

TheRebeccammendations Turns Five!



The most delicious organic chocolate birthday cake by Coco Paloma Desserts.

Folks. Today, TheRebeccammendations® turns 5! That's 1/6th of my lifetime! When I started my blog St. Patty's day night in 2009 with a hamantashen recipe and photos I took with a manual camera and 35mm film (!) and asked my friend John on Facebook chat what the blog name should be, I didn't even expect to keep the name to avoid it sounding like it was a diary of my life. John, I am still indebted to you and owe you a steak dinner - or three. I wanted to write it to share entertaining ideas for others. I stuck the name on until I would come up with another one - and low and behold, the name steered me in such an amazing direction! Here are some of the most memorable moments:

TheRebeccammendations 1st Blog Birthday at The Belmont, where I discovered amazing local artists Courier (who later played a private show for me and my friends after moving to Chicago), Matt McCloskey, and Jordan Whitmore and my parents helped put together goodie bags and my Grandma Joyce sold raffle tickets!

Joining the Austin Food Blogger Alliance founding board, where member Jodi convinced me to join Twitter to grow my blog readership.

Teaching myself social media to build relationships with other bloggers and media, then hosting a workshop featuring Chef Tyson Cole of Uchi.

The workshop leading to me founding LocalizeAustin, a small and local business marketing consulting company, where I supported clients like Austin Restaurant Week, Autism Fest Austin, Wolfgang Career Coaching (and kick-starting Careers & Beers), Better Bites of Austin and co-hosted the Austin Video Marketing Marathon with UPG Video, providing professional videos to 9 small businesses in one day at an affordable rate.

Moving to Chicago, joining the Windy City Pizza Club on my first day in the city, also joining the Chicago Food Bloggers, and eating lots of pizza through the long, cold winters.

In honor of this year's blog birthday, here are my top 5 favorite blog posts over the years:

- 1) Tribute Week to Local Musicians - I featured one local Austin band each day for a week.
- 2) Let's Open a Sandwich Shop - Courier, the band that played at my blog's 1st birthday, played a private show for my new friends and I a month after I moved to Chicago as part of their acoustic home tour. This was cause for making gourmet sandwiches for the hungry band and audience.
- 3) Grandma Joyce's 76th Birthday Tribute - This still stands as one of the most viewed and commented-on posts in my blogging

history.

4) How to Host a Petit Soiree - My roommates and I created a new party category and cooked up some new recipes for an intimate dinner party gathering of friends.

5) Kitchen Schooling: The Chopping Block - I was lucky to have Mom and Dad visit me right after I moved up to The Windy City. We took an Italian cooking class and it was a delicious blast!

?And one more for good luck!

6) Truffle Evolution: 4th Generation - It is a birthday after all, so dessert is required: After visiting my cousin Dana in Denver and making oreo truffles for a Super Bowl Party inspired by Bakerella, this became my signature dessert (and birthday gift) for many a friend/family gathering, including goodie bags for the wedding of my dear friends Jen and Reid!

Thanks for following along all the way up to Chicago and beyond. Cheers to many more years of eating, entertaining, and blogging!