

THE LONG OF IT

A QUARTER CENTURY AFTER GRADUATING, ED '90 AND NICOLE TEILLON RIEGL '90 LOOK BACK ON TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF PAYING IT FORWARD.

Every week, Nicole Teillon Riegl '90 posts a new recipe and accompanying commentary to her food blog, Riegl Palate (rieglpalate.com). Her offerings, beautifully photographed and elegantly described, run a wide gamut of food and drink, from chicken cashew chili, to Hemingway daiquiris, to clams with wine and bacon. Her husband, Ed Riegl '90, serves as fellow food explorer, taster, editor and provider of inspiration. Together, they plumb Southeastern Pennsylvania—from Chester County farm-to-table operations to sophisticated downtown eateries—and well beyond, searching out the interesting, the exotic, the delicious.

“If I’m not eating,” she said, “I’m thinking about food.”

Each entry in Riegl Palate entices. Each stokes the appetite. But viewed broadly, as one can do via Teillon Riegl’s Instagram ([instagram.com/rieglpalate](https://www.instagram.com/rieglpalate)) or on Pinterest ([pinterest.com/rieglpalate](https://www.pinterest.com/rieglpalate)), it is impossible to ignore their cumulative effect—the broad, colorful tapestry of fruits, grains, meats and spirits that add up to extraordinary sustenance—or her passion for her subject.

The visual richness of Teillon Riegl’s efforts comes as no surprise; her Franklin & Marshall College degree in art history clearly inspires her aesthetic approach to food. She also sits on the board and volunteers as a docent at the Wharton Escherick Museum in Paoli, Pa.

“I’ve been able to integrate my love of art history,” she said of her pastimes.

But Riegl Palate’s color and whimsy belie a consistency of effort and quality that come with intense focus and diligence over time—the only way the Riegls could possibly maintain the breadth of activity they undertake.

Nicole has made a career in marketing, since the 1990s holding a number of positions, most of them at Malvern, Pa.-based business information company Progressive Business Publications. Currently she serves as director of Progressive Business’ Institute Division, which provides online executive education services. Ed, who followed his F&M degree in political science and government with a Villanova MBA, has made a career of commercial banking and, more recently, in the startup world, working to get software companies in banking and online education

off the ground. In addition to his gastronomic/editorial duties, Ed enjoys fishing and golf.

The Riegls are generous with their time, over the years sitting on a startling array of nonprofit boards (among other positions, Ed has held the presidency of the Timothy School’s board), and they have been extraordinarily generous to F&M, in each of the past 25 years devoting time and financial resources to the College.

Their ongoing dedication—year after year of volunteerism and giving—yields wonderful benefits for the alumni they help organize, the students they mentor and support, and the College they love and endorse. How and why do they find the time and energy?

Ed joked, “It was either this or a foundation for kittens... There are people who give seven figures [to F&M]. There’s a likelihood that won’t be us. We don’t give money because F&M helped us get our first jobs or started our careers. It has nothing to do with wanting to be part of some society. It’s more to do with the fact that we’re both in our own ways trying to pay it forward. We try to encourage people to do the same, try to tell our friends in some way shape or form to give back if the place meant something to you. We feel a tie that binds.”

For Nicole, a 2014 F&M Alumni Medal winner and the owner of a long resume of F&M volunteer service, it comes back to her college experience: “It positioned me where I am in my career and where I am in my personal life. So much of my success comes from what I learned and skills I honed at F&M.”

She said, “I never stopped being engaged. The College meant so much to me that I couldn’t imagine not being involved. I’ve planned reunions, chaired our regional council, served on the alumni board and now on Leadership Council. I was a founder of CFW (the Council for Women of F&M) and am its second chair. I’m very excited—there are lots of good ideas and potential for great impact. We’d like to engage women at various stages of their lives—provide a different outlet for women to connect.”

Ed, likewise, takes pleasure in offering opportunities and the benefit of his substantial professional experience to F&M students. “The thing I take most seriously,” he says, “is on an annual basis recruiting students, performing alumni interviews, trying to continue mentoring while students are on campus. I try to help them understand the benefit of paying it forward.”

Their view is a long one.

“I think the College has made great strides over the past 10 years,” said Ed. “Is the College headed in the proper direction? Yeah. I’m a firm believer. What I find most impressive is that it holds to the tenets of a liberal arts education.” ■



Photos from food blog—rieglpalate.com