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*Steps Away...
Miles Apart*

Newsletter - 2022

What Matters Most

I want to start with a reset of this 32 year old, annual newsletter tradition. After a 2 season hiatus, it starts with a promise and a pledge. A simple, yet not so simple pledge. I promise to have more fun WITH you and simultaneously be less of a perfectionist pain in the butt at times, especially if you join me on that path. Pretty simple. Tomorrow isn't promised. I'm still going to reach for perfection, but allow myself to fall short. I hope you will (and simultaneously won't) notice the difference. Let's turn that page-together.

Covid Canvases

Like many of you, the past two years have been a time of unprecedented introspection for me. Also like many, my hands tend to push away from idol ness. Turning inward to one of my passions, I created a series of Covid Canvases, poems and prose, that I wrote over the last 2 years, some of which are now hanging inside the restaurant for just this summer. I hope you find some enjoyment in these artworks. Each was written by me during the Covid peaks and ebbs as reflection and release but always with the optimism of a fire islander.

New Leadership Team

I am so proud of our next gen team already stepping up to help meet the unique and unprecedented challenges facing our hospitality industry. Between the labor shortages, the cost of goods and supply chain earthquakes, and the severe local housing shortages, it's bound to be a challenging season. A warm shout out to Travis, Vicki and Spencer who, after a decade of internal employment, have essentially joined me as the new managing quartet, each taking on specific roles in the wake of our "stewardess and GM" Hailey's early retirement. The energy, warmth and hospitality chops that this team brings to the Island Mermaid is palpable and appreciated. You, our loyal guests, will surely be the beneficiaries.

***2022 Needed A Game Changer!
We're Bringing TWO***

Most of our longtime guests know that, each year for the last 32 seasons, I always find at least one and sometimes several game changers to keep things evolving and fresh. Fresh for our guests and for ourselves. This season is no different. In some ways, this years game changers are potentially huge. Chef Kevin Manning, our longtime Sous Chef, takes the helm as planned and will build on the shoulders of those who trained each generation preceding them. Chef Kevin (aka "Coop"), hired as a CIA extern by myself and retiring Chef Joe Rago 7 years ago, was actually at the helm for much of last season, helping Chef Joe during his planned and anticipated final season. Over the last several years, Chef Kevin has been responsible for some of the most sought after menu items here at Island Mermaid. To help Chef turn the page, we gutted the kitchen and gave it a much needed face lift this winter. The crew at Cernilli Construction was (again) at the ready.

Weekly Late Dinner / Late Night

Tuesdays - Bitchy Bingo with Ariel Sinclair

Wednesdays - Wisdom Wednesdays

Thursdays - Fire Island Follies

Friday / Saturday - indoor/outdoor dance club with NYs #1 DJ - Just Joe

Sundays - Sunsets with The Zigons

Fire Island Follies! aka Dirty Thursdays.

Speaking of game changers, even we aren't 100% sure town is ready for this much fun! After much planning and arm twisting, we are so jazzed to announce (western) Fire Island's first ever continuous weekly Burlesque Show, featuring some of the countries premier artists. The Miss Isle of Fire Event was the gateway into this world for us and we are kicking the doors wide open. You won't want to miss Lil' Miss Lixx, Wilfredo and their troupe of scintillating, sexy, rotating performers every Thursday night from 9-12. Grab a late dinner table reservation to guarantee some heart racing and delicious moments under the tent. Follow us on Insta @islandmermaidob for weekly lineup details and late seating info.

Help Us Support City Harvest!

32 years ago, we set the bar higher when we ditched that ugly wooden bowl of salad that traditionally came free with every meal on fire island. 5 years ago, we did the same thing with bread. In the process, we have solved several honest problems and simultaneously done something good. When you buy our artisanal bread, baked off to order, you help feed some hungry New Yorkers. 20% of all bread sales are donated to City Harvest. You win, we win and our fellow citizens win. Less waste, more pleasure.

***Finally, Real
Bathrooms***

It's been nearly 3 seasons since we created actual location worthy bathrooms. The last two seasons haven't allowed us to remind guests since we have had so much more pressing things to discuss. Ladies, take a look. We solved one of the worst legacy problems our building ever had.

Downtown Flood Mitigation.

It's Here-Now Find A Place To Live!

There are two gigantic and pressing issues facing all local businesses here: (1) flooding on Baywalk and (2) the extreme lack of affordable staff housing (even unaffordable rooms no longer exist!). Airbnb and other weekly rental opportunities have stripped any last incentive for owners to rent to staff. Many of our business owners are using pumps to create paths for guests even after normal rain periods. We hear that ground should be broken in the next 18 months on an engineered solution to parts of the downtown flooding. Ask me for details. I'm happy to share what I know. Now, let's also tackle the housing shortage.

Staff in the Spotlight

There are several ways you can catch the attention of your boss to the point of getting a shout out, where there is little space available. One of them involves a rare combination of extreme longevity AND being the best in class at what you do. These two cats are that unicorn. An actual double unicorn! Perhaps a quadruple unicorn, since it's 2 x 2. Combined, Mike Brocco and Vin Radwinsky have probably served a half million drinks over the last 25 and 27 years together. They have done it with "pizzaz", smiles, sexiness, speed and cool, all while mentoring the next generation daily. Perhaps because they are both public school teachers by trade and passion, or perhaps because, that's just how they roll. We plan on keeping them around until they each hit the 30 year mark or more at Island Mermaid. Make sure you take great care of them as incentive for the journey.

We look forward to serving you in our 32nd season when we re-open Friday, April 22nd See you at the beach! Scott & the staff.