

indulge

TASTE IS EVERYTHING

Volume II, Issue 5 2018

'M' is for Macaron

On The Farm
with Ruby Goat Dairy

Portie comes alive with
The Italian Job

Chef Check
with Dylan Benoit

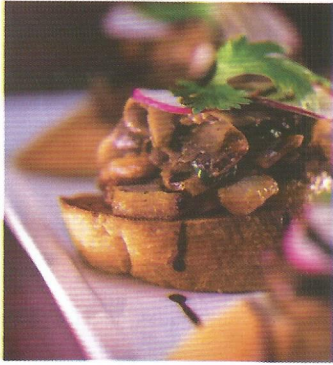
A Quick Break at
Broken Plate

ISSN 0799-4990



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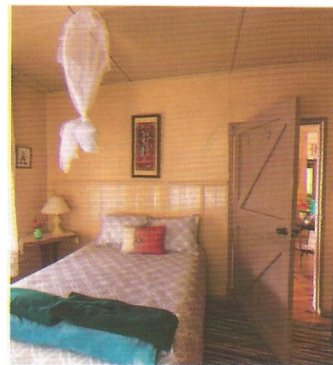
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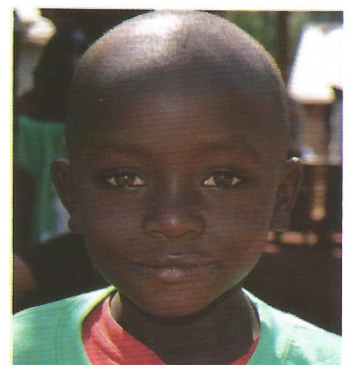
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Publishers' Note



Honestly, where does the time go? Summer seems to go by too quickly, with Fall dancing at our doorsteps and then 'as you quint you eye, it's Christmas'.

There are so many things going on and it feels like there is no way to do it all. Jamaican cities are alive with live music performances, festivals of all kinds, artisan expos, amazing parties, and of course, great weather for outdoor recreation, wine tasting, beer tasting, fine dining, new restaurants and so much more. Of course city life also brings the rapidly expanding roadways and seemingly triple the number of cars on the roads... life is busy and time is short!

Now, if you haven't felt this almost revitalized energy, this rejuvenation, then perhaps you're a bit more nestled away with a freshly brewed cup of coffee in hand, enjoying the quieter side of Jamaica. Don't get us wrong, we love that too. There's nothing like a Road Trip to Check Inn for some R&R. We suggest Heritage Gardens of Cold Spring in this issue.

Now, each year, we are anxious to see

what innovations are taking place in their respective categories. Admittedly, we have businesses and entrepreneurs that dominate year after year, and deservedly so. But, we also have newcomers to the list.

We raise our glass to people like Andrew Bruce of Plant JA, a man with an innate passion for permaculture and simply growing food for sustainability and a couple of New Jersey natives who have fallen in love with Jamaica and taken up goat farming who are now producing quality artisanal products like Feta and Ricotta, yogurt and even Labneh soap right from their farm. We are inspired.

And in our business of food and drink, there's absolutely no denying these increasingly popular 'eat what you grow, grow what you eat', 'support local', 'eat better', and 'live better' trends. We feel them, and we hope you feel them too. More importantly, we hope that these are not just trends, but lifestyle values that are here to stay. We see campaigns encouraging less sugar, getting our Jamaican children to start thinking about health in ways we didn't when we were growing up. We see

movements inspiring a more plastic-free, less wasteful way of life. We love it... we are all for Indulging in a sustainable way.

And hey, we'll be the first to admit that we're not the pros in the world of publishing, but what we do know, is our food. And we know our wines and spirits. And we know just how inspired we are to build a better Jamaica. And if it's one thing we leave you with in this issue, it is that you get in the know too. Know what you eat and what drink, and just what you put into your bodies. Indulge in learning about where your food comes from, where it was grown, how it was processed. Indulge in learning the history and the culture of what you drink. Learn about your favourite spirits, and how they were aged, and by whom, and where. We promise you that the next time that you indulge in not just the flavours, but the why and the how of the flavours, the next bite or sip will be that much more gratifying.

Happy Fall & Happy Holidays,

- Jo, ML, Tania & AB

Ruby Goat DAIRY

PHOTOGRAPHY: DWAYNE WATKINS

Ruth and Byron combined their names to get Ruby.

Ruby is the name of their dairy farm.

Their dairy comes from goats.

Ruth Mitchell and Byron Walker are a New Jersey-based, retired couple who fell in love with, and chose to retire in Jamaica. Their retirement project has seen them invest not only in Jamaica on a whole, but in the day to day lives of many individuals in their community home. “I fell in love with Jamaica,” Ruth shares, she’d been visiting Jamaica for more than 40 years... “And I fell in love with Ruth,” Byron adds his piece with sincere conviction.

They’re as cute as they are creative. Ruth and Byron are the principals behind Ruby Goat Dairy - a simple goat dairy experiment that 3 years on, has grown into a full-fledged micro dairy farm. “I had never seen so many goats just walking around!” Ruth was astounded by the numbers of goats everywhere, and was simultaneously shocked by the lack of goat-derived products available on grocery shelves. Ruby Goat Dairy was started to fill a small need and has grown to supply more than just a product, but rather a greater purpose. “We consciously developed Ruby Goat Dairy as a community model, working with local goat farmers by milking their goats and paying them for the milk.” Ruth is happy to share to her story with some of the employees who are close by. And they are eager to nod or chime in in agreement. “Our staff milk the goats. Their training and dedication assures quality and consistency of milking practices. The neighbours’ involvement invests them in Ruby Goat Dairy.





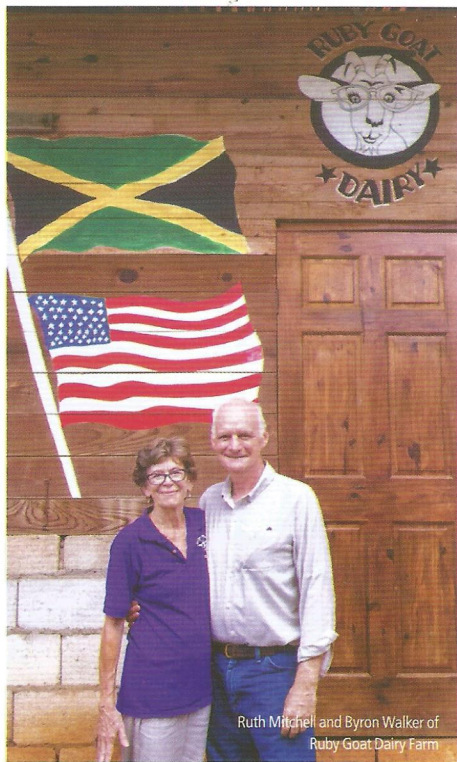
It develops camaraderie, provides expertise to us and genuinely connects us with our neighbours.”

The goats are bred for milking and are raised with a love and care not typically seen on a farm in Jamaica. I hear Ruth calling names. Glenda, Dot, Ricoletta, Miss Bell and Sophie, (to name a few). And I’m in awe that she knows them by name. “Yup, she calls each goat by its name... and still calls me by her ex-husband’s name.” Byron rolls his eyes and laughs at the same time. Everyone is laughing at this point, and there’s an intense sense of happiness in the air. Even the goats seem happy, if that’s at all possible. “Our goats are healthy and happy.” They are eager to be milked, knowing that healthy and tasty treats will be their reward. The grass and greens that they get are pesticide-free and

each animal’s individual needs are assessed and treated accordingly. Pro-biotics are administered as needed and the goats are medicated only as necessary. Common practices such as blanket-medicating the herd for worms, or any other health management issue, do not occur.

Ruth and Byron developed a symbiotic relationship with Simon, a young goat farmer in Carey Park, Trelawny, and in 2015, after ‘officially’ learning the ropes at a goat and cheese-making internship in Connecticut, Ruby Goat Dairy was born. The arrangement was simple and effective. The young weaned male goats would go to live on Simon’s farm, and Ruby Goat Dairy Farm would keep the young female goats; since that of course, is where the milk comes from. Today, a total of 37 goats constitutes a relatively





Ruth Mitchell and Byron Walker of Ruby Goat Dairy Farm

small farm. But in Jamaica where we say 'likkle but tallawah', Ruby Goat Dairy is making a solid name for itself by proudly specializing in artisanal products like goat's milk, cheeses: Chevre, Feta, Ricotta, Halloumi, Chevre Delight & Ricotta Salata; yogurt; Labneh soap & Ruby Doo - a goat manure and their only product with no expiration date!

Being the environmentally, healthy and socially conscious couple that they are, it is no surprise that Ruth and Byron are continually trying to improve the best practices on the farm. "We collect rainwater, we 'recycle' whey, a by-product of cheese-making, and we provide it to a local pig farmer. We use paper bags, recycle plastic bottles and cardboard, and we are adopting the recently available biodegradable food service packaging and garbage bags." Ruby Goat Dairy is also part of the growing "eat healthy, eat local," and "genuine Jamaican" movement currently en trend in Jamaica. They are also happy to share to an increasingly vested audience, that goat milk products may be a comfortable alternative to lactose intolerance.



Ruth and Byron have every right to be proud of their work. Knowing that a small country goat dairy farm is serving a nation by employing, educating and entertaining its people, is more than commendable. And it's not just their staff who is happy. A visit to the farm by neighborhood children, gives them access to Ruby's Wi-Fi password and keeps them all happy and connected! For Ruth and Byron, the Ruby Goat Dairy retirement project (and hobby) has brought them innumerable joys. They are grateful to people from all walks of life who have helped them in various ways, to integrate seamlessly into a foreign culture. And likewise they are happy to share the benefits of goat milk and goat cheese to Jamaicans who have not been exposed to such products. They both agree... "We are blessed with wonderful staff who take pride in this project, its development and its purpose. We share a patriotic desire to see Jamaica do well and we're proud to be a part of it." ●

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