

Looking Good in Lamorinda

Dressing up for the holidays and beyond



James Tissot, Holyday, 1876.

Image courtesy Legion of Honor



Photo courtesy Myara Children's Boutique

Myara dress.

By Moya Stone

It's all about dressing up at Myara Children's Boutique, a recent addition to the Lafayette Clocktower. Proprietor Maryam Moraveji opened her shop earlier this year bringing to the table 18 years of experience in women's couture and bridal design.

Originally from Toronto, Moraveji moved to Lamorinda with her family in 2018 and was inspired to shift into children's fashion design when she had trouble finding clothing she liked for her then 1-year-old daughter, Rya, who is now 6. She was looking for "whimsical but not costumey" so she made Rya's clothes herself. When friends started asking Moraveji to make clothes for their daughters, it was time to consider a shop. But it wasn't until a few years later that the dream became a reality.

Myara is a wonderland of dresses, from 3 months to size 14, in quiet pastels like mint green and sky blue. Each design includes various unique details such as jeweled necklines, cutout backs, or ruffled sleeves. A signature look is layers of tulle, which speak of ballerinas and princesses. But these dresses are not just for special occasions. Moraveji believes in crossing pretty with practicality and giving girls permission to wear Myara dresses however they choose. She says they're not just for sitting and having tea. "No, no, no ... why not wear the dress and climb a tree?"

Moraveji uses stain resistant polyester fabric lined with cotton and many of the dresses can be machine washed. She also considers long-term wearability by adding a ribbon sash



Myara sneakers.

Photo Moya Stone

that will cinch in the dress as needed but can be removed. "We want these pieces to be worn as long as possible without compromising fit," says Moraveji, who is also proud of her prices that start at \$55 with the most expensive piece at \$225.

Then there are the sneakers! Myara offers sneakers specially designed to coordinate with the dresses. "We've had a great response to our shoes," says Moraveji. "And they have been tested for proper arch support." In gold, pink, or black these sparkly sneakers are a perfect choice for girls who wants to dance, run, jump, and skip in comfort. Let's not forget the boys. Inspired by her 3-year-old son, Moraveji has added a line of boys' clothes, which includes shoes and coats.

Myara's social media manager, Mariam Simpson likes to bring her 6-year-old daughter into the shop where she enjoys playing in the big playhouse located in one corner of the store. "This is what a closet of a princess would look like," says Simpson, who appreciates the balance in Myara clothing between special occasion and everyday reality.

One special occasion to dress up for might include afternoon tea. Shadelands Ranch Museum in Walnut Creek is hosting holiday teas Nov. 30 through Dec. 15. Tea luncheons are served downstairs in the historic Shadelands mansion while upstairs is a craft faire, featuring all kinds of handmade goodies including jams, candy, and various big and small gift items made by local crafts people. Call for reservations: (925) 935-7871.

The ladies and gentlemen of the 19th century knew all about dressing up as documented in the works of French artist James Tissot. On now at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco is the exhibition "Tissot: Fashion & Faith." Tissot is known for depicting the lives of modern society in mid-1800s France and England. Approximately 60 paintings, illustrations, and portraits are featured and presented thematically. In his detailed work we see animated people dressed to the nines in ruffles, bows, hats and gloves in the midst of a ball, afternoon tea, or a picnic and all so vivid viewers feel a part of the scene. What a fun family jaunt for the holiday season perhaps in a Myara dress. "Tissot: Fashion & Faith" runs through Feb. 9.

How about dressing up while reading? For the fashionable reader on your holiday list I recommend "The Gown" by Jennifer Robson (William Morrow). This is a fictional story of two women who worked on the wedding gown of then Princess Elizabeth in 1947. As embroiders for the fashion house of Norman Hartnell, Ann and Miriam work tirelessly for three months on the train of the royal wedding gown while learning to deal with painful memories of the recent past. Perhaps a bit predictable but still a page turner and well written, "The Gown" is an entertaining glimpse at couture crafting as well as life in post-war London. Just right for a winter read.

Happy holidays and remember to go forth in dressed-up style.

Moya Stone is a fashion writer and blogger at OverDressedforLife.com.

Sweet and savory side dish perfect for Thanksgiving



Photos Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

If you're looking for a delicious new way to serve yams with your Thanksgiving feast this year, we've got you covered. Sweet fig jam and savory Kalamata olives combine with the salty blue cheese to make a mouth-watering side dish. It was all my son's

idea, and I have to say, I was very impressed! Although, when he left the skins on the sweet potato cubes, I was a bit concerned, but it turned out great this way since they made for nice crispy edges. I should think this would also be a really great hearty dish for any vegetarians who plan to spend the holiday with you.

Sweet Potato Blues

(Serves 6 as a side dish)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 orange sweet potatoes (approximately 1.5 to 2 pounds), cleaned and cubed with skins on
- 3-tablespoons olive oil
- 2 large shallots, thinly sliced or chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon white pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme or 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- ½ cup fig jam or spread*
- ½ cup finely chopped Kalamata olives*
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese
- ¾ cup grated sharp white cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS

Heat 1-2 tablespoons oil in a cast iron skillet. Add cubed sweet potatoes, garlic, shallots, herbs, salt, and black and white pepper. Cook slowly over medium-low, until edges of potatoes get crunchy and the insides are tender, turning occasionally so both sides get crispy.

Spread fig jam over potatoes in the pan, and sprinkle blue cheese crumbles evenly over the top. Continue to cook until cheese melts. Sprinkle cheddar over the top and broil in the oven just until cheddar gets bubbly and starts to brown. Serve hot.

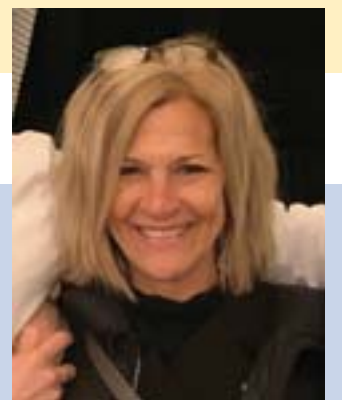
*Note: I used Divina Kalamata Fig Spread with Almonds, but if you cannot find it (see info box below) follow the recipe by using a plain fig jam or spread and mixing in ½ cup chopped Kalamata olives.)

To order Divina Kalamata Fig Spread, check with your local grocer, or visit amazon.com, they do carry it and can ship it to you.

Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com.

This recipe can be found on our website:

www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.



You can find most of the recipes published in the Lamorinda Weekly on our website. Food tab: www.lamorindaweekly.com/html2/food1.html

We are excited about the amount of activity we have had from the AD in your paper!! Thank you for allowing us to be part of the Lamorinda Weekly!!!

Sal, Sales and Marketing Director

Honestly, the Lamorinda Weekly is always the best source for our efforts. Everyone reads it, thoroughly!

Thank you very much.
Lucy

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