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Kane County Magazine

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THE LAST SUPPER

REFLECTING ON MY TIME WITH KANE COUNTY MAGAZINE

By Katie McCall, local food columnist

Photo by Victoria C Photos



When I was first offered the opportunity to write this column, we were less than a year into the pandemic, and the future of our bakery, Two Wild Seeds, was unknown. It seemed like the perfect chance to dip my toes back into professional writing after a 10-year hiatus.

As I put pen to paper and conceptualized “A Fresh Take,” I imagined that it would, naturally, be heavily food-focused — covering different ingredients, various cooking techniques, gizmos and gadgets I couldn’t live without ... and it was. But at its core, it was so much more.

Looking back at the previous 15 columns (yes, this will be my 16th!), the topics varied, but one thread remained constant: It was always a creative space that allowed me to dive into my past, celebrate the present and explore dreams for the future — all through food’s key role in my life.

From binge-watching the Food Network as a teen and enrolling in culinary school to working in restaurants around Chicago and eventually opening (and closing) our family bakery, I’ve taken you all on this journey of self-exploration through the means of food and sharing it with others.

Together, we trudged through the woods hunting for morel mushrooms and gathered around the table in the garden for my birthday dinner. We talked about sustainability and finding new inspiration in the kitchen by simplifying our approach to cooking, as well as navigating awkward holiday get-togethers with dietary restrictions.

We made hearty soup in the winter, pickled vegetables in the summer and even learned to churn butter from cream using a Mason jar. I shared with you some of my most beloved recipes, including my mom’s traditional Irish colcannon for St. Patrick’s Day, the bakery’s famous apple crumb coffee cake and the spiced cinnamon ornaments I grew up making every Christmas.

This has given me a space to explore, educate, reflect and even vent. A space to share my love of food by way of storytelling through my own life experiences. And for this, I am truly humbled and honored that you’ve taken interest in my little corner of the world.

When I think about my writing style, I’ve always tried to treat it like the food I prepare — approachable, honest, personal, meaningful, authentic and organic. I learned early on in my culinary career that a meal should tell a story and always keep you intrigued,



wondering what's next.

So ... what's next? While I've decided to step away from the monthly column to refocus my energy on my family and other personal career endeavors (currently writing and self-publishing our *Two Wild Seeds* cookbook ... send coffee and lots of it!), I'm not completely leaving my seat at the dinner table. I'll be a guest contributor every few months with a new approach: less about me and more about you!

The world is a beautiful place — and our own community is such a great example of that beauty. Rich with makers, botanists, historians, artisans, farmers, gardeners, chefs and bakers, there are new stories to be told.

So, I'm packing up my knives (and pens) and hitting the road to explore this next chapter ... and, of course, eat. If you see me around town, please stop and say hello! I'll be the one nose-deep in produce at the farmers market or sipping on a latte outside one of our local coffee shops, behind this laptop — most likely writing about food.

■ Katie McCall, former owner of Two Wild Seeds Baking Co., is a bona fide Midwestern girl. Raised on four acres of rural property in Yorkville, she was always taught to respect nature and all of its bounty. From foraging morel mushrooms in the woods to picking wild black raspberries for homemade jam, Katie feels most at home when in nature and preparing food for others. When she's not creating new dishes in the kitchen (and writing about them) she can be found nose-deep in cookbooks, exploring the outdoors with her family — and eating ... always eating.

HUG IN A MUG: individual chocolate chip cookie

Sending all of my loyal readers a big HUG with this delicious chocolate chip cookie that's made in a mug — in less than 2 minutes! This is the perfect recipe to cure any sweet craving without having to make an entire batch of cookies. (You're welcome.)

SERVES 1-2

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 4 tablespoons flour (can sub in with gluten-free flour)
- 3 tablespoons semisweet chocolate chips

In a mug (no smaller than 8 ounces), melt the butter, about 35 seconds.

Add the sugars to the melted butter and stir until well combined. Then add the egg yolks and stir again until egg is fully incorporated.

Next, stir in the vanilla, salt and flour. Mix and then add the chocolate chips. Stir again, then microwave about 45 seconds. Test with a toothpick; if clean, it's done. If gooey or any undercooked batter appears on top, cook an additional 15 seconds.

Enjoy warm as is or with a scoop of your favorite ice cream!

Stay in touch!

To follow along with Katie's culinary journey, follow her on Instagram at @katiemccall. For questions or comments, email her at kimccall86@gmail.com.

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