

A MIDSUMMER'S DREAM COME TRUE

Marti Wolfson and Evan Madin's Farm-to-Table Wedding

BY MARIA BUTEUX READE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY TURNQUIST PHOTOGRAPHY

July 11, 2015. As a pleasant breeze ruffled lush green pastures, sun sparkled off crystal wine glasses, and atop whiskey barrels, wooden boards offered artisanal cheeses, ruddy charcuterie, brilliant crudités and summer ripe fruit. In the cool shade of an open barn stretched three long tables covered in ivory linen, candles, flowers.

Marti Wolfson and Evan Madin had a bluebird afternoon in Roeliff Jansen Park, a bucolic 165 acres in Hillsdale saved from development by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation. The setting's simple beauty perfectly reflected the couple's aesthetics. As a chef and culinary nutrition educator, Marti's life revolves around food, health and well-being while Evan, a teacher of English and journalism, remains keenly attuned to the world around him.

Through her business, MW Culinary Wellness, LLC, Marti offers culinary and nutrition consultations, cooking classes and professional workshops. "I believe in bringing people back to food basics and guiding them on my principle tenets: seasonality, quality ingredients and eating mindfully."

In cooking and in life, take the simplest elements, treat them with respect and let them speak for themselves. That ethos infused this midsummer wedding.

THE BACK STORY

Marti worked at Canyon Ranch in the Berkshires before earning her culinary degree from the Natural Gourmet Institute for Health and Healing in Manhattan's Flatiron District. Evan spent 14 years as a teacher and administrator in the New

York City Department of Education before shifting to a Westchester high school.

The pair met in 2013 and their first date was at Le Pain Quotidien on Lex and 85th. "Coconut macaroons and coffee," Evan recalls. "I told myself that if I liked this woman, I'd suggest we visit the Temple of Dendur." An hour or so later, they strolled over to the Met. Seven months later, Marti moved from the Upper East Side to Evan's apartment in Astoria.

The couple traveled to Iceland in July 2014. Unbeknownst to Marti, Evan had the engagement ring in his pocket. "I had *no* idea it was coming!" Marti says. "Evan drove us north to Dettifoss waterfall, an otherworldly beautiful spot." Evan says, "If we had been anywhere with cell service, the first inclination would be to reach for your phone and tell everyone. But in that remote location, we could just enjoy the moment and have it to ourselves for a couple days."

Later that fall, they crafted their own wedding rings. Marti discovered the Wedding Ring Experience, a California-based company with outposts all over the country. "We went to this jeweler's apartment in Brooklyn and spent eight hours there making our own wedding rings and sipping Champagne." Yet on their honeymoon to Greece and Turkey, the unthinkable happened. "No one ever told me your fingers shrink when you go in the cold water," Evan says. "My ring is now a gift for the gods of the Greek ocean..."

The couple knew they wanted to get married in the country, so that fall was peppered with road trips to the Berkshires and Hudson Valley. "We were staying at the Silvanus Lodge in Hillsdale and checking out various venues and caterers, but nothing felt like the right fit," Marti says. "Steele Andrews, the owner of Silvanus, suggested we call Lisa Light, a renowned wedding planner in the area, and visit Roeliff Jansen Park a mile down Route 22." Things began to fall in place, a wild goose chase gone right.





Rebecca's "Everything" Drizzle

This dollop of yum is always front and center in my refrigerator. The combination of fresh parsley and mint, blended with lemon, olive oil and sea salt is a perfect drizzle to amp up the yum for chicken, lamb, fish or vegetables. I've been known to scrape the jar, just to capture the last few drops. Parsley gets a brain boost from the phytochemical quercetin, which helps protect brain cells from free radical damage, while mint helps with focus and concentration.

Makes about ½ cup

½ cup tightly packed fresh parsley leaves

2 tablespoons tightly packed fresh mint leaves

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

Sea salt

¼ teaspoon grade B maple syrup

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Combine the parsley, mint, lemon juice, ⅛ teaspoon of salt, syrup and oil in a food processor and process until well blended. For a thinner drizzle, add a tablespoon of water and briefly process again. Taste; you may want to add a pinch of salt.

COOK'S NOTE: To quickly remove stems from parsley or cilantro, hold a clean, dry bunch of the herbs in your non-cutting hand, angling them downward at 45 degrees, with the top of the bunch touching the cutting board. Scrape down along the stems with a chef's knife, using short strokes, to separate the leaves from the stems.

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FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Naturally, Marti focused on the food and decor while Evan zeroed in on the photographer, music, travel and guest accommodations. "I spent nine months working with Lisa Light, a wedding consultant based in Chatham," Marti says. "She included so much in her package and brought our vision to life. We shared ideas over Pinterest." Evan admits that they learned how to be creative and stick within their budget.

"I wanted our wedding to be a food experience because food is my life," Marti says. "I had several major chef friends coming to the wedding so the bar was set pretty high." Knowing that, Lisa pointed the couple to Mazzone Catering. After an initial phone consultation, Marti and Evan drove up to their headquarters in Clifton Park for several tastings. "They blew us away," Marti says. "They could do everything we suggested."

"Yoram Ottolenghi is my inspiration," she continues. "I had been studying his books that year, so I knew I wanted lots of small Mediterranean dishes for people to choose from. Color color color, and lots of spice. The two executive chefs at Mazzone, Mark and Matt Delos, are twins and looked exactly like my mentor chef at culinary school! I gave them several recipes of mine which they incorporated with their own. I wanted as much locally sourced product as possible, and they met that challenge. Jen Grogan was our liaison there. She was hands-on and fantastically helpful, and Chef Mark and I fine-tuned the menu over the course of several months."

In May, Jesse Turnquist, the photographer whom Evan had hired, suggested a photo shoot at Hillrock Estate Distillery in Ancram. "I had discovered that Evan appreciates fine whiskey," Turnquist says, "so I thought this would be a great way to get to know them both a bit better." The trio toured the distillery and sampled some small batch bourbons. The photos came out fabulous, the couple became comfortable with Turnquist, and Evan decided to incorporate a whiskey tasting into the reception itself. Triple win!

JULY AT LAST!

Friday evening, 30 friends and family dined at John Andrews Restaurant in Great Barrington. An expert in farm-to-table fare, chef/owner Dan Smith orchestrated a summer feast of grilled rib eye with compound butter; roasted halibut, lentils and sweet peas; and fresh tagliatelle with wild mushrooms. Cocktail hour featured Chef Smith's pâtés, charcuterie and local cheeses. A bittersweet chocolate-hazelnut-esspresso-whiskey torte and an array of housemade ice creams provided the exclamation point.

Saturday morning, while the stylist tended the bride and her coterie got ready, Evan took several of his groomsmen and his cousin Rachel out for breakfast at the Crossroads Diner in Hillsdale and then over to Hillrock Distillery for a tour and tasting.

By late afternoon the wedding couple emerged, Evan in his J. Crew tuxedo and white tie and Marti in a dress custom designed by Kathryn Conover. "Kathryn brought out the dancer in me with a fitted bodice and big skirt," the bride explains.

The couple arrived at the park and saw their yearlong vision come to life. Lisa Light had tended to every imaginable detail and created a romantic tableau. Lanterns and strings of white lights hung from the rafters, color radiated from the flowers and table settings, and the long communal tables with wooden lazy Susans whispered "family."



The bucolic rolling hills and lush pastures worked their magic as well. People strolled to the crest of the hill, glasses of iced tea in hand and sport coats slung over shoulders. The wedding party arrived on foot as well, wending their way along the newly mown path. Under the chuppah adorned with crimson roses and twists of greenery, prayers were uttered, rings exchanged, and the traditional glass crunched under Evan's shoe.

After the ceremony, a golf cart shuttled the newlyweds down the hill to a shady tree behind the barn. They discovered a table for two, complete with Champagne and hors d'oeuvres. "We had a few quiet minutes to ourselves just to soak it all in before the cocktail hour began, almost like our engagement days in Iceland," Evan reflects.

FAMILY-STYLE WITH A MEDITERRANEAN FLAIR

"I wanted the meal to be served family-style. I loved the idea of people spinning the wheel and talking with each other about the food," Marti says. "Life involves sharing and nourishing together. Mazzone created that atmosphere with the communal tables, lazy Susans and family-style dishes."

Rebecca Katz, one of Marti's culinary mentors and author of several cookbooks, shares her perspective. "When I got the invitation, I just knew I had to attend, even though I'm not much of a wedding person. Marti had shared the menu with me ahead of time so my mouth was watering even before I left California! I'm still talking about it a year later!"

"Mediterranean-inspired dishes are Marti's wheelhouse. Her sense of self as a cook was translated through the Mazzone chefs. The food was simple, with the finest ingredients freshly prepared. Every bite was better than the last! I can still taste the bright flavors and feel the care devoted to the preparation."

As the reception drew to a close, Marti and Evan brought out the team who had worked so tirelessly and introduced them by name. "It was so important to recognize these geniuses who had attended to every last detail of the wedding," Marti says.

By Sunday morning, all traces had vanished. Evan reflects: "Lisa built a space, then it came down. It falls in line with some of our Buddhist meditations about being unattached. The ephemeral sense of it's there and then it's gone, but without a sense of loss. We did something incredibly beautiful and it will never run again. Part theater, part mandala."

The symbiotic rapport that evolved between Marti and Evan and their team of producers allowed the creation of an organic, inviting, food-centric celebration. By all accounts, the entire wedding expressed Marti and Evan: gracious, personal and elegant. #3



Menu

Marti and Sean's Wedding Feast

CATERED BY MAZZONE HOSPITALITY

Salads

TUSCAN KALE, SERRANO HAM, BUCKWHEAT, ANCHOVY-CAPER VINAIGRETTE
HEIRLOOM TOMATOES AND CUCUMBER WITH SARATOGA OIL AND VINEGAR

Main

GREEK LAMB MEATBALLS; ZA'IR CHICKEN; FENNEL-RUBBED PORCHETTA
QUINOA WITH SEVEN HERBS, CHICKPEAS, ROASTED RED ONIONS, CURRANTS
ROASTED EGGPLANT, TAHINI, TOMATOES, OLIVES, RED ONION, HARISSA
SAUTEED KALE AND SWISS CHARD
PICKLED BEETS, CARROTS AND FENNEL
REBECCA'S EVERYTHING DRIZZLE, LEMON MARMALADE, TZATZIKI

Dessert

LOCAL & SEASONAL PIES WITH ICE CREAM (DAIRY-FREE)
CHOCOLATE, CHERRY, PISTACHIO AND ORANGE BARK

JULY 11TH, 2015

THE CATERER'S ADVICE

It's important to talk through your vision. Anything is possible, and we can go "off book." If you feel overwhelmed, we'll work with you and help create your ideal event. We won't put you in a box.

Mazzone Catering
Clifton Park, NY
MazzoneCatering.com

MAZZONE CATERING

Jennifer Grogan serves as Mazzone's off-premise event planner. "We have a good rapport with wedding planners in this region," Grogan says. "We've done events on farms, in barns and special locations throughout the Hudson Valley and Adirondacks."

"Mazzone is a full service caterer, beyond just food and beverage. We do total event management, handling all logistics of planning and operation. We look at the big picture: guest flow, food, design work, decor. We made the lazy Susans for this wedding, which were integral to the food we served and how we presented it as a bountiful feast, communal style."

Head chefs Mark Delos and Matt Delos are twin brothers and alumni of the Culinary Institute of America. Mark is chief operating officer of culinary and Angelo Mazzone's business partner, and he oversees the in-house design team. Matt is the executive chef of Mazzone Catering.

"Once Marti and Evan became comfortable with us through the tastings, they handed over the reins and let us do our thing. Marti and Chef Mark were like kindred spirits. We were happy to let Marti incorporate her own recipes to honor her fellow chef mentors. Those personal touches mean so much."



JESSE TURNQUIST—PHOTOGRAPHER

Rebecca and Jesse Turnquist had years of experience before joining forces as business partners in 2008. The couple's own marriage celebration in 2000 inspired them to become wedding photographers.

According to Jesse Turnquist: "We try to stay organic and true to the moment. We don't stage any shots. When we begin working with our clients, we encourage the couple to participate in a session of engagement photos, which allows us to get to know each other and begin to establish a level of comfort and trust. For example, when talking with Marti and Evan, I learned that while Marti is the true foodie, Evan appreciates fine whiskey. So I suggested that we take a tour of Hillrock Distillery in Ancram, which produces amazing bourbon. The three of us took the tour, did the tasting and got the full experience. I took photos throughout so they could see how I worked. Spending that time together helped us develop a relaxed rapport with each other."

THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S ADVICE

First, do your research and make sure you agree with the photographer's style and aesthetic. Secondly, cultivate a trusting rapport with the photographer. He or she will be with you and your fiancé practically every moment of that weekend. Since most people claim to hate having their picture taken, feeling comfortable with your photographer will allow that person to capture the most genuine "in the moment" shots.

Turnquist Photography
Hudson, NY
TurnquistPhotography.com

LISA LIGHT—THE WEDDING PLANNER

"I love finding the right place to match the couple."

Twenty-five years of experience as wedding planner translates into more than 300 weddings. It also morphed into a family affair as her husband, Dr. Glenn Rugen, and her three daughters pitched in with whatever needed to be done. "Glenn is a chiropractor by day and a wedding hand on weekends!" Lisa jokes. "Grace is my lead floral designer, and she also custom-painted Marti and Evan's wedding sign for the roadside. Olivia is a photographer and assisted Jesse Turnquist that weekend. Maisie is a musician and sometimes helps the DJ, but this time she drove the golf carts and handled the random tasks as they cropped up."

Light grew up in Austerlitz and lives in Chatham. "We specialize in barn weddings in the Hudson Valley. This area is sometimes referred to as the Napa Valley of the east with our natural beauty, elegant barns and incredible farms. Because barns in this region typically host only one wedding per weekend, planners can have access to the facility for several days, which gives ample time for setup and takedown."

Lisa Light now serves as a wedding consultant rather than a planner. "I have a database of more than 200 wedding planners I've worked with around the world. I look for people with high standards and a passion for wedding planning." As consultant, she acts as a one-stop wedding resource, providing advice on locating venues and identifying planners, caterers and photographers.

Light also writes columns on wedding and event planning for several magazines, and she published a book called *Destination Bride: A Complete Guide to Planning Your Wedding Anywhere in the World*, available at Amazon or on her website, DestinationBride.com.

THE WEDDING PLANNER'S ADVICE

- Develop a budget and treat it like a business plan. It may not sound romantic but it will reduce headaches during the process and help you stay focused on your vision.
- Give yourself time to plan and be open to brainstorming.
- Vet your wedding team so you feel confident in their expertise. Treat your team respectfully and they will give back double. Then let go and enjoy the wedding!
- Plan for good weather but also develop a plan B you can actually live with if the weather turns inclement.

