

In Memory of David Marc Fischer



1962-2009

David Marc Fischer Memorial Dinner
NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Group
Lilli & Loo, a GFRAP restaurant
September 14, 2009

Rest in Peace, Gluten Free NYC

Sunday, August 9, 2009

I received some very terrible and shocking news on Friday. David Marc Fischer, of Gluten Free NYC, passed away on Thursday due to an illness in New York City. This is a tremendous loss to the gluten-free and national Celiac Community.

I met David about four years ago at a local gluten-free event through the NYC Celiac Disease Meetup group. We started chatting that night and immediately became friends. David and I quickly learned that we had more than just Celiac Disease in common. We both grew up less than one mile from each other, we went to the same high school, and we both thought Plainview, NY was a gluten-free Mecca.

Over the years, I became a huge fan of David's blog Gluten Free NYC. In 2007, when I started writing this blog it was David who was one of my biggest supporters. His encouragement and support of all things gluten-free helped me kick-off my blog. It was always great to get comments and feedback from David, even if our views on Celiac Disease didn't always match up. The great thing about David is that he could always back up his comments, so I never really had a good argument against him.

In the summer of 2007, David helped the NYC Celiac Disease Meetup group attempt to spin off an organizers sub-committee. Although the group didn't pan out, David was a strong contributor to ideas for future events. David's passion for the gluten-free community in NYC was obvious. He could always be seen at Columbia University Celiac Disease Center events, NFCA events like the cooking spree, and even at community board meetings supporting bars like Heathers (serving gf beers) to help avoid getting them shuttered for good. He blogged regularly and I was always quite envious at his dedication and time to blog since I couldn't keep up with my own blog.

David and I had many amusing conversations over the past few years. As some of you might know, there is sometimes drama in the gluten-free community. Read any message board, attend any organizationally-tied event, write a blog with opinions... gasp! We both had our run-ins with "haters" but we always got a good laugh about it. Being the organizer of the largest Celiac Diseases Meetup group in the country, I have dealt with enough lame gluten-free drama over the past few years but David always let me vent to him even if I knew he really just wanted to roll his eyes. After our Meetup events, David and I would always take the long route back to the subway to chat about the most recent event. He gave me advice, made suggestions for future events, and just chatted with me about life. It was obvious to me that David was a loyal person that was respected by his friends and family. I am happy I could call David my friend.

David has been a huge force in the gluten-free community for many years now. His blog has given many people tons of information about gluten-free living, restaurants, and products. His unwavering support for the Celiac community goes beyond David having Celiac Disease. He became an advocate for our gluten-free lifestyle which went above and beyond blog writing. His enthusiastic debates with the members of the NYC Celiac Disease always made for the most exciting message threads. David's support of both awareness and advocacy was obvious from his presence at my Celiac Disease events. His death and absence from these events will be quite a huge loss to us all.

David, you were a friend, a mentor, and an inspiration to me and the Celiac Disease community. I am so sad that you are gone and even sadder that I didn't get to say goodbye. I will miss you.

*Erin Smith, Gluten-Free Fun, Author
NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Group, Organizer*

Source: <http://glutenfreefun.blogspot.com/2009/08/rest-in-peace-gluten-free-nyc.html>

Thoughts from the New York City Celiac Disease Meetup Group

"David was someone I never formally met, though we attended a few of the same events.

I plan to be at the memorial dinner coming up on Monday anyway. When I was first diagnosed, I scurried around to find a substitute for my son's pizza delivery and my office lunch requirements and did all the label and list reading.

After awhile I looked around for information and tried to get a sense of what was going on in the world with celiac outside my own experience, especially here in NY.

David's voice was one that made a lot of sense at a time when I needed to regain my perspective and a normal stress level and move forward. His blog offered interesting and sometimes amusing takes on pertinent topics and events. As I began to regularly read his blog, I relaxed and got more comfortable and open to other celiac-related experiences and knowledge - such as this Meetup group for example.

This is a dinner and memorial for David's close personal friends, and for all of us in a community that he helped to create. Monday is an opportunity to celebrate and honor David and his contribution."

-Karen, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Group member

"He always had such passion and his dedication to what he felt so strongly about was a great addition to the Gluten Free community."

-Loretta, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Member

"I did not know David but I loved his blog. My heart goes out to his family."

-Lourdes, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Member

"David helped me so much when I was first diagnosed. David will be missed. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family."

-Loretta, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Member

"David will be surely missed. What a great guy. May he rest in peace."

-Mo Tantawi, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Member

"David was an amazing and generous man. He helped me with my CV when I was struggling to improve it. He was ALWAYS so sweet and considerate. He brought me gluten-free beer from around the world without me asking. I lost touch with David and cannot believe he is gone without the chance to say goodbye. He really was a gift to this world and will be missed."

-Natasha Yannacanedo, NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Member

Source: <http://www.meetup.com/Celiac/boards/thread/7426588/>
<http://www.meetup.com/Celiac/messages/boards/thread/7629604>

Huge loss for our community

Posted Aug 09 2009 12:30am

"Today I received some very sad news via a celiac listserv post. One of the nicest gluten-free bloggers (Gluten-Free NYC: <http://glutenfreenyc.blogspot.com/>) around who helped untold visitors to NYC enjoy their gluten-free visits immensely through his blog posts, passed away from a sudden illness. David Marc Fischer was a joy to know - even if only through the internet. Recently he and I had begun corresponding via e-mail. He had a great sense of humor and a generous spirit and rarely did I not get a laugh out of something he included in his e-mails.

I am deeply saddened by this news and I'm certain that many others who knew David in any way feel like I do. The gluten-free world was better off with him in it. He will be missed greatly. Hopefully we can all take a lesson from David and live our lives to the fullest and not let a dietary restriction get in the way of that goal."

Tiffany Janes

Glad to Be Gluten Free, Author

Source: <http://www.gladtobeglutenfree.blogspot.com/>

Living Gluten-Free: Sending my best to the family of David Marc Fischer

August 17, 2009

"The celiac community recently learned of the sudden passing of David Marc Fischer. I did not have the opportunity to meet David in person but communicated with him via email and phone. What impressed me most about David was his sincerity and genuine desire to understand other people's experiences, especially when they differed from his own. Thank you, David for your service to the celiac disease community. Your voice will be missed."

Tricia Thompson, MS, RD

The Gluten-Free Dietitian

Source: http://www.diet.com/dietblogs/read_blog.php?title=&blid=16852

Off-topic: Gluten-free blogger dies

Thursday, September 3, 2009

"David Marc Fischer, the 46 year old author of the most useful gluten-free blog Gluten-free NYC died last month on August 6 apparently from leukemia. His blog was distinctive for giving gluten-free medical and policy news, rather than focusing exclusively on food food food. Also, he sounded like a nice guy who I'd wanted to meet. May his family be comforted in their loss."

Posted by Janet

Source: <http://teenrisk.blogspot.com/2009/09/off-topic-gluten-free-blogger-dies.html>

David Marc Fischer Memorial Dinner

September 02, 2009

"I can't believe I'm typing this. It still isn't real to me. My fellow gluten-free blogger David Marc Fisher of Gluten-Free NYC died this summer. It was sudden and shocking. I'll miss his professionalism. He was an incredible asset to our celiac disease community. I already miss his friendly and intelligent debates on the celiac disease Meetups message board.

And David was so much more than a celiac disease blogger. Not long ago we had the opportunity to talk a bit after one of the local events. He explained to me how he was taking care of his aging parents. After that conversation I felt like I had seen another side of him. He was an all around nice guy.

I'd like to invite all of you to a dinner the NYC Celiac Disease Meetup Group has put together in memory of David. It will be at Lilli & Loo Monday, September 14th. David loved this restaurant and went there often. This will be an occasion where we can all comfort and support one another while sharing our best memories of our friend David."

*Kelly Courson
Celiac Chicks*

Source: <http://www.celiacchicks.com/2009/09/david-marc-fischer-memorial-dinner.html>

"I did not personally know David, but was a great fan of his blogs, all the way in Indiana and despite the lack of geographical relevance... [M]y thoughts and condolences are surely with all who knew him well. I am so sad that he is no longer with us. I hope you have a wonderful memorial dinner, and surely he will be there in spirit."

-Suzanne Rampton; Fishers, IN

"Joan and all of her staff would like to express their condolences to David's family and the entire Celiac community."

-Howard Popkin, Joan's GF Great Bakes

"I'm so sorry to hear of the loss. It is wonderful that you are looking for ways to honor him. In many ways that's what community is ultimately about."

*-Andres Glusman, Ann Fitzgibbons, Andrea Murphy
Meetup.com*

In Memorium: David Marc Fischer, Gluten-Free NYC

September 13th, 2009

"I'm greatly saddened to share the news that one of the forerunners in the online gluten-free community passed away this summer. After battling an aggressive form of cancer, David Marc Fischer was taken from us abruptly in August.

I have struggled to write about it as sadness begins to overwhelm me. David was a dear friend and support. The loss hit me in a profound way, and I know I must be experiencing only a glimmer of the pain his family is feeling.

I first met David at the Gluten-Free Cooking Spree in 2007, though we knew each other 'virtually' before that. We became fast friends once we crossed over from digital to real life. David and I both went to college at the University of Virginia. We shared tales of Charlottesville in years past and were constantly exchanging tips on restaurants and gluten-free products. David came to my apartment for gluten-free tastings – he introduced me to a variety of gluten-free beers and always knew the best sources for gluten-free breads and pastas. Who else could understand the funny stories that come about when dating gluten-free? He was such a positive person, I felt truly lucky to count him among my friends.

In addition to authoring *Gluten-Free NYC*, he also wrote *Blog About Town* and was remembered at Emdashes for his dedication to the New Yorker cartoon contest. While his memorial was in August, the Celiac Meetup Group in NYC is having a dinner in his honor Monday, September 14th. The dinner will begin at 7pm at Lilli and Loo's, one of David's favorite restaurants. After spending time in China after college, David LOVED Asian cuisine. Since he only ate at restaurants that were part of the Gluten-Free Restaurant Awareness Program, the arrival of Lilli and Loo's was truly a gift for him. I realize many of you are too far away to make it to dinner, but we are lucky to be able to use the Internet to connect and share.

It feels like yesterday that David and I were making risotto together at a gluten-free cooking class he invited me to. I am so grateful for his friendship, thoughtfulness, conversation, intelligence and cheer. My life is richer and the world is a better place because he was a part of it."

Catherine Oddenino
A Gluten Free Guide

Source: <http://aglutentreeguide.com/gluten-free-nyc-david-marc-fischer-in-memorium.html>

I'm very sad to hear about David. He had taken me up on my offer to come to the Fancy Food Show in June, so I visited with him at our booth and after he strolled the show. I think he enjoyed it. We emailed a bit about restaurants I should try while I was in the city and he was interested to hear my thoughts. I did manage to go to Lilli and Loo for the first time and we had a wonderful meal!

When I was telling David about the trip we had planned after we were leaving NYC, I mentioned that we would be near Plattsburgh, NY and he actually knew a restaurant up there that had a gluten free menu! I was so surprised! But we went there and it was a treat! (Irisés Café)

He was a knowledgeable and generous man and I am very sad to hear of his passing. The celiac community is richer because of him.

-Mary Waldner, owner of Mary's Gone Crackers