

Ivey's In My Kitchen™

email: Cook@Iveysinmykitchen.com
website: Iveysinmykitchen.com

Oh, We Get By With A Little Help From Our Friends!

I cannot stop humming that song. Since last we spoke, there have been so many times I have found myself humming the iconic Beatles tune "I Get By With A Little Help From My Friends". This past month, it's been so true. Even here, in this very issue, the project of clearing out the milkweed space was an excellent example of what life here in our Hudson Valley is like. Friends helping friends, strangers helping and becoming friends, this is how we get things done. John sent out a beacon for assistance, we all took to the phones and the very next morning there was a forceful army that did a days job in an hour. I was so grateful to everyone who showed up! Thank you. Yes I, without shame, donated my children. I gave birth to them they can clear a little brush for me and really it wasn't for me, it was for John. My children see John as family; he is more than a friend. They do not know a life without him. They adore him. We all do. In the early years his wife was a fixture at my kitchen table bouncing my babies on her knee, he (John) is the one who taught both of my children to fish and they still do it to this day. Feeding John a slice of cake and a cup of tea at my table seeing him take time out of his crazy running around schedule, that view, means everything to me. I came here to the magazine, to you, because John and I helped each other out. But that's an embarrassing (for me) story for another time. My point is, we all need somebody.

I am a control-freak, there, I said it, which I am sure is not surprising to you. I have something much bigger than an ego when it comes to cooking for the ones I love. I think it might even border on the edge of madness. Yes, I want to insure that everyone who comes through my door for a meal gets exactly as they wished for and to keep that memory consistent. For my first "people" since the end of 2019, I was two things; excited like a jumping monkey to finally see my dear friend hug her and approve of her boyfriend. For her, it just had to be my flourless chocolate cake; it's her favorite. But the number two thing was me, I was not ready. The timing of her drive by visit was perfect but I was really limited and I had just enough energy for one thing. The one thing, which turned out to be me putting on a dress and visiting with my friend. So I farmed out the cake. The double looks of shock I got from my family were priceless. I have never pulled such a move. Never made such a request. Yes, I have walked my kids through making it at home, late at night, the morning of or at the last minute. I've taught my clientele and family over FaceTime but never have I BOUGHT a flourless chocolate cake. Not in this millennium. There was only one person I could trust without worry, without thinking,



truly trust blindly; Baked by Susan in the town of Croton-on-the-Hudson. And you know what, it was PERFECTION! It was a smooth chocolate memory and it was gone before we knew it, it was so good. If you love the art of baking and appreciate foods creativity then you can easily see the delightful inner workings that make Baked By Susan consistently delicious. And while the woman herself is brilliant enough, it's not just Susan, it's her friends, the "village" of the bakery she has created. You can see, smell and taste all of the thoughts that became recipes flowing out from Susan's art all around the bakery. However, her group of troopers are all so knowledgeable, warm, involved and helpful. You can feel the joint effort. You gotta try going in. Even the regulars are nice. Hi Laura!

When my daughter was concerned that I was not hungry, she stopped offering me "food", immediately hopped into her car, drove into the town of Croton, went into Baked by Susan, picked out a piece of sliced carrot cake and a pumpkin sugar doughnut. Just the sight got my mouth watering. I found my appetite, ate my simple dinner and went to town on the baked

goods. Bribery with guaranteed results, thanks kiddo. Baked by Susan's carrot cake? Let me tell you a little something about this carrot cake recipe, in the universe of baking, Susan wins carrot cake. And the pumpkin sugar doughnuts, OMG, they have driven us back each morning to get them fresh. When Baked By Susan first crossed my radar it was around their initial opening. I was at the farm market in town, my kids were squirts, I found Strawberry Bread, Baked by Susan and quickly lost my mind over toasting it with butter and have followed the bakery ever since. That experience was so many moons ago. Talk about being a part of the community? Since then Baked by Susan has expanded into so many items, lunch items, like their empanadas. Oy they will make your mouth water every time you think of them in between having them. They are unforgettable (and have vegan options) it's a lustful torture. And recently, just this Mother's Day they coupled up with the town's florist to help each other spread the joy.

Husband and I have been married a few centuries now and our anniversary is still kind of important to celebrate. I owe my Hub for his thoughtfulness and his creativity after all this time. My favorite anniversary gift to date, came with the help of Susan. Yeah, that one.

Michael and I got married with a lot of help from our friends. It's true. We had both been married before, both had big weddings and neither of us wanted that. Neither of us had the gall to ask our parents. We were too old and they had given us so much. We really wanted to do our wedding on our terms, with just the people we loved. We wanted to invite our parents as guests, not checkbooks. The person, who officiated at our wedding, was doing us a favor. The 24th person we asked. Even my wedding dress was a favor, my Hub-to-be worked at the store, the employees helped me with everything, especially when four days before my wedding, we realized my entire wedding dress had to be taken apart and remade. Yeah you read that right, totally had to remove the entire supportive back of my wedding dress and reconstruct the whole thing in less than four days till I wore it. I love you Kay, your lightening fingers and your magical seamstresses. They did what no one else could, they saved me and then they came to the wedding. We had very little money, things like flowers we especially considered a luxury. I tried to accept the idea of bodega bought flowers \$5 dozens were popular in NYC in the 90's. I really did try. I was trying to be practical and frugal and I happened to be sitting with my favorite co-worker and hang out lunch date, Zina. She was patiently appalled, I told her of my idea and she was visibly not ok with it. I was not going to make my flowers for my wedding from the corner deli. I believe, her being a talented artist, who was responsible for many of the beautiful interiors and exteriors that took my breath away during the 80' and 90's, made it somehow unnerving for her. She had impeccable taste. We were both working for an architectural interior design firm at the time and I think that her inner artist combined with her genuine generosity prompted her to help us with our flowers. She made a phone call and gave us the name of her friend who just happened to handle the flowers for the most iconic event space in New York. And she sent us off to speak with him that day after work. He asked me what did I love about flowers. I told him I had a passion for lavender thornless roses (back then called Sterling Silvers),

I would be happy for any of the colors of the rainbow and I would be happy with a single rose for each of my bridesmaids to walk down the aisle with. That is not even close to what I got. The flowers were abundant, artfully arranged and popping



with colors, wildly colorful. Each maid's bouquet looked like art and my bridal bouquet was so bright it took my breath away. It looked like jewelry but with flowers. It was every color of the rainbow, in a perfect setting to dry and keep forever and here it sits with me 22 years later. This act of kindness, this friendship that shared a creative factor, produced the most remarkable floral arrangements, boutonnieres and bouquets that I still to this day think about. I remember their spectacular beauty and how grateful I still am. We needed help from our friends, we accepted their help and it was indelible. We got by with a little help from our friends.

Our wedding venue was also a gift given to us, don't get me wrong, we paid, but there is no relation to what we gave in exchange for what we got. New York's hottest party planner caterer extraordinaire to the rich fabulous and famous happened to be a close friend. A real one. That first marriage I mentioned before, the engagement party was his first on his own job, hired by my parents, in their back yard. It was unforgettable and there has not been a Pinsker party without him since 1989. Larry's magic touched every main event in our lives from my parents special wedding anniversary parties to their big birthdays, our friends weddings, their children's parties to my own little sisters wedding day, (an affair beyond compare, believe me) none of these days would have existed in such awe inspiring beauty without him. So when Michael wanted to get married, the first person I went to, after my parents, was Larry. I went to him to ask for a "small party in my parent's back yard". He asked me 3 questions; (1)"Ivey, is that what you really want???" to which I replied, "it's all I can afford." (2)"Ivey, is this REALLY what YOU want???", to which I replied the same. (3)"Do you trust me?" Larry asked with those brilliant eyes and a huge grin, which made me know that I was safe. "OF COURSE I DO!". He told me "This is what you are going to do. You are going to forget this entire idea that you have and do this at my place.

Let me handle every thing, let me do my job. Ok? Are we good? Ivey?" I was stunned, speechless; I nodded with jaw dropped gratefulness. He was right, he was my friend, let him do his job in his space. He told us when and we just showed up. I never questioned him about any of the details of my wedding I never called with a request or a single question, not once. Bridezillas, take that!

On the actual day, Michael and I walked into OPERA, a bar/nightclub on the lower west side that was perfectly transformed into a magical fekened floral fantasy of colors and smells from bouquets of flowers to enormous raised glass bowls of candy, to a hand carved wood buffet of foods that I can still taste in my mouth today. Oh yeah I ate on my wedding day! There were all of the people who were truly a part of our lives surrounding us. And I have never forgotten the incredible



experience of Michael and I having our very own little cake. There was of course a large version for toasts, photographs and to cut up for our guests, but Larry had a tiny special cake, a mini, flowing with rainbow frosting flowers and the best vanilla cake you have ever eaten, just for us. Without the help from my friends, and their friends, and their friends, I would lack this epic experience that has attached me to not only my Husband but also those involved, forever. Now let me get back to that anniversary gift. Michael went to Susan, Baked by Susan, with a 20 year old photograph, yes an actual picture of our little cake, described the inside to her and

when he came home for dinner the night of our wedding anniversary he had a Baked by Susan box with an exact replica of our mini wedding cake. It is still the most treasured anniversary gift I have received, just yet. Here I was, twenty years later, tasting "Larry's cake" Baked by Susan. And again, I filled with love for my friends.

Now my friend Larry Scott has been invited by our very own Chanel 5 Rosanna Scotto and the Scotto family to install the "Larry experience" to their soon to reopen outdoor cafe area at Fresco by Scotto. After these trying times an interior-exterior fantasy face lift, if you will, can provide hope and promise. I keep an eye on him always and like other service industries this last year has been nail biting. We have really needed our friends. I was thrilled to hear

of Fresco by Scotto reopening, they had fantastic food and I know the creative genius that lives inside of Larry would be just the thing to bring out the crowds. I can't wait to experience what they put together. I can try with a little help from my friends, you my readers, to turn you all on to the surroundings that only Larry can create, especially around such excellent food. I want everybody to go and check out the beautiful mastery that is Fresco by Scotto. Larry Scott and Rosanna Scotto have a wonderful chemistry to their long friendship, if you have ever seen them together, at a benefit, or working together or even see her interviewing him, they have a delightful mixture that blends and shines. I am so glad to see how it has clicked and blossomed into such a much-needed project. After a year of the restaurant being closed and a year of just food I need a little atmosphere. A little magic. I cannot be alone in wanting this; some of you must feel the same? Aren't you ready to recombine the dining-experience? I want to laugh and party and eat and I know it will be enchanting. So, I urge you, as I plan to do after it's opening (tentatively set for June 1) to go directly into the city, that is New York City to the rest of you, specifically to eat at Fresco by Scotto. Tell them you were sent by "the Boating on the Hudson girl". And then tell me what you thought of it. Take photos. We will be thrilled to publish your reviews! Fresco by Scotto (212) 935-3434 located at 34 E. 52nd St. frescobyscotto.com Confirm for opening date. The Scotto family is getting ready for YOU!

Next time you are craving exquisite baked goods, are hungry, are ANYWHERE near Croton-on-the-Hudson, or maybe just curious to try the exact twin of my flourless chocolate cake, visit Baked by Susan (914) 862-0874 located at 379 S. Riverside Ave. Croton-on-the-Hudson, NY 10520

Do yourself a favor and always ask what is new that day. Zina the favor you did cannot be repaid I will always be so grateful for your colorful, perfectionist, designer artist brain and full heart. And btw girl, I still have all those original Martha Stewarts you passed on to me, still think of you every time I pull them out and they are the pride of my culinary library.

At a most difficult time, let's all help our friends get by. Reach out to your local businesses. Enjoy! Love Ivey.



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