

PAIGE'S PAGE

The September Edit

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BAY HARBOUR MARKET

Where Have You Been All My Life? Pretty sure Rihanna was talking about this pizza.



The Breakfast Pizza. Guys. I am embarrassingly late to egg on pizza, especially because this is basically my dream breakfast. Thin, properly crisp base, bubbling cheese, loads of salty crispy bacon and that rich egg yolk bringing the whole thing together. Neapolitan pizza is everywhere right now, and I love it, but sometimes a thin crunchy base just hits differently. And while everyone else is asking how many egg whites you had, I have always been a yolk girl. Carbs, fats, protein. The macros have spoken. If your weekend breakfast is not looking vaguely like this, I feel bad for you. No notes. I am still thinking about it a month later.

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VIET ROOTS

Rooted in my heart, my soul and, quite firmly, my stomach.



Vietnamese food is top tier for me, and Viet Roots being new has done absolutely nothing to help me pick a favourite. Luckily, they all come from the same roots, so I'm rooting for the lot. Sharing is caring, provided I do the ordering. My order is the **Viet Roots sushi, rainbow rolls, maki, vermicelli bowl and beef pho**. Fresh, fragrant, crunchy, comforting, and somehow the kind of food you can eat loads of without feeling like you need to lie horizontally for the rest of the day. The vermicelli is all cool noodles, herbs and crunch, the sushi is ridiculously fresh, and yes, I stand by this, Vietnamese restaurants make excellent sushi. Then the pho. Pho me, it works in any weather. On a hot day, let that broth cool a little and suddenly it is exactly what you want. Rooted. Fully.

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BASILICO

A couple glasses of wine later, pasta felt like the only sensible next move.



I don't know how I have gone this long without ending up at Basilico, especially considering they are one of the places in the area still serving food a little later. I went classic with the **penne, oven roasted pepper, aubergine and zucchini in Napolitana sauce, finished with pesto**. Nothing complicated, just really, really good. The pasta was properly al dente, the sauce clung to every bit of it, and the vegetables kept everything fresh while the tomato and pesto brought that sharp, herby richness. Light enough that you do not feel defeated afterwards, but still warm, comforting and exactly what I wanted after a couple glasses of wine next door. This is the kind of pasta I could eat very often. Simple food, done properly.

COOKED

There is a correct way to eat this. I do not make the rules.



And I am willing to be annoying about it. The **halloumi cigars** on their own are salty, crisp and very much giving savoury. The berry sauce is sweet, tart and fresh. Lovely separately. But together? That is the point. You need the halloumi, the crisp phyllo and the berry all in one bite, otherwise you are simply not getting the full assignment. It is rich without being heavy, sweet without being dessert sweet, and salty enough to keep you going back in for another forkful. Basically the kind of thing people mean when they say, “It’s not too sweet,” except this time I actually agree with them. Very into it. Very much thinking about it again now. 10/10.

HONEST CHOCOLATE

Short and dark. Kind of like me in summer.



The Short & Dark Hot Chocolate is made with their 70% chocolate and it sits somewhere between proper hot chocolate and the beginning of a cacao ceremony, which is exactly why I like it. Rich, dark and properly chocolatey without tipping into sickly sweet. It immediately took me back to my cacao ceremony days at Pyramid of Chi in Ubud. Not quite enough to send me fully spiritual, but enough to make me sit there quietly, sip slowly and reconsider a few life choices. Mind, body and apparently soul. Very good.

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THE FALAFEL GUY

The hummus did not make it home with dignity.



The foodie find here is very specifically the **hummus**. Chickpeas, good ingredients, proper flavour, no need to overcomplicate the situation. It is nutty, fresh, silky but still has enough texture to remind you that actual chickpeas were involved, which I weirdly love. I took some home and ended up eating it straight out of the tub with a spoon, so I think that tells you everything you need to know. It does not have the longest fridge life, but realistically, if you have a spoon, a mouth and even a passing interest in really good food, it is not lasting three or four days anyway. Best hummus I have had. And I do not say that lightly.

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GRUB & VINE

Chef Aaron has done it again. Obviously.



I was very lucky to be invited to experience **Grub & Vine's new spring tasting menu**, and Chef Aaron's brain needs to be studied. I'd list every course, but then we would be here all day. The chilled pea soup with Parmesan ice cream was ridiculous and the pork loin served medium rare was one of those dishes that makes you stop talking for a second. Which, for me, is saying something. His food is clever without ever feeling like it is trying too hard, and there is always something on the plate that makes you think, wait, how did you even come up with that? Pair it with a sommelier who somehow takes you through space, time and several wine regions in one sitting, and I genuinely cannot think of a better way to spend a day. One day, when I am very important, I would like a Chef Aaron meal at least once a day. Seems reasonable.

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COOKED

A very strong argument for putting vegetables in a bagel.



My Dish of the Month is the **Mediterranean Veg Bagel**, and as someone who eats a very respectable amount of bagels, I do not hand that title out lightly. The bagels are hand rolled, boiled and ridiculously fluffy, with none of that sad, stale chew that requires a full jaw workout. Inside, you have charred peppers, spinach, marinated aubergine, red onion and olive tapenade, all fresh, tangy and properly full of flavour. Then comes the small piece of genius: melted mozzarella on either side of the hole, quietly keeping everything where it belongs instead of depositing half your lunch onto your lap. Thoughtful. Delicious. Excellent bagel engineering. I would very happily eat this again tomorrow.

BOB'S BAGELS

Another bagel. Nobody is surprised.



Speaking of bagels, here is another one, just to prove the point. Bob's makes a Montreal style bagel, which I have learnt is very much my thing. The dough has that slight sweetness to it, with a lovely chew, and then I added their house mazavaroo because obviously I did. This is the **veg bagel**, but the **mazavaroo** is what takes it somewhere else. I have eaten a fair amount of this chilli sauce in my life, and theirs is genuinely one of my favourites. The best part is that it seems to have a slightly different personality every time. Sometimes hotter, sometimes more garlicky, sometimes a little sweeter. Everything, everywhere, all at once, but in chilli form. Add a bagel, Kalk Bay, the park across the road and a bit of people watching by the sea, and I am extremely easy to please.

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Stay hungry. Stay curious.

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