd never dreamed possible.

Millerton's trio of tracks paid off beyond immediate trade and transportation; they also opened up production channels. In 1854, the Millerton Iron Company was established in the Irondale section of North East. Manufacturing "car-wheel pig iron" used to

make railroad equipment, within 30 years the Millerton Iron Company was among the area's largest employers with roughly 150 workers. By 1890, its furnaces had an annual production capacity of 12,000 tons.

The rails eventually led to the need for another industry: hospitality. Soon Millerton had three hotels, retail stores, and eateries – including a diner. It was only a matter of time until the bustling village needed places for people to rest their heads – and to fill their bellies.

Celebrating the Diner and Millerton, together

That need remains as strong today as ever, evidenced by the many local eateries, several of which will be celebrating Millerton's 175th anniversary in ways big and small throughout July. The Oakhurst Diner is among numerous local businesses sponsoring the 175th anniversary celebration; it also has the rare distinction of having recently celebrated its Crystal Anniversary.

In 2025, Oakhurst toasted its 15th year – a milestone for any business, especially a restaurant, fabled to be among the riskiest of ventures with reports of nearly 90% failing in their first year. But online industry blog restaurantworks.com calls such accounts myths, citing 2024-25 statistics showing only 17% of restaurants fail in their first year, while 51% survive after five years, and 34.6% make it beyond 10 years.

"We just celebrated our 15th anniversary last year," said LeJeune. "I think the diner has become a staple

Continued on next page ...

here. When people think of Millerton, it's one of the businesses that comes to mind. You can't miss it. It is kind of young in Millerton's 175-year history, but there's no end in sight at the moment."

Najdek agreed, "I think the diner does fall next in line ... after Oblong." That lineup comprises some of the longest-standing, still operational establishments on Main Street, led by the half-century-old bookstore, Oblong Books & Music. With longtime businesses like Terni's, Saperstein's, Simmon's Way Village Inn, North East Rexall Pharmacy, and Block's Furniture no longer around, the Oakhurst Diner has quietly earned its top-tier placement. Of course, several other Main Street favorites have likewise stood the test of time including Country Gardeners Florist, Taro's NY Style Pizzeria & Restaurant, Gilded

features of Silk City diners include the rounded corners and facades framed by large windows. As architecture that serves a purpose, the diners are swathed in Art Deco and railroad design details.

Inside, formica tables trimmed with shiny chrome are sandwiched between booths upholstered in vivid vinyl or Naugahyde. Opposite those cushy booths stand the hallmark of any diner: its counter and stools, stretching end to end with a break in the middle to allow servers quick kitchen access. After all, speed is the name of the game at a diner, whether a greasy spoon or an avant-garde bistro.

The swiveling stools offer more polished metal and upholstery, while tile or terrazzo floors gleam below. Lit signs do their best to attract hungry passersby, as large glass display cases feature homemade pies and cakes,

pany. Cooper appointed his five sons to executive positions to help manage the business. Expanding into bus, car, and truck body production and into paint and auto body detailing, the company eventually diversified further. By 1926, a division dedicated solely to the commercial manufacturing of diners was created.

By the 1950s, Silk City diners were available in three sizes "fully equipped with grills, coffee urns, refrigerators, and work benches ... to reduce production costs," according to The Paterson Museum, and streamline operations for restaurateurs.

The trademark diners became ubiquitous throughout the Northeast, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Silk City diners were produced until 1966 and conveyed to their final destination by rail or truck but were never actually used in rail travel. Efforts to sell the

approximately 166,000 annual HVRT users – numbers that have surely increased as the trail's seen multiple expansion projects since.

Whether traversing the Rail Trail or simply touring Main Street, Millerton continues to lure people eager to explore. Many of those visitors, of course, need refueling ...

A menu in a million

Oakhurst's menu is eclectic, to say the least, with a hybrid of options including diner favorites (meatloaf with mashed potatoes, Mario's beef chili, patty melts, pancakes, French toast, and breakfast sandwiches) to cutting-edge Vietnamese items not typically seen at diners (family recipes and homemade dishes courtesy of Paul Harney's ex-in-laws in Texas, like Ma's pho soup, edamame dumplings, chicken lemongrass dumplings, and



Photo: Olivia Valentine



Moon Framing, and The Moviehouse (the last with a change of ownership).

"Hopefully we'll be here another 15 years," said LeJeune, adding an enthusiastic "maybe!" when asked if that might extend to another 175 years considering the village's anniversary.

She added, "The diner provides something reliable. When you come here, you know what you're getting. We're kind of like the post office: we try our hardest to stay open in whatever weather, though there have been a couple of snow days in recent years when we had to close. But unless it's really bad and we're putting our staff in danger, we try to be here."

Silky diner design

Customers certainly appreciate the effort – for the food, for the staff, and for the aesthetics. One glance at the gleaming stainless-steel exterior brings many (myself included) an instant sense of pleasure and peace, knowing what awaits them inside. Telltale

making every sweet treat nearly impossible to resist.

Some Silk City diner history

Named after its "Silk City" origins (as Paterson, NJ, was dubbed in the late 19th century for producing more than half of the nation's silk), roughly 1,500 of the stylized diner cars were made by the Paterson Vehicle Company between 1926 and 1966. Only "a fraction" of the prefabricated diners exist today, with even fewer being operational, according to dinerville.com.

But before there was the Paterson Vehicle Company or Silk City diners, there was a failing wagon company in Suffern, NY, founded by Everett Abbott Cooper. In the 1890s, Cooper relocated to Paterson, renaming his business the Paterson Wagon Company. It produced wagons, carriages, harnesses, and bicycles; by 1905 he filed for bankruptcy.

Within a year, the company re-emerged as the Paterson Vehicle Com-

pany to former employees failed and by 1966 all assets were liquidated, thus closing an unforgettable chapter in American postwar design.

Yet the Silk City diner remains a symbol of American optimism and mobility to this day.

Oakhurst stands strong and solid

Today, the Oakhurst Diner continues to embody that sense of American hopefulness as we celebrate this nation's Semiquincentennial, coinciding with the village's 175th anniversary celebration in July.

Millerton's tie to transportation has never waned. A trailhead for the popular Harlem Valley Rail Trail is right off Main Street, drawing outdoor enthusiasts from all over to walk, run, bike, skate, or simply meander along a 23-mile path stretching from Wassaic to Copake Falls. The paved former railroad bed is bordered by some of the loveliest and lushest scenery in the region. Data from 2012 recorded

bahn mi roast pork sandwiches; some are shipped in daily on dry ice) to creative Latin specialties by in-house chefs (chorizo migas, huevos rancheros, and Luis's famous pork tacos). LeJeune said her customers "rave" about all of it – especially the Latin food. The menu also offers unexpected options like a macro plate, CBD beverages, and beer.

But beyond the delicious vittles, patrons entering Oakhurst can expect a great experience. That's the thing about diners. No matter your political ideology; regardless of your socio-economic background; irrespective of your race, religion, gender, or age; whether you're a multi-generational local or a newly arrived weekender from the city, everyone is welcome to saunter up to the counter, hop on a stool, and receive service with a smile – all while getting an eyeful of gorgeous American design.

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Thai Baan at Tenmile Distillery

A TRUE DELIGHT AND A CULINARY EXPERIENCE

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

As soon as you drive through the gates of Tenmile Distillery in Wassaic, NY, you know you're somewhere special. Then, when you walk into the converted barn that is now home to Thai Baan restaurant in addition to Tenmile's distillery and a fabulous bar, you realize you're actually somewhere very, very special.

We had early reservations on a Friday evening, and we drove through a torrential downpour on our way to Wassaic as a summer thunderstorm rolled through. But inside Thai Baan, we felt welcomed and at ease. The atmosphere and decor is truly fabulous, giving a sense of Zen. Jason Jeffords, one of Thai Baan's owners, seated us with an amazing, unobstructed view of the outside grounds and mountain range off in the distance to my left, while to my right I had a direct view of the Friday night chickens as they rotated on the rotisserie.

Jason was so welcoming, and after giving us a moment to peruse the menu, he returned and talked with us about their menu items, and about his head chef (and wife) Runie's approach and Thai background. He suggested I try the April O'Neil which is a jalapeño vodka with cilantro, mint, pineapple, and lime. Admittedly, I often tend to play it safe and go sweet with my drinks, but after one sip I understood why Jason made this recommendation: this is one of the best cocktails I've ever had. The initial sip was perfectly spicy, but the flavor quickly changed to a mixture of cilantro and mint, ending with the pineapple's sweetness. This was my

first of many flavor experiences of the evening; every single sip and bite that I took was a true culinary experience.

Jason then suggested that he bring us a sampler of their favorite dishes, which we excitedly agreed to. A few moments later, Runie came out from the kitchen to meet us, and she was just as wonderful as Jason. It was very evident that they love what they do and that they put that love into every dish and drink their restaurant has to offer.

I was able to talk a little bit with Jason about their backgrounds, how they ended up at Tenmile, and what a culinary journey it has been.

How did Thai Baan come into existence?

Thai Baan started, if I think about it, when Runie and I first started dating. I had a new apartment and zero food in my fridge, so Runie would bring things over every time she stopped by. Pretty soon my fridge and cabinets were filled with food I didn't know how to cook. We would just cook at the apartment instead of going out to dinner, which was a welcome dating experience in New York City. This is where Runie first started making her food for me.

What are your and Runie's backgrounds?

I have been working in hospitality for 27 years, 26 of those in New York City. I started out working in fine dining as a bartender for chefs like David Bouley, Gray Kunz, and John Fraser. I moved into the wine department at Gotham Bar and Grill then moved on to operate the groundbreaking cocktail bar, Pegu Club.

After that I got into nightlife, operating the very large 230fifth rooftop nightclub and then becoming the beverage director at the celebrity-driven Catch in the Meatpacking District. At that point I started opening restaurants for the likes of Blue Ribbon,



Jason and Runie in front of the Friday night rotisserie chickens.

2nd Ave Deli, and Jean-George, and I worked as a corporate beverage director for the LA nightlife brand sbe.

Runie spent most of her career in hotels and cruise lines. She has worked in every position in a restaurant at this point. Her longest contracts were with a Hyatt Regency in Dubai and the Crown Plaza in Oman.

From NYC and Dubai to ... Wassaic? How did this collaboration with Tenmile come about?

I was actually doing the sales for Tenmile Distillery in New York City when their current vendor had to leave for a weekend to do a private event. The owners, Joel and Eliza, asked us if we could do a Thai food pop-up. Everything went so well that we got invited back for a second pop-up in the fall. Following the second pop-up Joel and Eliza realized Thai food could work in an area like this that lacks ethnic food options in beautiful spaces. We decided to make the move up to the Hudson Valley.

What are your impressions of the local community and landscape?

We very much enjoy being in the Hudson Valley after a long life in New York City. Runie grew up in the countryside of northern Thailand, surrounded by rice fields and sugarcane fields. I grew up on Lake Ontario in Western New York in a very rural community. So being in the countryside was not completely foreign to us, and we've adapted quite well. Runie has been growing a garden now that we're here in the country.

Let's talk about the food: why Thai? How do you create the dishes? Do you offer seasonal menus? Do you have any challenges getting ingredients?

Runie is from Thailand and this is the food she's always made. She's been working on her recipes for years, preparing dishes for colleagues who

Continued on next page ...



work away from home in far off cities like Dubai. We think of it as elevated Thai comfort food. Runie tries to make food that Thai people would be proud to eat and that reminds them of home.

The menu changes as seasonal products are available, but we strive for consistency. We do have a challenge getting certain items, so we drive down to Queens every few weeks to source anything we can't get otherwise. There are still some items we can't get here that if we were living in Thailand, we would just go pick in the backyard.

How would you explain Thai food to someone who's not familiar with it?

Thai food is interesting in that it offers all types of flavors, but most Americans are unfamiliar with those flavors because we just never eat them. There's a balance and a sharpness to Thai food. Most dishes try to use all five flavor profiles. Many people associate Thai food with spiciness, but the balance between acidity, sweetness, creaminess, and umami is the key to Thai food. We get some folks we can tell are nervous about Thai food, so we steer them towards a dish like a massaman curry, which is just meat and potatoes with different spices.

What are each of your personal favorite dishes and why?

Runie's favorite dish is papaya salad, but for Thai people that's something you eat with every meal. When she makes it at home, it is spicy (with 30 chilis) that her face turns red, and stuff comes out of her nose. That's how Thai people love it.

I have a number of favorite dishes. The pork belly noodle soup and any curries we serve; a basic, well-made fried rice is amazing. Runie's been making me a bowl of noodles at home every night, and that's something I really love.

For someone coming to Thai Baan for the first time, what's a dish they must try?

We do a chicken dinner on a rotisserie in the dining room on Friday nights, it's a must. Runie brines it in coconut milk, Thai herbs, and lemongrass,

and we cook it on the hearth for two hours. The skin gets nice and crispy, and the inside stays incredibly moist. We serve it with rice, fresh vegetables, a few dipping sauces, and a papaya salad. All the desserts are amazing too, especially the pandan crème brûlée.

Are there specific food and drink pairings that someone dining at Thai Baan should try?

We make a lot of amazing cocktails at Tenmile Distillery using spirits made at the distillery. Everything from vodka piña colodas to American single malt Manhattans. One drink that works really well is the April O'Neill. It's a spicy vodka drink with pineapple juice, mint, and cilantro. The flavors blend well with the flavors of Thai food. But we also have a fun wine list and local beer.

What's next? What does the future hold?

No one knows, TBD.

I can attest that the food is indeed impeccable, and did I already tell you that the April O'Neill was everything (and more) than what Jason promised it would be? Yum!

Before I go into our dishes from our evening at Thai Baan, I have to confess that my Thai cuisine experience was extremely limited until our evening with Jason and Runie. Sure, I knew that some dishes might be spicy, other dishes would have noodles or rice, and the flavors would definitely be something totally new to me. I was very excited! And let me tell you that every bite was genuinely a flavor explosion.

Jason and his staff first brought out the Thai salad (mixed greens, little gem lettuce, carrot, onion, and tomato with peanut sauce), veggie spring rolls, and pork dumplings. Everything looked amazing and smelled incredible. My first bite was of the dumplings and wow! Hands-down best dumplings I've ever had. The salad with that peanut sauce, yum! It was all delicious.

Next out came our entrées. Now, remember, Jason said he'd take care of us and bring us their favorite and best dishes. So when the braised pork belly with five-spice, lobster spaghetti pad kee mao, and the massaman curry



Photos this page by Kris Peck

were brought out, my husband and I didn't know where to start. Everything looked and smelled amazing. Jason walked us through the flavor palates, explaining that massaman curry (braised short ribs, massaman curry, potato, sweet onion, carrot, and coconut milk) is like an elevated "meat and potatoes" with a Thai twist. Every bite, regardless of the dish, was complex and had a complimentary explosion of flavors and textures, but was perfectly paired. Sure, a few bites were spicy, but I welcomed it. It was definitely the good kind of spice.

Choosing a favorite dish was really hard. After much deliberation and many bites, my husband shared that he loved the broth in the braised pork belly with five-spices, while we both really liked the lobster and noodle pairing. For me, the more I ate of the massaman curry dish, mixing the rice in with the sauce, forking a tender piece of short rib with potato ... it was indeed a comfort food, but at a whole new level. It may have been my favorite.

Next Jason brought out Runie's homemade coconut ice cream and the pandan crème brûlée. Like every dish before them, they were beautifully presented. And the flavors and textures? Again, it was an experience

like no other.

We walked out of Tenmile Distillery and Thai Baan to a clear blue sky. We felt comfortably full, still relishing the complete experience that every part of our evening had brought us.

Jason and Runie's staff were all amazing and just as welcoming as Runie and Jason were. The atmosphere of the restaurant is really something special, there's no other way to describe it. The food and drinks? Oh my goodness! Have I told you that it was an experience? And I know that I keep saying that, but I have never had such a culinary experience. Sure, I've been fortunate enough to enjoy some really amazing food in my life, but few of those were experiences. And Thai Baan certainly has the whole package when it comes to a complete culinary experience.

To Jason, Runie and their entire staff, thank you for your hospitality and for giving us such a wonderful evening filled with new flavors. •

Thai Baan is located at Tenmile Distillery at 78 Sinpatch Rd, Wassaic, NY. Call (845) 877-6399 or visit their websites, thaibaannyc.com and tenmiledistillery.com/food-and-drink/.

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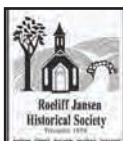
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Hawthorne Valley Farm Store

By Jesse DeGroot
info@mainstreetmag.com

“Why, why, why?” asked me of myself following a recent visit to the Hawthorne Valley Farm Store in Harlemville, NY, do I continue to instinctively hop in the ol’ jalopy and heedlessly aim directly for the local supermarket when the larder needs restocking? And then, why might I find myself looking askance at things if the basic stuff I find there seems so ... basic?

There for a sit-down with Director of Retail Operations & Enterprise Development Jeremy Laurange, I took a few free minutes to wander through the place, reacquainting myself (it had been a few years) with what the store had on hand. Instantly, the quality of choices presented became apparent, and that wasn’t simply the result of shiny packaging designed to tempt. I was already geared to return, legal tender of one form or another in hand.

“My whole life is here...”

Talk about working your way up the ranks. In his high school years, Laurange, a graduate of Taconic Hills who went on to acquire a degree in fine art at Columbia-Greene Community College and an accounting degree at SUNY Plattsburgh, was hired to make granola in the store’s bakery. “Honestly, it was one of my favorite jobs. There was something cathartic about it. You get to put your head down and just make lots of granola. I grew

into the passion of natural food.” He subsequently held a variety of jobs on his way up.

Nowadays, the Hawthorne Valley community is a family affair for the Laurange clan. Jeremy’s wife, Sushannah, serves as communications manager, and their three children attend Hawthorne Valley school, a K-12 Waldorf school. “My whole life is here,” said Laurange.

Education, agriculture, and the arts

He makes the point that Hawthorne Valley is “literally about education, agriculture, and the arts.” A common yet erroneous belief is that Hawthorne Valley and the store are part of a closed community, which couldn’t be further from the truth.

Since its 1981 inception as “a cigar box into which one could deposit money on the honor system for milk ladled out of the bulk tank and cheese cut from a wheel,” according to the store’s website, the store has grown by leaps and bounds. In 2004, it moved into its current home, an 8,000-square-foot building, which underwent an expansion in 2015. It has outgrown that space too and has eyes firmly affixed now on expanding into Hudson, across from the train station.

Prices are not “Aldi-level,” Laurange acknowledges, but spend seven seconds in the store and it becomes abundantly obvious that low-cost food items are not what Hawthorne Valley store shoppers arrive here seeking. Rather, it’s the high quality the store’s purchasing guidelines yield as the buying staff goes about their business of prioritizing local and regional sources, clean ingredients, and trusted producers whose values align with those of the Hawthorne Valley community.

“One of our claims to fame is that we are able to sell raw milk,” he added, the result of being situated “on a 900-acre biodynamic and organic farm. It’s a beautiful place to come to work every day.” Further, the farm store carries all of the certified organic



Photos courtesy of Hawthorne Valley Farm Store

and Biodynamic® products grown, made, and raised on the farm.

The community and location

On top of that, the entire Hawthorne Valley community “is in the middle of nowhere. You have to really want to come here. I like to say we’re supported by three separate demographics: There’s the local community, which extends out to Hudson and across the [Massachusetts] border. There’s the school, with 300 students, their families, and teachers. And there are the second-home owners,” Laurange said. “It’s a unique crowd. It’s an experience, not just grab your food and go. It’s a very different atmosphere here.”

Bottom line, the store is a non-profit operation. “We are not here to make money. We are here to support our mission of education, agriculture, and the arts. Every single penny goes back into that mission. Our customers should feel good about where their money is going,” Laurange said.

The Daily Menu

Stuck for a meal idea? The Daily Menu – meals and side dishes “crafted

with fresh, seasonal, organic, and locally sourced ingredients, reflecting the chef’s inspiration and ingredient availability” – is here to help. On a recent day, the menu sported such delicacies as a gluten-free beef stew, fashioned from grass-fed beef and organic onions, carrots, celery, garlic, fire roasted tomatoes, salt, black pepper, thyme, cumin, and rosemary. Or, there’s the lemon dill chicken, roasted zucchini, and mac and cheese. The Daily Menu is made available every day on the store’s website.

While the store processes “600-700 transactions” on a normal day, said Laurange, that number balloons when festivals are held on the grounds. The next scheduled event is the Fall Festival, held on the Saturday of Columbus Day weekend in October, which is “our biggest. We have thousands of people coming into the valley. It’s a celebration of the end of the season.” ●

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Willa: We'll have 'delicious' ... with a side of friendship

M eet Alanna Broesler and Jim Buhs for the first time at their restaurant, Willa, in Millerton, NY, and be ready to be treated like an old friend. Alanna will greet you at the door while skillfully managing a staff that responds to customers and each other more like family than like co-workers. Jim will probably be behind the bar, keeping drinks fresh, engaging in light conversation, and ensuring that regulars are recognized and first-timers treated well.

*By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com*

Bites

Approaching its third year as a much favored “destination restaurant” in the tri-state area, Willa has built a word-of-mouth reputation as a place for excellent food and generous service. Even before taking it over, Jim and Alanna knew the facility well. During its previous incarnation as 52 Main, they had both been behind the bar for more than a decade, becoming respected members of the culinary community. When the restaurant was put up for sale, long nights of conversation and planning resulted in their purchase and “refresh” of the Millerton landmark.

Rather than merely make changes to a tried and true menu, the couple relied on their own instincts and training (Alanna has a degree in sustainable agriculture and food systems

from University of New Hampshire) and close friendships with contemporaries in both the food service and farming communities to set out to skillfully create a concept that actually made good on an industry catch phrase that had become, over the past decades, mostly a marketing cliché: “farm to table.”

Apps

The mid-Hudson Valley and surrounding communities are dotted with small farms that focus on the discipline of careful planning and execution – from plots dedicated to organic vegetable growth to well-managed flocks and herds. With the energy and counsel of their long-time friend executive chef Daniel Meissner, whose restaurant credentials include stints in the kitchens of world-famous, three-Michelin-starred Noma in Copenhagen, Denmark; Swyft in Kent, CT; and Troutbeck in nearby Amenia, NY, the careful design of a menu made up of locally-sourced ingredients emerged. After extensive research and interviews, they developed close relationships with 10 core providers, supplemented by a dozen more regional farms that can be relied on to fill in when crop cycles impact supply.

“We do buy some essentials from standard restaurant suppliers,” Jim is quick to comment, with his signature, subtle smile, “ketchup and mayonnaise.”

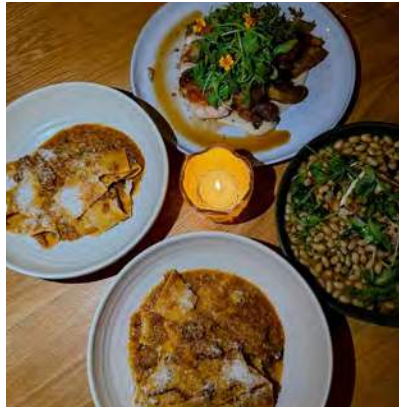
Lovely as the Hudson and Housatonic Rivers might be, menu items featuring fish are supported by whole fish delivered in quick order from the markets in New York City. “We take in whole fish and do all of the butchering in our kitchen, even using the bones as the basis of our fish stock,” adds Jim. Under the direction of Meissner and Chef de Cuisine Cody Needham, Willa’s kitchen meticulously creates each dish on the menu from fresh ingredients down to locally grown and ground flour for the pasta. A vibrant “cocktail program” designed and executed by Nikki Stein complements the refreshing menu choices.

Mains

When Willa first opened its doors and presented its menu to an eager clientele, a predictable pattern quickly developed. “Everyone just wanted the Kinderhook Smash Burger,” offers Alanna, who can watch entrees coming from the open kitchen to find their places in front of eager guests. Perhaps it was predictable – a hamburger seems like a safe bet, especially when approaching a new menu.

The gentle shift in diner behavior began within weeks. “Regulars started looking deeper into menu descriptions

Continued on next page ...



All photos courtesy of Willa.

and decided to try things that may have seemed a bit more adventurous.” When “I’m not sure ...” morphed into “This is really great!” the sea change had been accomplished.

The menu is not filled with predictable restaurant stand-bys. Each dish on offer is a carefully choreographed selection of ingredients that evolve with the season, always remaining true to the intent. “We carefully taste each dish,” affirms Jim, “and we’re willing to make subtle tweaks until we feel it’s right.” Those tweaks mean that the actual menu regularly varies from what’s printed, even if only slightly. An evolved menu design will be introduced this summer with the acknowledgement that a change will mean a re-print, but authenticity has its price.

And, as if on cue, the temptation to quickly engage with that authenticity is hereby provided with a recipe provided by Jim, Alanna, and Dan that allows us mere mortals to capture some of the Willa magic at home.

Wild Hive Farm White Bean Dip:

- ½ cup cooked white navy or cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 Tbsps extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsps lemon zest
- 1 small garlic clove
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 4 Tbsps cold water, or as necessary
- Olive oil to taste

Instructions:

In a food processor, pulse the beans, olive oil, lemon juice and zest, garlic, and salt. If the bean dip is too thick, slowly add water with the food processor running. Process until smooth. Put white bean dip into your favorite bowl, top with some extra virgin olive oil, and serve with crudite or naan.

Dessert

Although it’s likely not traditional to summarize a restaurant piece with a discussion about pigs, it wouldn’t be possible to convey the complete feeling of hospitality and generosity that is Willa without introducing Alanna’s newest venture – Willa’s Way Sanctuary.

A casual exploration of their new website (willaswaysanctuary.org) will show a pattern. Willa the pot-bellied pig (cover girl for *Main Street’s* May 2026 issue), Willa the restaurant, Willa’s Way Sanctuary the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit foundation – that pig has had an impact in Alanna and Jim’s life. The mission statement for this new venture underscores the simple, honest approach that is at the heart of everything they do:

“Our mission is rescue, rehabilitate,

and advocate for pigs while educating the public on their intelligence, emotional depth, and needs as companion animals.”

Check, please

It seems only fair to close with two things. First, the hearty encouragement to experience Willa in Millerton and enjoy the complete, authentic farm-to-table culinary experience.

And, second, to share the mission statement of the restaurant:

Our intention is to responsibly source the food that we cook, from small producers in the North East. We are on a journey to learn about our surrounding agriculture by tasting the bounty from which it is produced. We wish to build relationships with the farmers that grow our vegetables, fruit, herbs and raise our meat. In this pursuit of flavor and friendship, it is our goal to create tasty food that showcases the hard work of these individuals. It is our pleasure to provide this experience to our guests at Willa. •

To experience Willa for yourself visit them at 52 Main Street in Millerton, NY. Reservations are always a plus, get yours by calling (518) 789-0252. Check out their website willahvny.com or Instagram @willa.hv.ny.



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Chef Daniel Meissner's Fair Play Hospitality

blends Irish heritage with Hudson Valley agriculture

By Abby Audenino
info@mainstreetmag.com

Chef Daniel Meissner spends a lot of time around food. You can often find him in the kitchen serving as the executive chef at Willa on Main Street in Millerton, NY, or spending Saturdays at the Thistle Pass Farm booth (owned by his partner, Ellie) at the Millerton Farmers Market. Daniel's newest project, Fair Play Hospitality, is a little different from his previous work – it's a love letter to his Irish heritage.

Daniel's mother is Irish – born and raised just outside of Dublin – and growing up, he often heard that he was “Irish” too. Throughout his childhood in New England, he always felt drawn to agriculture and seasonality, which eventually drew him to his first professional kitchen at the age of 13. After graduating from the International Culinary Center in 2015, he went on to further develop his skills in a variety of Michelin-starred fine dining kitchens.

After visiting Ireland two separate times at 22 and 29 years old, he decided that this was the perfect opportunity to “connect and explore” a part of himself that he had felt “disconnected from” thus far in his life.

From Éire to the Hudson Valley

In Ireland, “fair play” is a phrase used to describe a job well done. Oigidecht is the Irish word for “hospitality,” and during the Celtic times under Brehon Law, it was mandatory for households to provide some form of hospitality to travelers, even if they were strangers.

“Irish culture is something that I am still learning about, in all honesty,” Daniel says. “Though in my research of the country, throughout history, hospitality plays a big part in its culture.”

Fair Play is inspired by the Irish values of storytelling, agricultural stewardship, and community and ultimately aims to explore the question,

“What is Irish hospitality?” Blending his interest in local agriculture and farming, Fair Play allows Daniel to showcase the farmers, foragers, and makers of the Hudson Valley through nights of shared meals, storytelling, and lasting memories.

“In terms of flavors, Ireland has a rich history of seafood, dairy, and wild food. Just like many cultures before the industrialization of food, the Irish ate seasonally because they ate what they grew and caught,” he explains. “So luckily for me, creating a menu with contemporary Irish flavors doesn't fall far outside of the way I already cook.”

Fair Play is also heavily inspired by two chefs in Ireland – Chef JP McMahon of Aniar in Galway and Cúán Greene of Ómós in Abbeylax. “These two gentlemen are at the forefront of contemporary Irish cuisine, and if you're at all interested in what I am trying to accomplish in the Hudson Valley, it starts with these two.”

Daniel notes that he still relies heavily on what is grown, raised, and foraged here in the Hudson Valley, while incorporating bits of history that he learns along the way about Irish cuisine and culture. He's so passionate about sourcing goods locally, in fact, that you can find an entire page on the Fair Play website dedicated to showcasing local farms, orchards, bakers, and makers that he works with, sources ingredients from, respects, and wants others to support as well. Some familiar names include Rock Steady Farm in Millerton; Mx Morningstar in Hudson; Vitsky Bakery and Ten Mile Table, both in Wassaic; and Kinderhook Farm in Columbia County.

A Summer of Fair Play

In addition to hosting pop-up events, Fair Play also offers private chef services; consulting for recipe development, kitchen design, and team management; weddings and other events; and cooking classes.



“As a new business, I am starting with a few different services and seeing what I can offer to the community,” Daniel explains.

For the foreseeable future, Fair Play will operate as a pop-up. However, Daniel shared that he has acquired a permanent location, although he noted that the details of that are not quite ready to be shared publicly just yet. Here's what he can tell us: “In the long term, we are creating a venue that works in tandem with Thistle Pass Farm to share with our community.”

“We are just looking to be authentic, and with that authenticity will come triumphs and mistakes. We are not looking for perfection; we are looking to learn and grow with our community,” Daniel says. “Fair Play is about exploring curiosity and the exploration of one's self. Our goal is to make people feel welcomed in our ‘home’ and not judged by the outside world. We wish to look deeper into how we as humans experience connection through food.” ●

The best way to stay connected with Fair Play and get more information about their upcoming pop-ups is via their Instagram @fairplay.hv or on their website fairplay-hospitality.com.



Photos courtesy of Daniel Meissner

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Nines: A Neighborhood Restaurant in Germantown

By Abby Audenino
info@mainstreetmag.com

Avery and her partner (in both life and work), Ryan McLaughlin, weren't actively looking for a restaurant space when they made the move to the Hudson Valley in 2024, but when they learned that Sarah Gaskins, a longtime friend of Ryan's and former owner of Gaskins Restaurant, was quietly looking for a buyer for the building, it was kismet.

"We found we really thrived when helping each other with work, leading us to want to collaborate and create opportunities for growth for one another," says Avery Janelli, the co-owner of newly-opened Nines Restaurant in Germantown, NY.

Ryan has known the former owners of Gaskins, Nick and Sarah, for many years. Gaskins thrived in Germantown for nine years, so when Avery and Ryan learned that they were looking for a specific buyer – someone who would be a responsible employer and an active part of the community – they knew they could be the right fit.

"We saw that the location offered a lot that would make the endeavor realistic for us. For example, it was fairly turn-key. We were able to sustain so many elements, from the kitchen equipment to the tableware. It didn't need a full build-out, just a quick refresh," Avery explains. "Not to mention, it came with a great reputation and the good-will of the community."

What ultimately came to fruition in the classic 2 Church Ave location is Nines, a casual neighborhood restaurant that is approachable, comfortable, and ordinary in the best way. "Our shorthand for this is 'easy and unfussy.'"

From Kitchens in Philly and NYC to the Hudson Valley

Avery and Ryan have been working in restaurants and hospitality for nearly their entire working lives. The now Hudson Valley residents have experience in both Philadelphia and New York City, where they honed their skills on both sides of the kitchen door.

From 2015 to 2024, Avery worked at High Street Hospitality Group, an independent restaurant group in Philadelphia that has been nationally recognized extensively over the years. She worked first as a manager, opened and closed restaurants along the way, and eventually became the director of special projects, which involved brand development, people and culture-related projects, and supporting teams across the organization.

Ryan, on the other hand, began his career as a chef in famous New York City kitchens such as Blue Hill on Washington Place and Per Se in Columbus Circle. He then moved on to become the chef at the Vanderbilt in Brooklyn, and in 2012, arrived in the Hudson Valley where he ran kitchens at Swoon in Hudson and Gedney Farm in Great Barrington, MA, among others. In 2022, Ryan began supporting the rapid growth of Other Half Brewing, located in Brooklyn, before returning to the Hudson Valley with Avery in 2024.

"From 2022 to 2024, Ryan split time between the Hudson Valley and Philadelphia while working for Other Half Brewing. We became a couple and discussed moving to the Hudson Valley together at some point," Avery shares. "When I finished a big project, I suggested that we seize the opportunity to move, lest I get involved in something I wouldn't want to walk away from! I'd been spending weekends up here and although it was hard to sacrifice the professional network I'd built over many years, it was a good time for the challenge of a new place."

On the menu at Nines

When thinking about opening their own restaurant, Avery and Ryan knew they wanted to do Italian cuisine. However, it was important that they were able to incorporate the French culinary approach, which is the foundation of Ryan's cooking. They were particularly inspired by the Riviera, where French and Italian cooking styles converge; the dining is casual and includes a lot of seafood.

They note that the "elegant yet casual" style of Ligurian cooking is especially an inspiration for the cuisine at Nines. Ligurian cuisine comes from a crescent-shaped coastal region in northwestern Italy and is characterized by fresh, simple ingredients and known for aromatic, vegetable-forward, and herb-rich dishes.

"It is important for us to be a family and an everyday restaurant, where there are dishes that change often and some that are almost always on the menu," Avery says.

Ryan has a long history with many farmers located in the Hudson Valley, creating deep connections that bring the food directly from farm to plate. Nines sources many vegetables from Mx Morningstar Farm in Hudson and Plane Meadow Farm in Clinton Corners, chickens and rabbits from Northwind Farm in Tivoli, and beef from Kinderhook Farm in Valatie.

Making hospitality accessible

"In a way, I think we want to be sort of ordinary," says Avery. "We believe a good meal, in a cared-for space, with hosts interested in their guests' well-being, shouldn't be hard to come by." But more than just taking care of their guests, Avery and Ryan also endeavor to create a fulfilling and supportive environment for their staff too. They believe that restaurant jobs should "work for people's lives," and communication, clear standards, mentorship, professionalism, goal orientation,

progression, and real collaboration from the whole team all contribute to the real quality in the food.

"Part of hospitality is making the most generous assumption about people. This applies to our dynamic with guests, but it also applies to the team internally. We assume the best from our colleagues."

Up ahead

Now that summer has rolled around, Nines plans to offer lunch on the weekends. Their closed day is Thursday, which affords them the opportunity to deep clean and prepare the space ahead of the weekend. However, Avery and Ryan also see Thursday as a good day for special service, such as hosting a visiting chef or collaborating with another restaurant.

Additionally, they are also planning to host some industry-focused gatherings, including a panel discussion on current trends in beverages. "But mostly, we are just focused on our core offerings: improving cultivating organizational health; and finding consistency, ease, and efficiency for our team."

Avery and Ryan note that being a neighborhood restaurant means getting to know their customers, learning their preferences, and understanding what is most useful to them. "We are curious! We want to know what our wine lovers would like to see on the list. We want to know if offering the deck for private parties would be helpful. Is there an appetite for happy hour? For visiting chefs? Ryan and I are pretty much always here and we are thrilled when our guests tell us what they are looking for and what serves them best." •

Nines is located at 2 Church Ave, Germantown, NY. Visit them online at ninesgermantown.com and keep up with them on Instagram @ninesgermantown for more information.



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GILDED MOON FRAMING

BROTHERHOOD WINERY

blends history and good vintages

By Barbara Peduzzi
info@mainstreetmag.com

I'd been thinking about a road trip to check out Brotherhood Winery, in Washingtonville, NY. The editor asked if I had a food issue story. Done and done. Scenic ride down the Taconic, dodge the traffic on I-84, a couple of turns, a charming ride through horse farms, and a low, one-lane railroad underpass and there it was. And there it was again, as I missed the first turn into their road but found the other end of it.

Short version, worth the trip. Well worth the trip. Retail manager Juan Sanchez set me up with long-time employee Kevin Young to gather information. The book *The Story of Brotherhood*, by Robert Bedford supplied more.

Spoiler alert: it is not, as the name led me – and, I have discovered, others – to believe, associated with any brotherhood as in a religious order. Brotherhood did not start out to be a winery, nor did it start with that name. Founder John Jaques was a cobbler, moving to Washingtonville in 1810. He planted his first vines in 1835, planning to sell grapes. Wine was not considered then because the family was very religious. In 1837, he took grapes to New York City and sold them for 15 cents a pound. The next year, the price dropped by two cents, and he refused to sell his premium fruit. Jaques brought the grapes back and made his first wine, which, according to his sons, was primarily

intended for communion purposes and connoisseurs.

Little did any of them imagine that almost two centuries later their winery would be the oldest continually operating one in the country, winning the Grand Prize in Wines and Champagnes at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition, surviving the Depression, producing a Riesling served at the White House, and becoming the largest wine distributor on the East Coast, shipping some 1.2 million gallons a year.

Then the Jaques Brothers

Once he started making wines, Jaques dug into the business. Literally. In 1839 he made the first wine cellar in the county, all dug by hand. A local mason constructed the two-foot-thick brick arch walls and ceilings that defined the rooms and walkways. The second vault was added in 1855. The first wines bore the name Blooming Grove. When Jaques' sons Oren, John Jr., and Charles took over the business in 1858, they changed that to Jaques Brothers.

They began advertising in newspapers, which sprang up in that post-Civil War era. The nearby Newburgh branch of the New York and Erie Railroad made shipping easier and cheaper, and business grew. An endorsement of the wines from the Presbytery of Hudson helped demand for the sacramental wines double,



All photos by Barbara Peduzzi

then triple.

Unfortunately, when two of his brothers passed away, and then 200 gallons of grape brandy was seized by the US Department of Revenue, Charles could no longer maintain the business and reluctantly sold it to New York City wine merchant Jesse M. Emerson and his son Edward in 1886.

Brotherhood of New Life

They brought the name, having previously taken over Brotherhood Wines, a part of the utopian community 'Brotherhood of New Life.' Their wine quality compared favorably with Europe's best, enabling expansion of the business through eastern and mid-western states. After several revisions, the labels now say 'Brotherhood Est. 1839 America's Oldest Winery.'

A new building was erected above the vaults in 1894. In 1906, a tunnel connecting them created the largest underground wine cellar on the East Coast.

Edward Emerson's comment, "When centuries have come and gone, this building and its many vaults will still be here as an everlasting monu-

ment to the memory of the Brotherhood Wine Company," has turned out to be prophetic.

Long a prohibitionist-fighter, Emerson resigned himself to closing when the World War I war emergency stopped alcoholic beverage production, until he and director Louis L. Farrell found a dispensation allowing them to sell sacramental wines. When Emerson unexpectedly passed away in 1924, Farrell used his connection with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York to expand sales which, along with a great deal of perseverance, kept Brotherhood open throughout Prohibition.

Consortium ownership

A succession of Farrells held the helm for almost 50 years, until Brotherhood was sold to a consortium of local business partners near the end of the 1980s recession. Winemaker Cesar Baeza had been brought in as an assistant in the early 1970s; he took charge to restore the winery to its former glory.

Continued on next page ...





The consortium ownership evolved into the current Beaza, Castro, and Chadwick partnership. They continue to add wines to their list, producing hundreds of thousands of cases annually, while preserving the legacy started almost two centuries ago.

In the 1950s, New York State recognized their historic significance and added the ‘underground winery vaults’ to tourism guides. Wine tasting tours were started in the 1960s, and a New York City newspaper article on those brought throngs to get their free samples. Louis Farrell, Jr. realized this unplanned and unexpected popularity could be a financial salvation, and Brotherhood became possibly the first venue to create wine tourism. In 1964 it was listed as a tourism stop in New York State’s Vacationlands guide.

Milestones and becoming the White House wine

The 150th Anniversary was celebrated with many special events in 1989. Ten years later tragedy struck when a devastating fire destroyed most of the main building, leaving little more than the stone ends. Rebuilt as close to the original as possible, the space now holds several tasting stations and a well-stocked wine assortment.

In 2000, Brotherhood was added to both the New York State and National Registers of Historic Places.

The Brotherhood label wines are generally New York State grown grapes, with a concentration on those from the Finger Lakes for riesling and pinot noir, and from the north fork of Long Island for chardonnay, cabernet, and merlot. Concord and Niagara grapes grown at the winery are used

for their altar wines, which the winery still sells to religious organizations.

Since the 2005 purchase by Chileans they have also been, Young said, “Loaded with affiliated wines from California and Chile,” as well as distributing French and Italian imports.

He noted that wines considered to be the specialties are, “Oh, a bunch of ‘em. Our riesling is the first New York State wine to be put on the table at the White House.” This happened when it was brought to President Bill Clinton’s attention that only California wines were being served, and he determined that one from each state should be made available. This ‘White House wine’ is by far the number one seller.

In addition, “You can always find the traditional ones: cabernet, merlot.” Brotherhood also offers seasonal specials, for example a sweet, rosario wine in May and a mulled holiday wine in December.

There are also sparkling wines and “a couple called champagnes – we’re grandfathered in to call them that.” Their late harvest riesling compares to ice wine.

Music, events and history

Music and special events for occasions such as Mother’s Day, Valentine’s Day, and the annual Grape Stomp (think the classic *I Love Lucy* segment) draw people in. “People love music,” Young observed.

He then stressed, “If people come here, they’re gonna see beautiful structures. The underground cellar is phenomenal. Most important is the history, too often we forget about that.”

If I’d not been on the story, I may have passed on the tour. It would have been my loss. Do not, repeat, do not

take that chance. Unless, perhaps, if you are claustrophobic or fear being underground.

The tour begins on the patio, where Young shows off the building, now housing the restaurant, which in its day was the home of a beer hall, massage parlor, and healing cottage.

Do any other wineries have a chapel? The centuries-old First Presbyterian Church of Washingtonville building was moved to the farm by Jaques; it was scheduled to be demolished, but as a trustee and ruling elder, he could not let that happen. It is used now as a tasting room for bus groups: “Blessed with wine in a church,” he quips.

Moving on, to a long window on the world of bottling the wines. One machine does it all, with one or two workers watching as bottles are filled, capped, and labeled, then sent along for packaging.

Now it’s time to go underground. Stone steps lead to a walkway lined with early wine-making equipment, including modern-for-the-time hand-operated presses and corking machines, and some of Jaques’ shoe-making tools. Information about the Brotherhood’s history is posted on the walls.

The first vault, 14 feet deep, 17 feet wide and 72 feet long, holds the original huge oak casks, each able to hold up to 3,500 gallons. This leads to an open space with two rooms off it. One is a small niche for the Farrell family private cellar, complete with iron bars and a door with a large ‘F’

The other holds racks of champagne bottles, carefully tended and turned regularly. A saying from the 1899 company booklet, on the rock wall outside this says, “May all your pain be sham, and all your champagne good, And if you’d real champagne, there’s none like Brotherhood.”

A tunnel from this room, 39’-7” long and 6’-3” wide leads to the newer vault, 15’-0” deep, 28’-10” wide and 86’-10” long.

The original tasting bar is still in the first room of this. A final room is filled with more casks of wine, aging at controlled temperatures and checked weekly for their progress. Although he denied knowing any ‘mysterious activity’ mentioned in the

web page write-up, Young did relate that early in his working at Brotherhood, back before there were lights through the wine cellars, he went in with a small flashlight and was startled by a pile of clothing on the floor in one section. “I went to get some protection and a bigger light,” he recalled, excitedly and a bit fearfully telling the person who had asked what he was doing, “There’s some clothing down there!” and patiently was told, “Kevin, it’s Halloween. That’s for our Halloween tour.”

Walking through, one can only imagine, and gain much respect for, what it took to build these impressive, still in use, rooms.

Back into the sunshine, it is pointed out that we have walked under the building now housing the restaurant, and the drive between the buildings. On to what we’ve been waiting for: wine tasting! Young’s informative patter about the wines served included the suggestion for a port, “Pour a tablespoon on your oatmeal – at 18%, your day’s gonna start just fine!”

The tastings ended with his advice, “Drink what you like, like what you drink. Don’t be a wine snob!”

Keeping this in mind, I wandered through the many, many, many appealing choices in stock. Don’t ask how many came home with me. •

Visit Brotherhood Winery at 100 Brotherhood Plaza Dr, Washingtonville, NY; reach them by phone at (845) 496-3661; or find out more through brotherhood-winery.com.





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FAST (IMPATIENT) ... AND FURIOUS

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

The slightest moment can be a trigger. Something unexpected appears and brings back a memory or creates a small explosion of insight. It's the "Aha! moment" when we least expect it.

We had viewed *The Devil Wears Prada 2* and drafted a modest pirouette of a review. We had seen the original when it was first released, but one or two things have happened in the past 20 years since then, and specific memory was a bit foggy, so we decided to find *TDWPI* on a streaming service and settle in for the evening.

We managed to get 30 minutes into the film before the lure of something more compelling became a trigger. Why did this year's offering engage when the first effort seemed to move so slowly and be so lugubrious? Punch up the remote. Look for something else. Perhaps a third curtain call for *Peaky Blinders*?

Pacing. The way in which the director and the editors had paced and placed the shots; the use of music; the splashes of light and color; and the helicopter, drone, and crane shots sweeping across the screen were just

different. They were faster in the contemporary piece. With 20 years of music videos, 30-second network television commercials with one-second smash cuts, and CG-infused Marvel Universe feature films intervening between *Devils 1* and *2*, sensibilities and tastes have changed. *Maltese Falcon* is a great film ... but it moves with the speed of molasses.

Signs of age?

Pan the camera right ("swish pan") and focus on the cluster of "tweens" hunkered over their cell phones in Irving Farm or Sweet William's or Dunkin' and sample the accumulated impact of a world that simply moves faster. Their thumbs dance on their phones like rain hitting the windshield. True, it may be a "sign of age" as Jake Holmes sang five decades ago, but whatever the cause, the effect is profound. There is a steady pulse of impatience that runs through life. There is no longer a "news cycle." News is instant. There has been a crashing decline in conversation. Text, don't call. I want an answer now. Swipe left. Swipe right. Move on.

True, there may be some who feel

like life was moving too slowly, so the uptick in speed is a welcome upgrade. "Move along, Boomer."

On the opposite side of the ledger, there will be those who long for a slower, more contemplative lifestyle. "You dang kids! I remember the good old days ..."

In a pluralistic society, either option may be tolerated – if we can dispense with the pejorative nicknames, the angry overtones and the implied superiority.

But, how do we cope with the implied fury of a new generation that seems to exhibit an attention span similar to hovering fruit flies as thumbs flail on mini keyboards punctuated by occasional outbursts of impatient frustration? Sir George Still identified it as "defective moral control" in children in 1902. What a jokesmith. That's a bit too harsh, to be sure.

Impatience and destructive fury

More recently, the term "attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" became an accepted diagnosis when patience is non-existent and learning is stifled. ADHD. Is it a shorthand novelty

reserved for the emerging generation, or has it been a hidden condition now elevated because as a culture we're gasping hungrily for instant technology?

We're no critic of speed. Far from it. When the lust for speed turns into impatience and destructive fury, however, "the line it is drawn and the curse it is cast" as Dylan prophesied in *The Times They Are A-Changin'*.

There are many, many things on our "to do" list – as individuals, as communities, and as a now-troubled nation. It might be best, in the long run, if we begin with the tasks at home and take the required moments to "teach our children," to paraphrase Crosby, Stills, and Nash's first blockbuster hit song. Take a moment. Listen. Think it through. Find the words, and articulate them. Take another moment. Talk.

Besides, why are a handful of jittery "tweens" sitting over there drinking double-shot, double-sugar iced coffees at 3:30 in the afternoon? Just sitting!

That may be a trigger for another day. ●

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A new chapter unfolds



By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

The summer season is finally upon us. Locals and tourists will be flocking to towns scattered around the Hudson Valley to enjoy the serenity of our region. They'll also be escaping the heat at our many restaurants, breweries, and wineries. Those of us who are fortunate enough to call the region home will have our fair share of weekend guests.

A new name with familiar faces

If you are looking for a warm, welcoming spot to spice up the midday hours or to take a break from prepping breakfast and lunch, head to Tousey NY Café and Bar in Clermont. These libations always seem to kick things up a notch.

"It's a neighborhood spot where everyone is welcome," said Kimberly Tousey, owner, Tousey NY Café and Bar. "We are open weekly from Thursday through Sunday; Sundays primarily focus on a brunch experience inspired by my childhood in Denmark. Guests can enjoy a hospitable Danish flair, great food, and unlimited mimosas and bloody Marys," she added.

The menu includes seasonal salads, pretzel charcuterie, grilled cheese with pork belly, and fresh baked bread. Desserts include homemade cheesecake, flowerless chocolate torte, and ice cream. Beverages include a house made black currant juice and The Honeybee, created with honey from the family's hives. Local beers are also on tap as well as a selection of wines and nonalcoholic cocktails.

A new vision

The building that houses Tousey NY Café and Bar was recently home to Tousey Winery, which closed a few years ago. After spending the last 15 years in the wine industry, Kimberly

Tousey is excited to channel her own vision, creativity, and spirit into this destination, which is so dear to her heart.

"Now that my three babies are teenagers, I think it's time for this new chapter," she said. For many years, this building was an important part of the community, and it was also a meaningful place for the Tousey family.

Family ties

Kimberly's father, Ray Tousey, is a well-known beekeeper in the region and sold his honey from the building when it was functioning as Tousey Winery. His honey is also available at local farmers' markets.

"When I was a child, the building was home to the Blue Roof Market. Underneath the most recent sign for Tousey Winery is the original sign from when my family was in the apple business and operated a fruit stand here," said Kimberly. "Reopening this building is both a personal and meaningful moment for me. I look forward to welcoming old friends, new neighbors, and visitors alike as we create new memories together."

Through the years, the building has also served as a coffee shop and travel agency.

Join the Touseys as they turn the page on this new chapter set in a familiar destination where so many memories have been made. Although this new iteration of the business was inspired by Tousey's childhood living abroad, it is fueled by the entrepreneur's passion for food, hosting, and transforming customers into lifelong friends. ●

Tousey NY Café and Bar in Clermont is open every Thursday and Friday from noon to 9pm, and from 11am to 9pm on Saturdays. Sunday exclusively offers a brunch service from 11am to 3pm. The venue is available for private parties. Families and pups are welcome. Check them out on Instagram @touseyny.



Tousey NY Café and Bar just opened its doors in Clermont, offering brunch, drinks and more. Tousey NY Café and Bar welcomes families and pups to its friendly spot. Images courtesy of Tousey NY Café and Bar.

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Photo: istockphoto.com contributor bhofack2

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

July is like a fireworks show: much anticipated, beautiful to watch, full of oohs and aahs, and over way too soon. This year I'm determined not to let it get away too fast. One of the most fun ways to celebrate this month of being outdoors as often as possible is by bringing its bounty of fresh foods into your everyday meals. This includes your wine glass.

Sangria is the drink that will bring your summer celebrations to their most delicious expressions. Whether you and your family are gathered at the table, you're picnicking with friends, or you're off to a favorite spot to watch the sunset, sangria brings a special summer vibe. With fresh fruit at its peak this month and next, it's time.

Little is known about the origins of sangria. It is speculated that the word derived from the Spanish word for blood – *sangre* – because of its dark red color. It became popular in the US after being introduced in the Spanish pavilion at the World's Fair in New York City in 1964. Today it is still associated with Spain, but it is known and enjoyed the world over and is extremely popular here in the US.

One of the great things about sangria is that you can make it with almost any combination of wine, fruit,

juice, and booze. "Sangria is a classic Spanish drink," according to my friends The World Wine Guys (Mike DeSimone and Jeff Jessen). They should know, they spend a lot of time in Spain. "At its core it's essentially a punch made with red wine, brandy, fruit juice, sugar, and cut fruit. It is very strong in terms of alcohol," they noted, which is why it's often diluted with *aqua con gas* (sparkling water).

Another important consideration is the time needed to marinate the fruits and refrigerate the sangria. Ideally the sangria with the fruit in it should be made at least two hours ahead of when you want to serve it, but four hours is better, and it can even be overnight.

Sangri-dients

1. Wine

When choosing a wine to make sangria, remember, the wine is the backdrop, not the centerpiece. You don't have to worry about whether the wine's subtle flavor profile complements a special meal, so keep it simple. Sangrias can be made with all kinds of wine – red, white, rosé, sparkling, or sweet.

For red wine, go with one that is more robust and dry with deep fruit notes for a classic, citrus-based sangria. These tend to be wines from

Mediterranean and Southern Hemisphere countries, where grapes like garnacha, merlot, and even cabernet sauvignon thrive. Reds that are lighter but still dry with bright fruit are best for sangrias that feature milder fruits like plums or grapes or more exotic fruits. Think pinot noir, Beaujolais, or a blend.

For white wines, a simple pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc works very well. The vanilla notes of a chardonnay are nice with peaches. Rosés make delicious sangrias, too. Choose one from almost any country so long as it's dry.

I believe that bubbles make everything better, and there's no shortage of exceptional, affordable sparkling wines on the market, so here again you have a lot of choice with sparkling wines from around the world, including Proseccos from Italy, cavas from Spain, and blanc de blancs from the US or France. Don't splurge on a higher-priced Champagne for sangria.

Yes, you can make sangria with sweet wines. White zinfandel, catawba, riesling, and moscato are all good choices. You won't need to add sugar to these!

2. Fruit

Fresh, ripe fruit makes such a difference in sangrias, and it's prime

time for berries and will soon be for peaches and melons. Find a farm or farmer's market and stock up. There are so many different fruits you can use for sangria, including oranges, lemons, limes, apples, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, grapes, peaches, plums – even honeydew melon, pineapple, pomegranate seeds, mango, and watermelon.

3. Spirits

Authentic sangria includes brandy, which works very well with red wine. Grand Marnier and triple sec are orange-flavored brandies and beautifully accentuate sangria's citrus notes. Lighter wines, however, call for spirits that won't clobber the fruits and other flavors, and range from vodka, gin, rum, and even Curaçao. There are many flavors of vodka nowadays, and these are fun to add to sangria.

4. Juices and Sparkling Water

The flavor combos of juices these days are amazing, and they're fun to use for sangrias. Traditional juices include orange juice, pineapple juice, apple juice, white grape juice, and pomegranate juice. Cherry, blueberry, and

Continued on next page ...

pomegranate juice can be quick and tasty additions.

Aqua con gas (seltzer water) lightens and lifts a sangria. There are oodles of flavors of sparkling water you can try. Like anything else, some are better than others. The more natural the source of the flavor, the better it will taste. I typically just add plain seltzer.

5. Simple Syrup

Sometimes a sangria just needs a little sweetener, especially if its base is a dry red or white wine. It's so easy to make simple syrup and keep it in the refrigerator. In a saucepan, mix one cup of granulated sugar with one cup of filtered water. Heat, stirring constantly, until the sugar is completely melted. Don't let the mixture boil. Remove from heat and let cool. Store in a glass container.

6. The Pitcher

A fruit-laden sangria is as much a visual as a gustatory treat, so be sure to choose a pitcher – or a punch bowl – that will show it off. It's as simple as that. You'll want a ladle handy for serving so you can scoop fruit into each glass.

Here are recipes for every kind of wine listed.

The Classic: Red Wine

Serves 4 to 6

This is how sangria started, with oranges, apples, and brandy. If this is the first sangria you make – and it's a great one to get started with – get yourself off to a good start and feel free to improvise to suit your



Photo: istockphoto.com contributor petrenkod

taste. Add more brandy if you want. Add some simple syrup, or top with lemon-lime soda instead of seltzer. Remember, sangria should taste good to you. It's a fun, fruity, refreshing wine punch.

- 1 bottle (750 ml) dry red wine
- 2 oranges, sliced thin in whole or half rounds
- 2 Granny Smith apples, cored and seeded, cut into bite-sized chunks
- ¼ cup brandy or triple sec
- Ice
- 2 cups seltzer

Combine all ingredients but the seltzer in a large pitcher or container. Cover and refrigerate for four or more hours. Add ice and seltzer and stir. Serve.

Berry Yummy: White Wine

Serves 4 to 6

So named because this sangria is loaded with fresh summer berries – raspberries, blackberries, and blueberries. Throw in the berry-flavored vodka and you have a berry tasty sangria! Note: Raspberries are the most fragile of these berries, and may fall apart as you stir the sangria. They'll still look nice and the flavor will be there, so don't worry about it, but do expect it.

- 1 bottle (750 ml) dry white wine
- ½ cup raspberries
- ½ cup blackberries
- ½ cup blueberries
- ½ cup berry-flavored vodka
- Simple syrup if necessary
- 2 cups seltzer

Combine all ingredients except seltzer in a large pitcher or container. Cover and refrigerate for four or more hours. Stir and taste. If desired, add some simple syrup. Add ice and seltzer. Stir and serve.

Basil-Berry: Rosé

Serves 4 to 6

Here's the sangria you can make with the strawberries that are so good this time of year – quick, before the season passes! Strawberries pair really well with basil, which is also plentiful in the summer and makes a great infused simple syrup (part of this recipe).



Photo: istockphoto.com contributor Alina Rosanova

For the basil-infused simple syrup:

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup simple syrup
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves

For the sangria:

- 1 bottle (750 ml) dry rose wine
- 1 1/2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- ¼ to ½ cup basil simple syrup (start with the smaller amount and add more if desired)
- 2 cups sparkling water

Make the simple syrup: In a saucepan, combine the water and sugar. Stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and add basil. Put the cover on the saucepan and let sit for several hours. Remove the basil leaves and strain the liquid so there are no solids. Put the syrup in a jar, cover it, and refrigerate.

In a large pitcher, combine all ingredients but the seltzer. Cover and refrigerate for about two hours. When ready to serve, stir in ice and seltzer.

Peachy Keen: Sparkling Wine

Serves 4 to 6

With sparkling wine, you don't want to lose the bubbles, so it gets poured into individual glasses when it's sangria time. The preparation is to marinate the fruit.

- 1 bottle (750 ml) sparkling wine, very cold
- 1 cup bite-sized peach pieces (skins on is fine)
- 1 cup blueberries, fresh or frozen
- ¼ cup peach schnapps

In a bowl, combine the peach pieces, blueberries, and schnapps. Stir to combine. Cover and refrigerate for several hours or overnight.

Ladle spoonfuls of the prepared fruit into four to six champagne flutes. Top each glass with sparkling wine. Repeat as desired with any remaining fruit and wine, being sure to keep the wine chilled.

Strawberry Lemonade: Sweet Wine

Serves 4 to 6

This is a crowd favorite for brunch on a summery Sunday – or any day!

- 1 bottle (750 ml) catawba blush wine
- 2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 container frozen lemonade (yellow or pink)
- 1 container water (from the lemonade container)
- 1 cup seltzer

Combine all ingredients but seltzer in a large pitcher or container. Cover and refrigerate for four or more hours. Add ice and seltzer, stir, and serve. It's hard to list just five sangria recipes as there are so many ways to combine the basic ingredients and create super summer sangrias. I hope that once you've tried these and feel comfortable with the basic concept and preparation, you will experiment with your favorite wine, fruit, and spirit selections. Cheers! •



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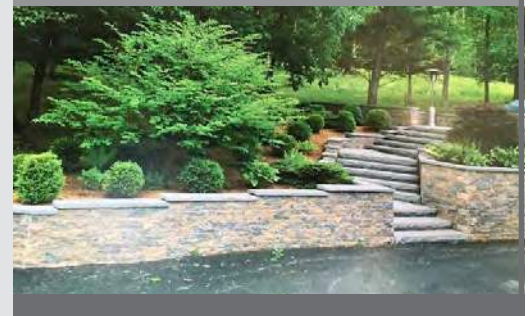
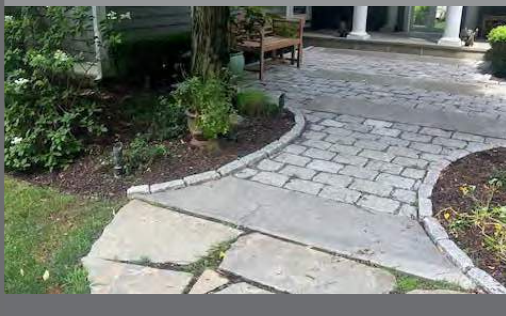
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