

25A

Gold Coast Luxury Magazine

March 2014

Fran Drescher
Courtney Reed
Eden Roc at Cap Cana
Baker House 1650

Food Issue

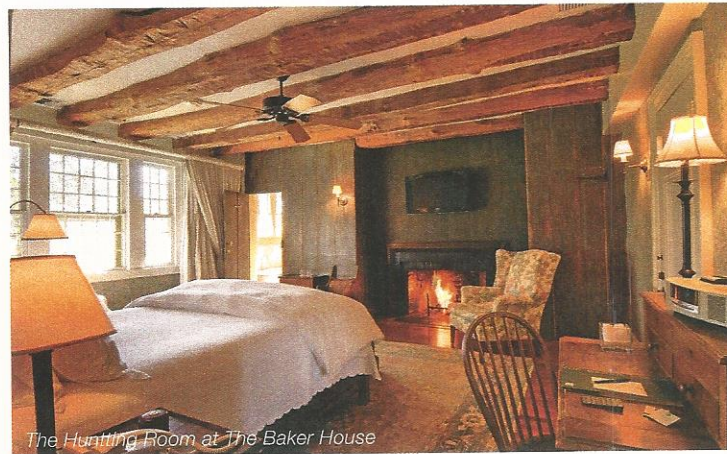
Alex Guarnaschelli
Kingside
Damaris Phillips
Vitae
American Cut
Revel
Gold Coast Chefs

BOBBY FLAY

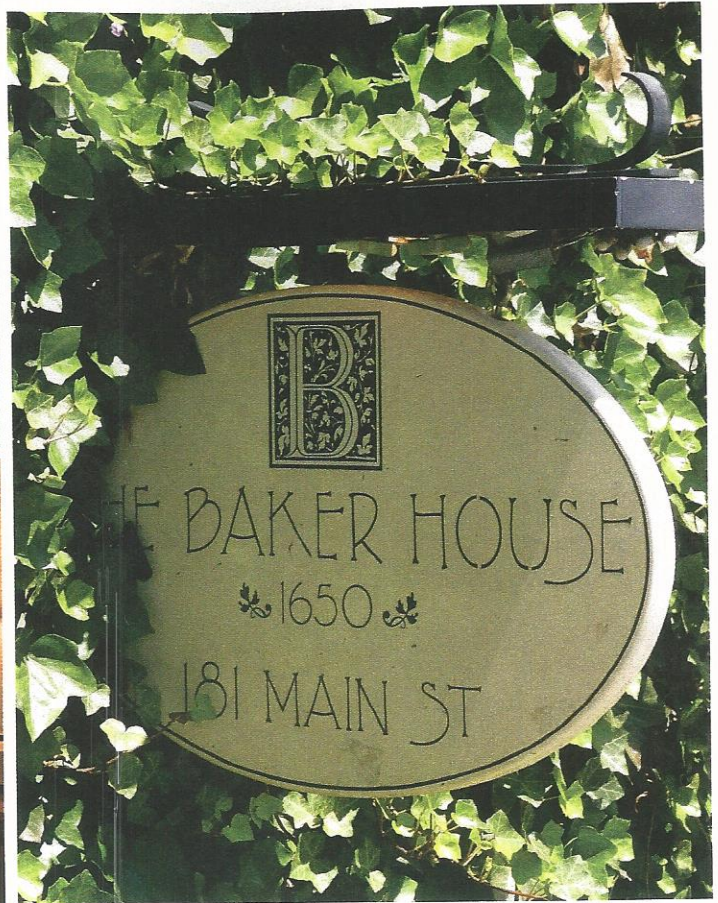
| Design | Fashion | Features | Food | Health | Luxury | Profiles | Sports |



The Baker House



The Hunting Room at The Baker House



The Fabulous Baker House

By Andrea Mineo

Photos courtesy of The Baker House

So I went to the Hamptons to relax. In the middle of winter. I thought it might be a good time to enjoy Long Island's most famous and fabled summertime mecca with a few inches of snow on the ground. With a frozen coating of white on the immediate landscape, and temperatures in the teens, I took the drive to the South Fork for a little winter break.

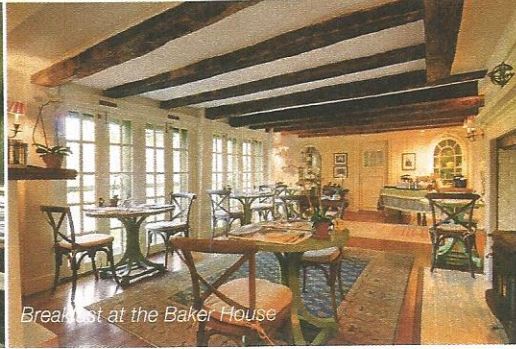
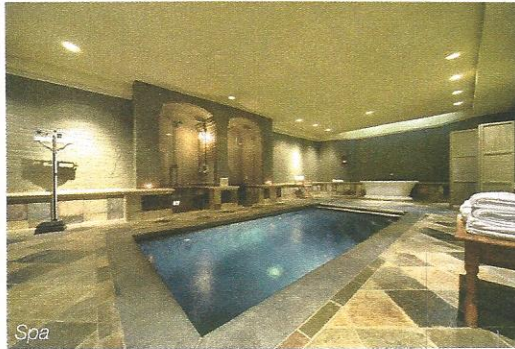
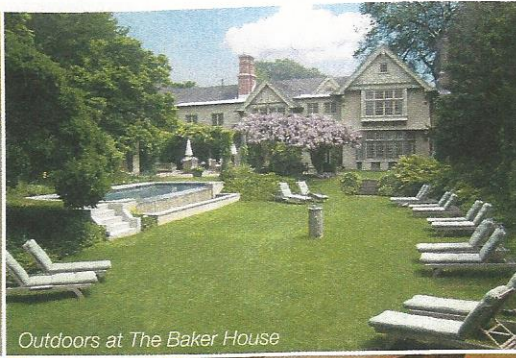
My destination: The Baker House 1650, an historic bed and breakfast in East Hampton. It sits quietly on Main Street as you approach the village. And it's kept watch over that same road at that same address for more than 300 years. The Baker House isn't the only historic home on Main Street but there is something singular about it.

The Baker House 1650 is well worn with history in the best possible way. According to its biography, it's one of the oldest homes in the United States. The house was built in 1648 by a sea captain who later sold it to Thomas Baker, one of East Hampton's original founders. The home was changed and it expanded through the years but in 1899 James Harper Poor – a prominent New York merchant – bought the property and began perhaps its most relevant renovation. Poor brought in an ar-

chitect who would transform the home into what it is now, with a nod to the Cotswold style of architecture. This was Poor's summer home and his daughter Mildred was married at the house in 1915. Guests came out for Mildred Poor's Hamptons wedding the same way they do today: by train from Manhattan's Penn Station. Mildred's portrait hangs on a wall in The Baker House as does her original wedding invitation and the newspaper clipping of her engagement.

It's a good bet that the home has seen quite a number of interesting characters walk through its doors since it's been standing gracefully for all these centuries. Through the years the home has changed owners and names. It's been called Baker's Tavern, As You Like It and The J. Harper Poor Cottage. Current owners Antonella Bertello-Rosen and Bob Rosen renamed the home The Baker House 1650 when they acquired the property, with a tip of the hat to Thomas Baker.

I knew I was staying in an establishment that had stories to tell. But let's get back to my story. Full disclosure: I had never stayed in a bed and breakfast before. I knew B&Bs were supposed to have that homey feel-



ing about them, you know, charm. Homey and charming are adjectives I'd use to describe The Baker House. But I also got this lovely feeling as I made my way to the house through the outside archway, with its carved wooden door.

Does that sound like Alice in Wonderland? Once inside I was enchanted and happy to be there and I had only been there for a few moments. I wanted to look around this house, this Baker House. There seemed to be warm sunlight coming in from everywhere.

I noticed the fireplace was lit and quietly burning in the open living room. Large window seats bookend the room that has many areas for guests to sit and engage in quiet conversation. Getting work done on a laptop or reading by the fireplace are other inviting options. The living room has a grand piano dating back to who-knows what year. I was later told by The Baker House General Manager Heather McCormack that the piano is so old that to properly tune it, it would have to be dismantled. McCormack also told me that a handful of famous musicians had tickled the ivories on the antique during their stays at The Baker House.

My room was one of only seven guest rooms, which I think is fabulous, by the way. All of the rooms are named after families who originally settled in East Hampton. I stayed in the Hunting Room and was excited to see another fireplace just beyond the bed. I used it during my entire visit. The Hunting Room is rustic with wood beams; it is a perfect mix of antiquity and modern amenities. I had the option of bathing in the claw foot bathtub or the shower. I soon found out that the bed was more than comfortable and I had trouble getting out of it because of that fact.

The Baker House is a bed and breakfast and I can say, the morning meals during my stay were all delicious. Food is served in the Breakfast Room looking out onto the property's garden. Again here, wood beams line the ceiling, a wood-burning oven keeps diners toasty in colder times and plenty of sunlight fills the room. But it was the fresh coffee and excellent food that really woke up this sleepy guest.

You wouldn't think a spa would exist in a home that was originally built in 1648 but The Baker House has one. On the lower level guests can find a swimming pool, a sauna and steam showers. Massage services and facials can be booked in advance. I took a dip and it was lovely. I also used the sauna. The spa can also be reserved for private use.

"For us it's more about the amenities you want when you're traveling," McCormack says. "It's a hands-off kind of luxury; we kind of leave it up to the guests. Some guests don't even want to talk to us."

There were other guests at The Baker House while I was there, but somehow my stay felt completely private. It was a beautiful, romantic visit back in time, a look at East Hampton history with everything I needed for today. I was relaxed from the moment I arrived until the morning I checked out, trudging back into the cold reality of winter.

The Baker House
181 Main St
East Hampton, NY 11937
631-324-4081
bakerhouse1650.com