

# James Lane

— POST —

Holiday 2025

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ALEXA RAY JOEL

*Photo by Vincent K Caruso*

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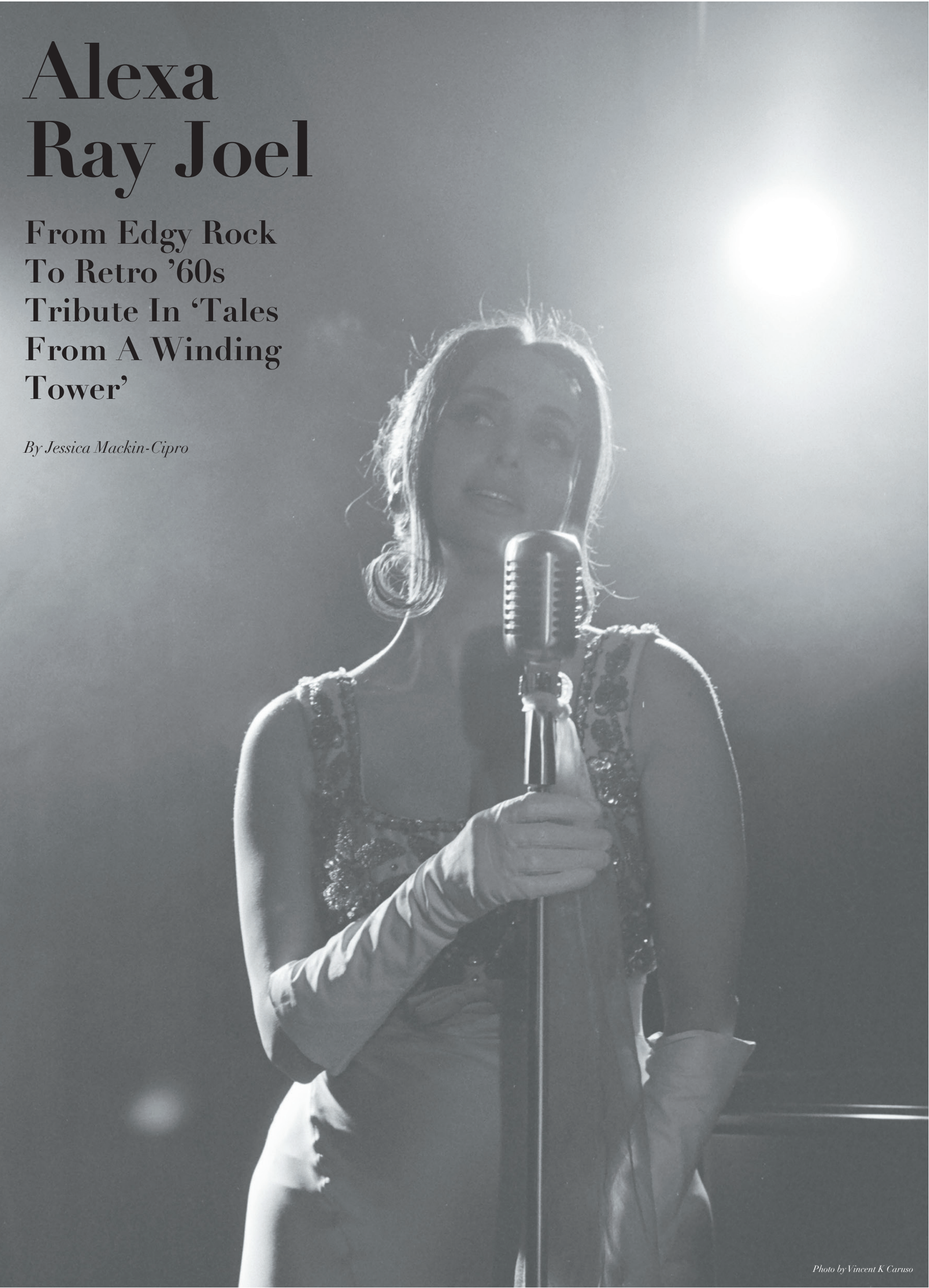


Photo by Vincent K Caruso

Dive into the world of Alexa Ray Joel, whose first two singles off her upcoming “Tales From A Winding Tower” EP take listeners on an eclectic musical journey through themes of fantasy, desire, and escapism.

As the daughter of Billy Joel and Christie Brinkley, two “vivacious and wonderfully artistic” parents, as she describes them, Alexa showcases the same energy as a fearless artist unafraid to experiment and emit a multitude of emotion, offering a mix of hard-hitting rock and a nostalgic ballad inspired by the 1960s, with the first tracks released: “Riverside Way” and “Heavy Eyes.”

We asked her about her inspirations and bold directions behind her captivating collection of songs.

**Can you share a little about the themes and musical direction of your five-song EP, “Tales From A Winding Tower”?**

This record came about very organically for me, with each song having its own distinctive style, sound, and musical influences. No two songs are alike on this EP... it ranges from a hard-charging, edgy sound like my first single “Riverside Way,” to a nostalgic ’60s torch song like “Heavy Eyes,” my newest single.

As the EP continues to rollout with waterfall releases (putting out one single at a time), I’m hoping there is something for everyone on this record, as it is my musically-eclectic way of paying tribute to a myriad of my most beloved artists — from current songwriters to iconic muses of a bygone era — such as Irma Thomas, Etta James, Ronnie Spector, Dionne Warwick. As the record progresses further, it delves into a theatrical hymn-like ballad and more of a ’90s experimental sound reminiscent of my favorite Lilith Fair female singer-songwriters. The underlying themes that tie each colorfully differing song together are fantasy, escapism, and desire.

**Your first single, “Riverside Way,” takes your music and lyrics in a bold new direction. How would you describe the sound and mood of this release compared to your earlier work?**

“Riverside Way” is a complete departure from anything I’ve ever explored or written before. I wanted to take listeners by surprise while also challenging myself to write a much edgier, darker, hard-hitting rock song that’s entirely contrary to the romantic “soft-girl” songs that I’ve previously released. It was a really fun and spontaneous process writing this song; it came about very naturally, I was just sitting in the bath one night, thinking about a fantasy of an innocent girl meeting a bad boy

and speeding down a highway — which I initially thought would be Riverside Drive (the NYC avenue) but “drive” didn’t sing nearly as smoothly as “way”... hence “Riverside Way.” I think it’s so important for artists to take risks and step outside their comfort zones, both musically and aesthetically. This fiery banger was my way of showing listeners that I’m not afraid to dive into new terrain, both as a songwriter and in terms of my persona. As someone who has always been known to the public as a “good girl,” “the good daughter,” I thought it was important to shed that skin, and step into my alter-ego as an adventurous vixen who throws caution to the wind! The narrative underpinning of this song is about a girl who becomes so immersed in the flames of her own desire that she ultimately ends up drowning in a fantasy that can’t be fully realized in reality.

**What’s the story or emotion you hope people will walk away with after listening?**

I think the inherent beauty of music is that it’s deeply personal to every individual — each listener will get something different out of every song on this record. I do feel that “Tales From A Winding Tower” will be especially relatable to late bloomers, like myself, who are perhaps finding themselves whilst in the throes of experiencing desire, lust, love, heartbreak, success, and are still on the path to fully realizing their dreams...

and how to bring them to fruition. I want listeners to take away a multitude of emotions from this record, as each song carries its own unique story and melodic undertones: from the lusty-intensity of “Riverside Way,” to the nostalgically sentimental sweetness of “Heavy Eyes,” to much intimately darker notes as the record continues to unfold; I think every listener will find a song on this EP that resonates with their own identity and style.

**Your second single, “Heavy Eyes,” is a musical love letter to the ’60s and pays tribute to some of your favorite female singers from that era. Can you talk a little about those who have inspired you on this track and how that inspiration influenced its direction?**

I grew up as a child with my ever-prolific father, who would play the piano while I sang to the iconic classic tunes of the 1960s, notably: “Anyone Who Had A Heart,” sung by Dionne Warwick, and written by Burt Bacharach, “Under The Boardwalk” by The Drifters, “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow,” sung by The Shirelles and written by the great Carole King, and “At Last,” one of my favorite torch songs with a knockout vocal delivery by Etta James, and last, but not least, the incomparable songs of my ’60s muse, Ronnie Spector. Specifically, I wanted to mimic a definitive musical style from the 1960s called “The Wall

of Sound,” which was made popular back in the day by Ronnie Spector’s producer and husband, Phil Spector. The effect it had on her records was genius... and to my ears as a songwriter, it truly defined the optimal sound of that era. It made the orchestral parts on her records sound both denser and richer at the same time. My father also paid tribute to “The Wall of Sound” with a few of his own songs — most notably his sorely underrated ballad “Until The Night,” and one of his greatest tunes “Say Goodbye To Hollywood,” which was an intentionally derivative and stylistically masterful tribute to Ronnie Spector. I was thinking about both Pop’s uncanny interpretations, and those of the golden era, when I wrote “Heavy Eyes”... which is my musical love-letter to the swingin’ ’60s.

**You described “Heavy Eyes” as a bright spot on the record. Can you describe how the track blends sweetness and fire?**

With “Heavy Eyes,” I really wanted to add a bright spot on this record, and it is by far the most uplifting “sparkling” track amidst more shadowy, darker undertones. I specifically wanted to evoke the musical style of “torch songs”: notably romantic and angsty ballads, complemented with rich orchestration and soulful vocal lines. Usually, a torch song is known for its pulsating chords, and you’re going to hear that palpably nostalgic sound featured definitively throughout this song. Musically and lyrically, it’s a bygone mix of lustful and sugary innocence. There’s an ingénue quality to “Heavy Eyes,” as it’s reminiscent of a simpler time, but it gets more sultry and fiery as the song continues to build with a gradually heightening intensity. I wanted to play with that mix of sweetness and fire, also known as sugar and spice. We’re living in such a complicated era right now, and I really wanted to bring what feels like some much-needed light and fun to the world. This song is my way of being a little more playful, coy, and flirtatious... and it’s delivered with a wink and a smile.

**Your songs convey a great deal of heart and honesty. Is it ever challenging to share something so personal with an audience?**

Honestly? It has never been a challenge for me to reveal my deepest, innermost thoughts and feelings through my art. As a creative, it has always felt quite natural to me; it’s my go-to outlet as someone who has always felt an inherent need to express myself artistically. I think our society far too often idealizes suppressing emotion... and as a non-conformist, I’ve always taken great issue with that. I think it’s so important for anyone and everyone to find a meaningful, positive, and productive way to express themselves — because we’re all a colorful and complex mix of emotions, instincts, subtle nuances, unsaid thoughts, desires, and longings. Personally speaking, as an angsty gal myself, I’ve never been afraid of admitting that. You could say I’m highly “pro-emotion” on principle — as both a songwriter, and just a human being.

I think it also influenced me to be a little more on the eccentric and creative side, having two such vivacious and wonderfully artistic parents, who are both real characters and storytellers in their own right. Growing up with them, we were always putting on musicals and having sing-a-longs, doing impersonations, and just hamming it up! So naturally, I came to appreciate celebrating music and the arts in the most vulnerable, expressive, and transparent ways possible — and I gotta say: what’s better than creating, singing, and making music for a living? I can only hope that it also helps to make the world a more beautiful, heartfelt, and honest place.

**Are there any upcoming performances we should keep an eye out for?**

I wish I could give you some dates now! But in all honesty, I’m just about to start putting my live band together in early December, with my amazing musical director, Tony Bruno. I think the goal for me as a live performer is to get the sound as close to the tracks on my record as possible — both musically and instrumentally, while also playing with that raw spontaneity and audience connection that can only come in the spur of the moment. Stay tuned on my Instagram @alexarayjoel for teasers, updates, music clips, writings, and all of my favorite things... I’m always sharing everything there!



Photos by Madison Fender

# James Lane Post x RGNY Collaborate On Limited-Edition Wines

In a blend of artistry and camaraderie, James Lane Post has partnered with RGNY to create two limited-edition wines. The collaboration embodies the spirit of friendship, creativity, and a shared passion for exceptional wine from the acclaimed North Fork vineyard.

The idea was sparked during an RGNY create-your-own-blend event at Aldo’s Coffee in Greenport. James Lane Post participated and created a “James Lane Blend” — a concept our teams would build on over the next few months.

The limited-edition collection features two unique, sustainably produced wines: a summer rosé and a Bordeaux-style red blend. Each bottle is adorned with artwork from Verona Peñalba, whose “Rosa Indica” series beautifully intertwines the human form with delicate botanical illustrations. The artwork pays homage to nature, emotion, and the fleeting moments we share.

The collaboration marries art and agriculture. The “Rosa Indica” artwork enhances each bottle, transforming it from just wine into a vessel of artistic expression. Peñalba’s romantic botanical collages complement the wines perfectly, making each pour a celebration of artistry and taste.

“Collages are also a collaboration between images. In this piece, the flower and the figures — each exuding confidence, elegance,



and beauty — create the most essential pairing,” said Verona.

The 2023 Scielo Red Blend offers a supple, well-balanced blend of Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Malbec. This wine is designed for lingering conversations and timeless nights, embodying the spirit of friendship and shared moments. Perfect for the holidays and the colder months in New York, tasting notes include a bright bramble berry front surrounded by earthy tones and black tea. It pairs well with steak, braised lamb, and caldo de res.

Meanwhile, the 2024 James Lane Post x RGNY Scielo Summer Rosé is a bright, elegant blend of Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec. Crafted to capture the essence of a North Fork summer, it promises to be the perfect companion for warm evenings and lively gatherings. With a maturation of four months in stainless steel, this wine has a light body, crisp acidity, and a refreshing finish. Notes of fresh strawberries, raspberry tart, and Bing cherries dance on the palate. Some optimal pairings include grilled chicken, ceviche, and charcuterie.

The family-owned vineyard, operated by the Rivero González family, honors quality and innovation and celebrates its Mexican heritage. The family planted its first vines in Parras, Coahuila, Mexico, in 1998 and launched RGNY on Long Island in 2019.



Photo by Estefany Molina

This collaboration exemplifies how art, wine, and good company can come together in a bottle. Whether enjoyed in quiet reflection or lively celebration, these limited-edition wines celebrate connection, creativity, and the joy of life.

Available at [RGNYwine.com](https://rgnywine.com) or ask for it at the RGNY Tasting Room.

# Vino la Navidad

## Sip, Create, & Connect With RGNY

By Kelly Alvarez

The holidays on the North Fork are nothing short of magical. Glittering lights along Main Road, cozy tasting rooms warmed by the hum of laughter, and that unmistakable crisp air that smells faintly of pine and sea salt. But there’s one vineyard that consistently takes this seasonal splendor to the next level, blending culture, community, and craftsmanship into every glass poured and every event hosted, and that’s RGNY.

This family-owned and operated vineyard, rooted in both the beauty of the North Fork and the richness of Mexican heritage, has created a brand that feels effortlessly on trend yet deeply meaningful. From the moment you step onto the property, you can sense that RGNY isn’t just making wine; they’re curating an experience. This season, their event lineup celebrates not just the holidays, but also to-

getherness, creativity, and community.

“This holiday season, we invite you to join us for a weekend-long celebration amongst family and friends,” shared the RGNY team. “Whether it be a Christmas Dinner benefiting OLA of Eastern Long Island, a Brunch with Santa, Wreathmaking with Hometown Flower Co., building gingerbread houses, or crafting your own holiday red blend, we hope to cultivate a sense of belonging and extend the table for all who seek it, innovating toward a more sustainable world for our community.”

And that’s exactly what they’re doing. RGNY’s Vino la Navidad celebrations are a spirited invitation to sip, create, and connect.

RGNY’s Holiday Weekend Celebration, held December 12 to 14, is packed with festive

activations. On Friday, December 12, holiday baskets are 50 percent off, and there’s a creative Holiday Happy Hour with VEME. On Saturday, December 13, there will be Gingerbread House Decorating, a Wine Club Pick-Up Party, and a pay-what-you-wish Community Dinner benefiting OLA. On Sunday, December 14, enjoy Santa Brunch a la Mexicana and Wreathmaking with Hometown Flower Co.

Sweeten your season with the hands-on gingerbread workshop, the perfect way to mix sugar, sparkle, and sips. Whether you’re gathering your friend group for a festive happy hour or spending Sunday afternoon with family, this is where imagination and icing meet vineyard charm.

If you’ve ever dreamed of being a winemaker, here’s your chance. RGNY’s Create Your Own Holiday Blend experience lets you craft and bottle your own red blend, a personal touch to share or keep. Guided by a wine expert, you’ll experiment with varietals like Petit Verdot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot, while nibbling on artisanal snacks.

And if you can’t make it to the vineyard? The Blending Session in a Box brings the experience to you, a beautifully packaged kit complete with tasting tools, a bottle of Scielo Tinto, and everything you need to blend from home or gift to a fellow wine lover.

For a more relaxed gathering, RGNY’s Holiday Happy Hour is the answer. Designed for offices, friend groups, or anyone looking to toast the season, this two-hour tasting room experience includes wine (or beer and non-alcoholic options), guacamole, tacos,



Photo by Estefany Molina

churros, and a bottle of Tinto to take home — wrapped and ready to gift.

Few things bring people together like food and purpose. The Dinner Navideño is a heartfelt celebration of community and connection, benefiting OLA of Eastern Long Island, an organization that empowers Latino communities across the East End. Every glass poured supports meaningful change, a true embodiment of the RGNY spirit.

For families, Brunch con Santa blends holiday magic with vineyard elegance. Kids can meet Santa and nibble on festive treats, while adults enjoy Scielo mimosas and a relaxed, joyful ambiance that feels authentically North Fork, with just the right hint of Mexican flair.

Creativity blooms at RGNY’s Wreathmaking Workshop, where guests craft their own festive wreaths using fresh, local greens. With a glass of wine in hand and charcuterie by your side, this workshop captures the essence of cozy, hands-on holiday joy.

As the RGNY team so perfectly puts it, “As we gather with our loved ones this season, we celebrate another year of achievements and look forward to what’s ahead. It’s a moment to reflect on our origins, honor the diverse voices that shape RG, and set the tone for the New Year. Vino is the gateway, and RG is the journey.”

Vino la Navidad cheers to new memories, new blends, and new beginnings on the North Fork.

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**290 Montauk Hwy, East Hampton**  
Prime Restaurant Compound on Montauk Highway.  
Modern Renovations + Ancillary Flex Use Building.



**32 Lighthouse Rd, Hampton Bays**  
Waterfront Restaurant & 13-Key Resort.  
Incredible Sunset Views Over Shinnecock Bay.



**363 Beach Rd, Hampton Bays**  
Waterfront Hospitality Venue With Sweeping Ocean  
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**53 N Sea Rd, Southampton**  
Highly Visible Southampton Freestanding Building.  
Office District Zoning with Grandfathered Retail Use.



**23 Bridge St, Sag Harbor**  
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# Luann de Lesseps

## Cabaret, RHONY, & Always Being Cool

By Jessica Mackin-Cipro



Luann de Lesseps has worn many hats, from being a Countess to a cabaret star and an original member of the “Real Housewives of New York” cast. We had the pleasure of interviewing her to learn more about her journey. Fans can see her perform in the “A Very Countess Christmas Cabaret Show” at Sony Hall on December 22 and 23.

**You’ve worn many hats nurse, Countess, Real Housewife, cabaret star. How do you believe each role has shaped your career?**

I’ve learned so much from each chapter in my life. I wouldn’t take any of it for granted.

I still am a nurse; I keep up with my license, and I’m proud of that. Shout out to all the nurses out there. Thank you for what you do. I’ve loved my days on television. They started out in Italy and have led me all the way here. Without the housewives, there would be no cabaret. And let me tell you, life is a cabaret.

**Cabaret has become such a signature part of your career. What draws you to that particular form of performance?**

I love storytelling, which is why I love Cabaret. It’s all about finding the perfect story that goes along with the perfect song. I love

comedy, and that ties right in as well. I’ve got a few shows coming up in NYC in December for the holidays! Check out countessluann.com for tickets. I’m also working on a new tour, all about love and the love hotel. A lot of people don’t realize each tour has all-new songs and stories to fit the theme. You’ll never see the same show — it’s always a different experience.

**Has there been a moment on stage that has felt the most transformative for you?**

Having Tilda Swinton surprise and introduce me on stage was pretty transformative. I mean, how iconic is that?! I’ll cherish that moment forever.

**What advice would you give your younger self, stepping into that very first season of “RHONY”?**

Be cool, don’t be like all uncool. I tell every young person to remember to stay true to themselves — don’t take yourself too seriously. There is no more yesterday, there’s no tomorrow, there’s only today. And we must live in the now. And remember, even Louis Vuitton makes mistakes.

**Can you talk about some of the philanthropic foundations you support and the reasons they are important to you?**

I support a great amount of LGBTQ+ foundations. Most recently, HMI. The LGBTQ+ community has always had my back, and I will always have theirs. I also love Gods Love We Deliver. I try to help out there whenever I can. It’s so important to give back to our community and raise awareness.

**When you’re not performing or filming, what does a day in the Hamptons look like?**

Oh, you will find me on my boat. That is my happy place! Then lunch at some of my favorite spots with my favorite girls. We love Le Bilboquet, American Hotel, Dopo, Tutto. The list goes on. I often go to Salt on Shelter Island. I love the city, but the Hamptons is my home.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



**EXHIBITION**  
NOVEMBER 15, 2025-JANUARY 4, 2026  
**STUDENT ART FESTIVAL:  
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**KIDS & FAMILIES**  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1-4 PM  
**HOLIDAY COOKIE  
DECORATING OPEN STUDIO  
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**OPERA**  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1-5 PM  
**THE MET: LIVE IN HD—  
ANDREA CHÉNIER**



**COMMUNITY WORKSHOP**  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 6-8 PM  
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Uxmal. Photos by Doug Young



Casa Montejo 495 Museum.

# Mérida

## Where History Breathes: The White City In Full Color

By Doug Young

The moment you arrive in Mérida, the Yucatán’s vibrant capital, its ancient heritage commands a slower pace of life. A deep sense of history presses in from the colonial stone and ochre architecture, inviting you to imagine the lives held within these grand, sun-drenched façades.

Mérida carries a weight of time that few other places in Mexico can match. Established in 1542, it was built directly atop the ancient Mayan city of T’hó, creating a place where two distinct histories are permanently fused. As you walk the grid of downtown streets, the modern world melts away, replaced by the sounds of horse-drawn carriages and the shadows of ornate cathedrals and palaces built by conquistadors using stones pillaged from Mayan temples. This unique cultural layering gives the city an unmistakable, almost aristocratic atmosphere, earning it the nickname, “The White City.”

But don’t let the formal architecture fool you. Mérida’s authentic charm lies in its color — the incredible range of turquoise, terracotta, and sunshine yellow splashed across every corner. From the brightly painted colonial doors that hide lush, private courtyards to the elaborate tiles underfoot, the palette here tells a story of energy and resilience. Every stroll through a neighborhood reveals an aesthetic of effortless elegance, reminding you that this city is not just a relic of the past, but a living, breathing, and very stylish metropolis that thrives on its unique heritage.

This elegance is not by accident — it is the result of a decades-long movement that rescued historic buildings and reinterpreted the Colonial aesthetic for modern life. This trend gained serious momentum in the 1990s with pioneers who recognized the architectural potential of the neglected landmark center. This revival, spearheaded by designers and architects from Mexico City and local Yucatecans, has transformed it back into a vibrant, highly desired residential area. This conscious effort to rescue and preserve these structures, using traditional materials like pasta tiles and chukum stucco (a plaster made from native tree bark), gives Mérida its current identity: an architectural oasis where history actively lives.

### The Heart Of The City: Culture & Exploration

Mérida’s perfect grid makes navigation simple, but the best way to truly grasp the city is through deep, observant wandering down its quiet side streets. Here, history breathes through the very pores of the limestone walls, and the intense Meridana light excavates the faded grandeur of a bygone era. It’s in the quiet pause of the afternoon heat — a collective intake of breath — that the city reawakens for the cool evening. This quiet exploration can reveal true architectural

gems, such as El Pinar on Calle 60, whose pastel pink, castle-like façade stands as a stunning reminder of Mérida’s golden era.

The Plaza Grande is the indisputable heart of the city, framed by the oldest cathedral in the Americas and the pistachio-green Government Palace (Palacio de Gobierno). While there, take a moment to step inside the Palace to witness the powerful “History of Yucatán” murals by Yucatecan artist Fernando Castro Pacheco, a collection of 27 massive oil paintings that vividly narrate the region’s complex cultural history.

The grand Paseo de Montejo, Mérida’s answer to the Champs-Élysées, is lined with stunning, European-style mansions built during the opulent henequen (sisal) boom of the late 19th century. Landmarks such as the Palacio Cantón, a gorgeous 1909 neoclassical mansion that now houses the Museo Regional de Antropología and features over 1,000 artifacts of Maya culture, define this historic boulevard. Tucked among these historic façades, you’ll find a constant interplay with the present day: modern gems like Clandestino Café offer exceptional quality coffee and a delightful selection of baked goods, and Posheria is a unique concept shop featuring crafts from indigenous Mayan communities and the traditional corn drink, Pox. These vibrant establishments beautifully illustrate the city’s current design renaissance, offering a moment of calm contemplation before you step back out into the street life.

### Where To Stay: Your Home Base In The Centro

To truly experience the soul of Mérida, you must live within its walls. The following two

examples beautifully showcase the distinct styles of accommodation driving the city’s architectural revival.

Casa Goliana (Full Home Rental): The pinnacle of this residential revival, Casa Goliana is a complete house rental that perfectly blends tradition and modernity. A collaboration between Workshop Design + Construction and Laseu Studio, the Porfiriato-era house retains historic pasta tile floors and chukum-finished walls while seamlessly adding contemporary functionality. Warm, tsalam-wood and new glass doors open the dining room fully onto the outdoor lounge and lap pool, creating a stunning, private urban oasis. To check availability for this lovely property, visit [casagoliana.com/merida](http://casagoliana.com/merida).

Hotel Chariot (Boutique Hotel): Situated in a prime location directly on the iconic Paseo de Montejo Avenue, Hotel Chariot provides an unbeatable base, making it an ideal choice for solo travelers and digital nomads. Situated just steps from the elegant Casa Montejo 495 Museum, an architectural landmark renowned for its original French-inspired decor and 16 majestic Carrara marble columns, the hotel’s most welcome feature is its outdoor, rooftop pool, providing a refreshing and cooling refuge from the intense afternoon heat. Guests can also enjoy dining at Diego’s restaurant, conveniently located off the lobby. Book your stay at [hotelchariotmerida.com/hotel](http://hotelchariotmerida.com/hotel).

### Dining: Pancho Maíz And The Soul Of Regional Crops

In Mérida, the heart of the Yucatecan kitchen lies in the reverence for its essential ingredients, especially the native corn that connects the present day to the Mayan

past. A prime example is Pancho Maíz, a beloved gem in the Mejorada neighborhood that serves as both a restaurant and a corn producer. In an uncovered colonial corner house that tastefully highlights its architectural details, Mexico City-born chef and owner Xóchitl Valdés celebrates the native culinary heritage. As she explained, “We source our corn exclusively from various locations on the peninsula. Using local corn was a tradition that had long fallen out of use.” Every dish here is a testament to the time-intensive process of nixtamalization, transforming heirloom corn into freshly made masa. The savory menu features red corn flautas filled with quesoillo (raw milk cheese), hibiscus tostadas with plantain and mole, and exquisite enmoladas (mole thickened with fruit, fresh cheese, and soft-boiled egg). Even the desserts are inventive and unique: a pixtle milk tiramisu (with cold brew and vanilla bean pâte à bombe) and a delicate red plum tres leches with vanilla bean cream. The reverence for this traditional process ultimately creates a dining experience that feels like a vital bridge between the Mayan past and the city’s vibrant present. Visit [panchomaizmx.com/en\\_in](http://panchomaizmx.com/en_in).

### Excursions: Beyond The White City

While Mérida’s center offers endless exploration, a truly essential side trip is venturing south to visit one of the grand old estates that shaped the region’s wealth: Hacienda Yaxcopoil (YASH-coh-poh-EEL). This 17th-century plantation embodies the full sweep of Yucatán history, from the Mayan ruins that gave it its name to the Spanish colonial era and the opulent henequen (sisal) boom of the late 19th century.



El Pinar.



Casa Goliana.



Easily accessible on the highway en route to Uxmal, Yaxcopoil has been meticulously maintained, unlike many haciendas that have fallen into ruin, offering a preserved glimpse into a bygone era. You can wander through the main house (casa principal) with its original European furnishings, tour the Maya Room museum, and explore the vast former processing areas that showcase the sheer scale of the region's century of sisal production. Visiting Yaxcopoil is a mandatory stop in history, offering crucial context for the architectural revival evident in the city today.

Following the hacienda route south leads you to Uxmal, the other mandatory pilgrimage outside Mérida, often lauded as the superior archaeological experience to the more famous, but frequently overrun, Chichén Itzá. Where Chichén Itzá focuses on warfare and commerce, Uxmal is a place of symmetry, silence, and soul. It embodies the height of the Puuc architectural style (pronounced Pooch), known for its ornate, geometric friezes and incredible preservation. Dedicated primarily to the rain god Chaac — whose masks cover the famous Pyramid of the Magician and the Nunnery Quadrangle — the entire site feels profoundly connected to the spiritual world. If you arrive early, the perfectly preserved structures invite contemplation, and the experience of wandering the deserted courtyards honestly borders on the mystical, allowing you to feel the presence of the civilization that constructed this majestic city.

For a complete change of pace and an escape from the city heat, head due north to Progreso, Mérida's laid-back coastal port. The area centers on the walkable Malecón, a waterfront promenade lined with shops and vendors. Its charm unfolds throughout the day: venture out early to see local fishermen cleaning their catch, rent a beach chair in the afternoon to relax and swim in the calm, turquoise waters, and return in the evening for sunset views of the famous

Progreso pier. Head a block inland to browse colorful fruit markets before settling in for dinner. For a specific, authentic recommendation, seek out Restaurante Boulevard 21 on Calle 80. This local gem is renowned for its friendly staff and affordable prices, offering stunning balcony



views of the Malecón while serving fresh, flavorful local specialties, such as ceviche mixto and excellent mojitos.

After exploring beyond its walls, Mérida reveals itself not just as a city, but as a constant, beautiful conversation between

deep history and a vibrant present. That stays with you long after you've left the heat and light of the Yucatán behind.

Keep Discovering Mexico

For deeper travel tips, curated insights, and

a focus on the most authentic, beautiful, and useful sides of Mexico — from hidden spots to daily rituals — visit The Local MX. The English-language Substack (@thelocalmx) connects travelers, expats, and culture lovers alike. Find them on X/Instagram: @thelocalmx\_



# Experience Luxury & Wellness At Lefay Resort & Spa Lago di Garda

## Year-Round Elegance & Spa Bliss

By Jessica Mackin-Cipro



Enjoy breathtaking views and indulge in the state-of-the-art spa and fine dining at Lefay Resort & SPA Lago di Garda in Italy. It's a perfect destination all year, thanks to the Mediterranean microclimate and easy access from Milan and Verona.

Lefay Resorts & Residences originated from the vision of entrepreneurs Domenico Alcide and Liliana Leali, who aimed to develop luxury wellness vacations by establishing a collection of eco-resorts. The flagship property, Lefay Resort & SPA Lago di Garda, launched in 2008 in Garegnano, and is recognized as one of the world's leading spa destinations.

While Italy's Lake Como has often been the star of the show, nearby Lake Garda is quietly emerging as a destination for travelers seeking a luxury stay with fewer crowds, relaxed and authentic Italian culture, and year-round

appeal. Lefay is leading the charge as one of the few luxury resorts on the lake that remains open throughout all four seasons.

While summer is undoubtedly a wonderful time to visit, guests can also enjoy the benefits of the off-season, including seasonal experiences such as viewing the golden foliage, wine or olive oil tastings, touring the La Malora Lemon House in Gargnano, and exploring festive Christmas markets.

With wellness travel on the rise, the property offers health-forward holidays with a variety of options. You can enjoy a relaxed visit, melt into one of the spa's cutting-edge treatments, bask in the views of your stunning accommodations, and explore the property and lakeside villages. Alternatively, you can opt for a more structured visit, where a medical expert can create a personalized wellness program tailored to your needs to follow during your stay.



inspired cuisine is served, giving a modern twist to Italian classics.

The fine-dining option at Lefay, Gramen, features a terrace overlooking the lake with a spectacular view, and its concept, created by Michelin-starred Executive Chef Matteo Maenza, is based on the Mediterranean diet. The energy, the therapeutic garden, and the aquatic world that surround the restaurant inspire each of the two tasting menus.

While visiting Lake Garda, be sure to visit the old-world villages nestled into the lake-side's rolling hills. You can also enjoy a high concentration of Michelin-star restaurants, including Vecchia Malcesine, Nin Restaurant in Brenzone sul Garda, and Lido 84 in Fasano del Garda. In the spring, enjoy the area's annual Lemon Festival, a celebration of the region's citrus heritage with tastings, workshops, and garden tours. The festival showcases the history and traditions of the area's citrus industry and its historic lemon houses, dating back to the 13th century.

This fall, the Autumn Rebalance offer is available from October 1 to December 18 with rates starting at € 590 per person, for two nights, double occupancy, and includes a stay in a 538-square-foot Prestige Junior Suite, daily buffet breakfast at La Limonaia Restaurant, a mountain salt and extra-virgin olive oil body scrub, a NanoViTM cell regeneration treatment, and a BIO Lefay SPA detoxifying massage La Luce Oltre la Nebbia.

The resort also offers a Christmas Special — a magical three nights of culinary indulgence and spa pampering. Available from the arrival dates of December 22, 23, or 24, rates start from € 965 per person, double occupancy, and include three night's accommodation in a Prestige Junior Suite, buffet breakfast, Christmas Eve dinner, and Christmas lunch at La Limonaia Restaurant, a Lefay SPA massage with winter essences, and a session in the salt-water pool La Luna nel Lago.

Lefay SPA offers access to 46,300 square feet of pools, saunas, a fitness center, and relaxation areas. Its spa method pillars, five principles on which the health programs are based, guide the treatments and programming.

These pillars include a medical energy examination, where the energy doctor will conduct an assessment using both Eastern and Western principles, consistent with the philosophy of the Lefay SPA Method. Treatments from Chinese and Western traditions aim to reactivate energy channels and rebalance the energy of body and mind. Holistic disciplines and breathing offer physical and energy rebalancing activities, such as Qi Gong and Meridian Stretching. The Lefay SPA Method also incorporates the oldest form of phytotherapy into its programs: herbal tea. Nutrition plays a fundamental role in preventive medicine, and the Lefay SPA menu is a detoxifying and moderately low-calorie dietary approach designed to ensure an adequate energy supply

through carefully selected foods. Lefay Spa's medical experts, along with a team of specialists, have also composed music exclusively for guests, utilizing multiples of eight hertz (the frequency of the Earth). These frequencies can rebalance and harmonize the biophysical body.

Adding to its year-round appeal, Lefay recently introduced five Sky Pool Villas — including residential-style two- and three-bedroom villas and a penthouse, each featuring a private spa, infinity pool, and full access to the resort's acclaimed amenities.

With a growing number of Michelin-starred restaurants, Lake Garda is also an increasingly attractive destination for culinary travelers, and Lefay offers a superb selection of dining options on the property. Light and airy in design, La Limonaia restaurant evokes the traditional lemon-houses around Lake Garda. Here, health-conscious Mediterranean-

Bridgehampton  
Chamber Music  
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# Holiday Indulgences

## Wine, Chocolate & Fragrance: A Holiday Gift Guide For The Senses



Altaia's eau de parfum WOO(E)D, is a woody, citrusy, spicy cardamom scent that adds subtle sweetness. For both men and women. \$255  
Beautyhabit.com



New York Cocktail Company has created the ultimate ready-to-serve cocktail gift box, crafted by NYC's top bartenders. \$79



Celebrate the season in grand style with MarieBelle New York's 2025 Holiday Collection, a 36-piece chocolate ganache. \$115



Spread cheer with a festive 12-piece box of chocolates from Disset Chocolate in Cutchogue.



Macari Vineyards' Bergen Road. \$75  
Photo by Carl Timpone



The James Lane Post x RGNy's 2023 Scielo Red Blend is a supple, balanced mix of Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot, and Malbec, crafted for lingering conversations and timeless evenings. Available at RGNywine.com or ask for it at the RGNy Tasting Room. \$38



Experience a truly exceptional organoleptic profile in this rare, mature cuvée with Sparkling Pointe's 2014 Brut Seduction. \$70



Wölfer's Summer in a Bottle Winter-Edition Rosé is wrapped in festive, alpine-inspired artwork. \$27

# James Lane<sup>®</sup> POST

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## Editor's Note

Welcome to the pages of our 5th anniversary issue. We are thrilled to have singer Alexa Ray Joel as our cover for this milestone edition. We can't believe five years have gone so quickly, and how different the world was when we first began. When we launched James Lane Post in November of 2020, we were in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This month, we hosted a James Lane weekend in Southampton, where hundreds of guests gathered to celebrate art, fashion, dining, wellness, and community. I can't help but think about how far we've come.

Community has always been a top priority for us. We learn as we grow, and at our core, we aim to showcase uplifting, positive content that supports the many businesses, people, and organizations within this vibrant community and any other region we cover through travel. We'll always keep this as the foundation of what we do.

Thank you to our team, advertisers, supporters, collaborators, and anyone who has picked up a copy to read over coffee.

Jessica Mackin-Cipro  
Editor-in-Chief,  
James Lane Post



James Lane Post's Holiday 2020 issue.

# A James Lane Weekend

## Cookbook Authors Brunch, Palette To Palate Dinner, & Wellness Programming At WAVE



Jessica Mackin-Cipro, Isadora Capraro, Georgia Suter, Kara Hoblin, Paul Brooke, Scott Bludorn, Verona Peñalba.

James Lane Post and Southampton Inn presented the second annual James Lane Fest — an exciting weekend right in the heart of Southampton Village, packed with experiences in culinary, art, fashion, and wellness.

The weekend kicked off on Saturday, November 1, with a Cookbook Authors Brunch & Signing with celebrity chefs Lidia Bastianich, Palak Patel, and Joni Brosnan, hosted by James Lane Post Editor-At-Large Bridget LeRoy.

LeRoy introduced the chefs during brunch. Following the brunch, guests had the opportunity to purchase books and have them signed by the authors. Guests also enjoyed wines from James Lane Post’s recent wine collaboration with RGNy on the North Fork and a gift bag from Bed-side Reading.

During brunch, trunk shows by Mama Ayni Collective and Andeana Hats took place, and Disset Chocolate had a table with chocolates available for purchase.

On Sunday, November 2, guests joined James Lane Post for a Signature WAVE Wellness Class in Southampton led by Lisa Zaloga, followed by a discussion with wellness founders Stephanie Esposito and Lisa Zaloga of WAVE Wellness, Amanda Duckstein of Shadowbox Pilates, and Andrea Fornarola of Elements Fitness Studio, moderated by wellness advocate and digital media entrepreneur Vanessa Steil.

Attendees enjoyed a signature WAVE Length class, WAVE’s first-ever mat class dedicated entirely to recovery. This transformative group session is designed to help you recharge, repair, and feel your best. Guests enjoyed a thoughtfully sequenced series of full-body stretches, performed on WAVE’s cutting-edge PEMF Infrared mats, each packed with advanced wellness technology.

Panelists discussed what inspired each of them to start their wellness brands, how they found their niche and differentiated their offerings, the role of inclusivity in their wellness brands, and much more.

A Palette to Palate artists’ dinner curated by Kara Hoblin of North Fork Art Collective was held on Sunday,

November 2, at the Southampton Inn.

The inventive and educational six-course dinner featured dishes inspired by artworks, paired with each course, created by Chef Michael Jeanty and Chef Joe Cipro, with dessert by Ursula XVII of Disset Chocolate. This series allows the chefs to create dishes based on the art — a continuous connection of inspiration and creativity.

The show featured a mix of original North Fork Art Collective members and new artists. All of the artists — including Scott Bludorn, Verona Peñalba, Isadora Capraro, Georgia Suter, Paul Brooke, Daniel Jones, and Kara Hoblin — call the East End home or have spent a significant amount of time on the forks.

Guests were the first to enjoy wine from RGNy’s recent wine collaboration with James Lane Post, which features artwork by Verona Peñalba on the bottle.

The evening began with a welcome cocktail, a Blueberry Thyme Vodka Fizz garnished with a gooseberry, created using Simple Vodka, and paired with artwork by Daniel Jones.

The meal began with two dishes prepared by Chef Joe Cipro: tuna tataki with purple potato cracker, puffed vermicelli, shiso, white soy, and finger lime, paired with artwork by Paul Brooke; and grilled oysters with warm horseradish cream, crispy prosciutto, black garlic, and chive, paired with artwork by Scott Bludorn.

Chef Michael Jeanty, the Executive Chef at Claude’s at the Southampton Inn, included a grilled shrimp with preserved lemon puree and leek ash, paired with artwork by Georgia Suter; olive oil-poached halibut with roasted fennel, beurre blanc, and an herb oil, paired with artwork by Verona Peñalba; and a pistachio-crusted duck breast with butternut squash, braised endive, and huckleberry gastrique, paired with artwork by Isadora Capraro.

The meal concluded with a warm chocolate olive oil cake prepared by Ursula XVII of Disset Chocolate in Cutchogue, paired with artwork by Kara Hoblin.

Photos by Madison Fender & Guisela Corado



Artwork by Scott Bludorn, Georgia Suter, Verona Peñalba, and Isadora Capraro.



Artwork by Paul Brooke.



Pistachio-crusted duck breast by Chef Michael Jeanty.



Chef Michael Jeanty, Kara Hoblin, Jessica Mackin-Cipro, Joe Cipro, and Ursula XVII.



Tuna tataki by Chef Joe Cipro.



Estefany Molina, Verona Peñalba.



Olive oil-poached halibut paired with artwork by Verona Peñalba.



Grilled oysters by Chef Joe Cipro.



Joni Brosnan.



Lidia Bastianich.



Palak Patel.



Lidia Bastianich & Dede Gotthelf.



Chef Michael Jeanty & Lidia Bastianich.



Eugenia Valliades, Christine Prydatko, Jessica Mackin-Cipro.



Andrea Forradola, Amanda Duckstein, Vanessa Stell, Stephanie Eposito, and Lisa Zaloga.



Bridget LeRoy & Bill McCuddy.



Laura Grier & Abi Ferrin.



Warm chocolate olive oil cake by Ursula XVII of Disset Chocolate paired with artwork by Kara Hoblin.



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# The Winter Shops Return

## A Season Of Pop-Ups, Makers, & Local Energy In East Hampton

By Lisa Frohlich @hamptonsnystyle



*SewHampton, located at 79 Main Street, offers sewing classes and upcycling workshops. At left: Kathryn Reid, Anita Boyer, Lisa Frohlich, Kasia Klimiuk, Maggie Sheehan, and Lauren Martin combine forces to help support each other's Winter Shop.*

This winter, East Hampton Village is welcoming a new wave of creativity and community through The Anchor Society's Winter Shops Program. Now in its second year, the program has expanded from one pop-up shop to four, filling empty storefronts and bringing fresh energy to Main Street and Park Place. Each Winter Shop offers something unique, from sewing and sustainability to gathering, wellness, and the performing arts.

The collaboration with Alice + Olivia, which closes its East Hampton location each September and reopens in May, is a strategic fit. This winter, SewHampton and Our Fabulous Variety Show will take up residence in the Alice + Olivia space at 79 Main Street. Meanwhile, Naturally Good and Hedges Lane will join the Gathering Marketplace at 82 Park Place. I spoke with the owners of these new shops, Kathryn Reid, Anita Boyer, Kasia Klimiuk, Maggie Sheehan, Lauren Martin, and David Piacente, about their work, their inspiration, and what being part of The Winter Shops means for the village.

### Meet The Winter Shops:

#### SEWHAMPTON

**Tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.**

**KR:** SewHampton is a creative sewing studio offering private, semi-private, and group lessons for all ages and skill levels, as well as alterations, a much-needed service in the East Hampton area. Our mission is to make sewing accessible, inspiring, and fun, whether someone is learning the basics, exploring fashion, designing custom home décor, or bringing new life to favorite garments through mending or repurposing.

People are also welcome to bring their own sewing machines for a refresher, to ask basic questions, or even to get help troubleshooting. Sometimes, we can fix their machines right on the spot. What makes SewHampton unique is our blend of craftsmanship and community. We provide everything our students need — machines, tools, and materials, so they can simply show up and create. Each class and service is designed to build confidence, connection, and pride in the art of making something by hand.

**How are you adapting your products or approach to connect with the East Hampton winter community?**

**KR:** We've designed our classes and services to embrace the cozy, creative rhythm of the winter season. From Sip & Sew evenings and Sunday Fun Day family sessions to up-cycling workshops and home décor projects, our offerings invite people to gather, learn, and make something beautiful together. At the same time, our alterations service provides a practical, year-round benefit, helping residents refresh their wardrobes or refurbish existing pieces instead of replacing them. Sharing our studio space with Our Fabulous Variety Show at 79 Main Street allows us to create a dynamic environment where art, craft, and performance intersect in a truly community-centered way.

**Are there ways your shop gives back or supports other local makers, artists, or causes?**

**KR:** Community collaboration is at the heart of SewHampton. We regularly repurpose donated textiles, support local artists and artisans through partnerships, and collaborate with organizations that strengthen the creative economy here in East Hampton. We're especially grateful to The Anchor Society and Our Fabulous Variety Show for including us in this initiative and for their shared commitment to supporting local talent. Through our alterations and sewing services, we also promote sustainability, encouraging people to repair and reuse rather than discard.

#### OUR FABULOUS VARIETY SHOW

**Please tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.**

**AB & KK:** As the only nonprofit dance studio on the East End with a mission to make performing arts education and performances accessible to all, we run our programs differently from more traditional studios. We incorporate history to make sure we are teaching respect for the genre, as well as having fun dancing together. We do not have a strict dress code so we can promote body positivity. We offer classes for beginners at different ages to combat the stigma of thinking that if you didn't start at age three, it's "too late," and we offer myriad enrollment options as opposed to a mandatory full semester or year term. We offer drop-ins, one-off workshops, and masterclasses with professional dancers.

Our most unique program is our OFVS Crew, a youth development program that offers even more opportunities to meet kids from different schools, take classes in NYC, and see Broadway shows, and we even take our dancers

to perform in Disney World!

Along with our studio classes, we also run in-school and after-school programs in partnership with Project MOST, John M. Marshall Elementary, Ross, Hampton Bays Elementary, Southampton Elementary, the Southampton Youth Bureau, and on the North Fork with the Butterfly Effect Project, the North Fork Arts Center, with even more in the works!

**What inspired you to take part in the Winter Shops program, and what does this opportunity mean for your business during the off-season?**

**AB & KK:** We have been looking for our own studio space since 2019, and in January, we started working to find space in the village to have more exposure within the community. Anita was introduced to the Anchor Society by East Hampton Town Supervisor Kathee Burke-Gonzalez. In their initial Zoom, Anchor Society reps were really inspired by the OFVS mission and the work we do, and felt we would be a great fit. New students have already been flowing in for classes this semester, and over 700 kids came into the studio for Halloween trick-or-treating! We are excited for what's to come in these next few months as we utilize the pop-up space for unique community events and synergistic activations!

The space allows us to be creative with new programs we're excited to expand our offerings for adults in the community, including jazz, dance fitness, improv, and Latin dance!

**Are there ways your shop gives back or supports other local makers, artists, or causes?**

**AB & KK:** One of our honorees at the Disco Ball, Anthony Madonna (director and curator of performing arts at Guild Hall), said it best, "We all benefit when we live in a surplus mentality." We have always been about synergy and collaboration, and the entire setup with "The Studio on Main" (which we have lovingly named it) is exactly that!

We have partnered with Kathryn Reid and SewHampton in the space. Aside from running our programming in a shared setup, we are collaborating on community workshops and incorporating Kathryn's skills to bring sewing classes to our camps and provide proper costumes for our shows.

It's important to us to support businesses in our local community, and we have already felt an incredible outpouring from them since

moving in. We are stronger together, and our incredible grant-writer, Brienne Ahearn, always reminds us of the statistics and benefits to the community and to students when they have access to the arts. This move has been a lot of work and stress, but it means moving a huge step forward in our mission, and for that, we are truly grateful.

#### HEDGES LANE

**Tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.**

**MS:** Hedges Lane is rooted in a lifelong love of gathering. I come from a big family where every occasion — big or small — called for candles, a full table, and a little celebration. That spirit lives on in my shop, where I blend interior design and entertaining to celebrate the art of living through thoughtfully chosen tabletop pieces, party details, and favorite finds that make every moment and home feel elevated, warm, and inviting.

**What inspired you to take part in the Winter Shops program, and what does this opportunity mean for your business during the off-season?**

**MS:** After fun pop-ups in Amagansett, I dreamed of expanding Hedges Lane into a full shop, but high rents made that challenging. The Anchor Society Winter Shops program gives me the chance to grow my business while contributing to a vibrant, year-round community in East Hampton Village. Staying open during the off-season helps bring both my vision and the Anchor Society's to life — strengthening the local economy and creating a welcoming, mom-and-pop feel for locals and visitors alike.

**Are there ways your shop gives back or supports other local makers, artists, or causes?**

**MS:** I'm excited to connect and collaborate with local artists and makers to incorporate their work into Hedges Lane, both through my design projects and in the shop. I also plan to host small events that bring people together and strengthen our sense of community year-round.

#### NATURALLY GOOD

**Tell us a little about your business and what makes it unique.**

**LM & DP:** What makes our business

unique is our commitment to finding the best local, organic, and responsibly sourced products available. Our customers trust that we do the work to ensure everything we offer is healthy, nutritious, and thoughtfully selected. We also take pride in seeking out small, like-minded companies that share our values. The kind of brands you won't find on big-box store shelves. We love discovering those hidden gems and bringing them to our customers, creating a shopping experience that feels personal, intentional, and special. Together, Lauren and I bring over 25 years of combined experience in the culinary and nutrition fields, which shapes everything we do, from the products we choose to the way we connect with our community.

**What inspired you to take part in the Winter Shops program, and what does this opportunity mean for your business during the off-season?**

**LM & DP:** We were inspired by the dedication and vision of the Anchor Society, whose mission to keep East Hampton vibrant during the winter months truly resonated with us. Their commitment to fostering a year-round sense of community, ensuring locals have places to gather, shop, and connect, is something we deeply admire and want to be part of. For our business, this opportunity means we can continue operating year-round and keep our Montauk team employed through the off-season. As many know, winter can be a challenging time Out East, so being part of this program allows us to support our staff and maintain our connection to the community.

**How are you adapting your products or approach to connect with the East Hampton winter community?**

**LM & DP:** We're bringing our "greatest hits" to East Hampton, the favorites our Montauk customers know and love. Our Grab-and-Go offerings are especially popular, and we've tailored them to meet the needs of workers, parents, and kids who want convenient, nourishing meals throughout the day. By offering familiar favorites and reliable quality, we hope to make daily life a little easier (and tastier) for the local community this winter.

*Interested in Being Part of the Winter Shops Program? If you own a business that could benefit from a winter pop-up or have a storefront on Main Street or Newtown Lane that could host one for the winter season, the Anchor Society would love to hear from you. Learn more and apply at theanchorsociety.org.*

# Holiday Happenings

Here are a few holiday happenings that will take place across the East End for you to enjoy this holiday season.

Southampton Inn presents a Black Friday brunch on Friday, November 28, from 11 AM to 2 PM. Gather with friends and family for a festive post-Thanksgiving brunch at Claude’s before heading out to shop in Southampton Village. Enjoy holiday drinks in the library on Saturday, November 29, from 2 to 4 PM, right before the Southampton Village Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony. Enjoy a Crafty Christmas Santa Brunch on Sunday, December 7, from 11 AM to 2 PM. Meet Santa, select your own toppings from the hot chocolate station, and make crafts with the team from Colorpop Workshop.

The Village of Southampton invites residents and visitors to celebrate the start of the holiday season with Shop Local Saturday on November 29, followed by the Village’s beloved Parade of Lights, Tree Lighting Ceremony and Fireworks Celebration at dusk.

The fifth annual Holiday Makers Market returns to The Church in Sag Harbor on Saturday, November 29, and Sunday, November 30. Support local artisans and spread holiday cheer as you shop for unique holiday gifts or treat yourself to something nice. Over 15 unique artisans and

makers will be available, offering a selection of ceramics, home goods, jewelry, and more.

Join the Southampton Arts Center for the Holiday Fair on Saturday, December 6, from 10 AM to 4 PM. This year’s event will take place in the theater, featuring local vendors, seasonal treats, and kids’ crafts. Holiday movies will be shown on the big screen to enhance the festive atmosphere.

Wölfler Estate Vineyard in Sagaponack presents its annual Lighting of the Vines on Saturday, December 6, from 6 to 8 PM. Kick off the holiday season with Wölfler’s iconic charity event benefiting the Bridgehampton Child Care & Recreational Center. Witness over 100,000 LED lights illuminating two acres of vineyard, enjoy live music, local hors d’oeuvres, mulled signature wine, and a silent auction of holiday wreaths by local artists.

Share the Harvest Farm presents Wreaths by the Sea, a naturally inspired holiday wreath workshop on Sunday, December 7, from 11 AM to 1 PM at The Dune Lounge at Gurney’s Montauk. Guests will design their own custom wreath using dried natural elements such as pinecones, moss, citrus, seed pods, and grasses. May Zegarelli of Ocean Fog Farm will guide the workshop.

Project MOST presents the return of its gin-



East Hampton Chamber of Commerce Holiday Tour of the Inns includes 1770 House. Photo by Jacques LeBlanc

gerbread house contest and display. Enter by visiting projectmost.org. A community event will be held on Sunday, December 7, from 2 to 4 PM at the Project MOST Community Center in East Hampton. Holiday snacks will be served, and all are welcome to cast a vote for their favorite gingerbread house.

The Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center presents Peconic Ballet Theatre’s production of “The Nutcracker” on December 13 and 14.

The Shoals in Southold presents Holiday By The Bay on Saturday, December 13, from 11 AM to 2 PM. Enjoy live music and a holiday market with luxury gifts, local wine, gourmet foods and complimentary gift wrapping.

Bridgehampton Chamber Music presents “Festive Baroque” with flutist and BCM founder

Marya Martin, along with four of BCM’s top musicians: violinists Kristin Lee and Kevin Zhu, cellist Estelle Choi, and harpsichordist Kenneth Weiss, on December 13. Enjoy music by Telemann, Vivaldi, and others to celebrate the holiday season.

The Greater East Hampton Chamber of Commerce presents the second annual Holiday Tour of the Inns on Saturday, December 13. The tour will feature several inns throughout the town of East Hampton, decked out in their holiday décor, welcoming visitors with festive treats between 1 and 4 PM. Featured inns on the tour include The Baker House, The Roundtree, 434 on Main, The Reform Club, Hunting Inn, 1770 House, The Maidstone, and Journey East Hampton.

Southampton’s Polar Bear Plunge will be held on Saturday, December 13, at Coopers

Beach in Southampton to benefit Heart of the Hamptons. Check-in will begin at 9 AM. All proceeds directly benefit the year-round food pantry and assistance programs, which currently serve 8,452 people in the Town of Southampton.

The Hampton Maid in Hampton Bays will host Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, December 14. Santa will be visiting and taking photos from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. A prix fixe menu will be served. Parents are welcome to take photos, and all children will receive a special gift to take home. A portion of the proceeds collected will benefit Heart of the Hamptons.

Guild Hall in East Hampton presents Art Social: Holiday Sweater Felting with Laurie Lambrecht on Monday, December 15, at 6 PM.

For more, visit jameslanepost.com.



## Kiss & Tell

By Heather Buchanan

### The Films Of HIFF: Don’t Let The Bad Guys Win

I believe forgiveness is overrated. I prefer to say, “letting go of anger which does not serve me.” By virtue of being human, anyone can make a mistake with minor to catastrophic consequences. But when you add in intent to inflict harm, that is another matter.

In our current climate, the sense of outrage and injustice is palpable, and at the 33rd annual Hamptons International Film Festival, filmmakers from all over the world created fascinating films addressing the subject of injustice. Their compelling narratives, whether documentary or fiction, showed differing approaches to “Don’t let the bad guys win.”

#### “It Was Just an Accident” From Iranian Filmmaker Jafar Panahi

Don’t stoop to the level of the bad guys.

Winner of this year’s Cannes Film Festival Palme d’Or, “It Was Just an Accident,” sets us on a literal road to revenge when a random accident spurs a series of events as a car mechanic believes he has found the government interrogator who tortured him. Filled with both gravitas and humor, this tale explores survivors of political violence who embrace their future while followed by ghosts or very much alive tormentors of the past. The members of the group who faced unspeakable horrors grapple collectively and individually about what to do when they assume the role of interrogator. Does it debase a human to descend to the level of evil, or is it cathartic to do unto him as he did unto you? Does taking the “high road” show that you do not become the monster, or does that leave you then still at risk?

#### “The Librarians” From Filmmaker Kim A. Snyder

Have a spine, literally.

Short of the cliché costume of the sexy librarian, those serving as our public and school librarians are the more unseen and unsung

heroes. But know they are far more than experts on the Dewey Decimal system. They are the front line of the fight for democracy in the age of book banning. Snyder is a master documentarian, giving faces and names to headlines and creating a film as compelling as any life-and-death medical drama. Books focused on race and LGBTQIA stories are in sweeping book bans across the country. And when a book can literally save a young person’s life, the censorship is not just a threat to the constitution but to a real person. The danger to these seemingly unassuming librarians ranges from harassment to firing to jail to death threats. But no shrinking violets here, these word warriors show what it means to have a spine and to defend the spines of the books which shape our lives.

#### “All The Empty Rooms” From Filmmaker Joshua Seftel

Don’t give the bad guys any air — or air time.

In this short documentary, reporter Steve Hartman and photographer Lou Bopp embark on a cross-country journey to memorialize the bedrooms of children lost to school shootings. Over seven years, they followed eight families from five school shootings. What is documented is every heartbreaking reminder of lives cut short. In these sacred spaces frozen in time, you see the hair band on the doorknob, the friendship bracelet or single bear slipper, or it may be the picture of the Eiffel Tower as a reminder of the trip to Paris for the graduation that never came. Or perhaps the basket of dirty laundry the mother does not have the heart to ever wash to eliminate the last chance to smell her son. One jewelry box holds letters of a young girl to her future self to have faith on her first day of high school, which would never arrive. At no point is any mention given of the shooters who heinously murdered these young people. No air given to their names or their desire for fame. The film is done with such incredible respect and compassion, where the only shots are those of a photographer capturing a day in the life, which was its last. In this case, the devil is not in the details. It is the angels.



Photo by Lisa Tamburini

## South Fork Bakery

### Slow Food East End Awards Snail Of Approval

By Jessica Mackin-Cipro

South Fork Bakery held its fourth annual Cocktails with a Cause and received its Snail of Approval recognition from Slow Food East End on Saturday, November 15, at Tutto il Giorno in Sag Harbor.

Based in Sag Harbor and Amagansett, South Fork Bakery is a nonprofit bakery and employment training center offering paid work, coaching, and community placement opportunities for adults with disabilities. The launch program prepares participants for greater independence and employment readiness while producing baked goods enjoyed across the region.

This year’s event featured a special presentation by Slow Food East End, highlighting South Fork Bakery’s efforts and its alignment with Slow Food’s principles of good, clean, and fair food. Slow Food East End is a local chapter of the global Slow Food movement, which supports sustainable agriculture, local food producers, and equitable access to food.

Bridget Fleming, the executive director of

South Fork Bakery, greeted guests at the sold-out event and introduced the speakers and board members.

Robby Stein, the president of the SFB Board of Trustees, began. “It’s really important for you to understand what you’re a part of, not only the community, but the support of community,” he said.

Landscape architect and longtime supporter Ed Hollander described how South Fork Bakery had helped his daughter, Ren Hollander, who works at the bakery, its farmers’ market tent, and is also a board member. “She started there and found work and found companionship and found friendship and learned abilities and talents... Every person that’s in this room who has a child wants one thing, and that for that kid to love themselves.”

“South Fork Bakery helped her to do that and helped her to learn who she was and how to value who she was,” he continued.

Slow Food East End was represented by Ma-

ria McBride, president, and Ralph Reinertsen, chair of the awards committee, who made a special presentation.

Reinertsen said of the organization, “It started in Italy in 1983. A man was walking by the Spanish Steps and saw a McDonald’s being made and said to his friend ‘Oh no, we don’t eat fast food, we eat slow food.’”

“We are giving this award because when we interviewed, we saw the love, the respect, the honesty, the ideals,” he continued. “I guess the best way to sum it up is, we feel more honored that you accept our award than we do giving the award. This is the first bakery ever awarded a snail.”

McBride then presented South Fork Bakery with the Snail of Approval as the first bakery on the East End to receive the distinction from the group.

Laura Miller, the daughter of South Fork Bakery founder Shirley Ruch, also spoke, paying tribute to her mother’s work.

“My mom always makes things extra special. South Fork Bakery exists because of her courage, her belief, and her gift for seeing everyone’s full potential,” said Miller.

“It’s more than just a bakery. It’s confidence, it’s community, independence, and joy. People who could have easily been left out and overlooked in this community are instead benefiting from meaningful work,” she continued.

Board members in attendance included Jane Millard, Liz Ilgenfritz, Roy Cohen, Helen Tsanos Sheinman, Rose Dios, Michele Cohen, and Ann Sutphen.

Guests at the event also enjoyed light bites, cocktails, a curated silent auction, and an informational video highlighting the expanding launch training program.

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