

OLD SAYBROOK NEIGHBORS

OCTOBER 2022

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Meet Tina Rupp & Family



Best Version Media

Photo by Kristen Schueler Photography



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By Lisa Lelas • Photos by Kristen Schueler Photography

Sylvie, Tina and Selene having fun making s'mores in their backyard!

Since moving to Old Saybrook full time from New York, Tina and her daughters, Sylvie and Selene have jumped right into the community with enthusiasm. Having a close-knit and artistic homelife together adds just the right touch of balance and perspective. "I want to raise two good citizens," smiles Tina, "teaching them how to be kind, respectful, independent and successful women who give back to society."

Tina Rupp was born and raised in Northfield, on the Jersey shore with one younger brother. She attended Rutgers University, earning her bachelor's degree in visual arts and German. During her junior year, Tina studied abroad in Germany and moved to Berlin the summer before graduation for an internship at a photo gallery there. "It was another excuse to live in Europe," she says, "while there I met some famous photographers, it was pretty cool!" After college, Tina began her career with a variety of jobs in the arts, starting as a receptionist for a German magazine in their New York office, moving on to working as a catalogue photographer's assistant and then freelancing for many photographers in the food business, allowing her opportunities to travel back to Europe and other parts of the world. By the time she was 28 years old, she had put together her own portfolio and decided to immerse herself into the food photography world. "A year later, I went out on my own. My first paid job was for Food & Wine Magazine. They selected one of my photos as their cover! I never needed to look for work again in the photography business." Tina started shooting for magazines and national brands such as Weight Watchers, Chipolte, Martha Stewart, the New York Times, Bon Appetit, to name a few. She was the feature photographer for Everyday with Rachel Ray magazine for years as well as her cookbooks. She photographed cookbooks for celebrities such as Oprah, Mario Batali,

and Giada DeLaurentis. Her career skyrocketed. She met and married her husband, also a photographer, and they settled in New York City where their first daughter was born.

"We purchased a weekend home in Old Saybrook in 2007. I have always lived by the shore and loved the antique homes of New England. Old Saybrook was the perfect choice and an ideal location because it was just 2 hours from New York. Plus, as a foodie, it has many great restaurants in the area!" By the time the family moved here full time in 2011, Tina had already secured many friends along the shoreline. Their younger daughter was born here. "I kept commuting to New York City for photo shoots for years, and in 2014, I also began a career in real estate." Working with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty (Essex office), Tina quickly earned the title 'Rookie of the Year' during her first year in the business. All this, while still doing food photography. "As part of my five-year plan, my real estate business ending up taking over my photography business. I still lean on my eye for visual design when featuring homes for sale in the best light." Now, as a single mom, Tina's mission is to instill within her daughters that same sense of joy and passion for life she has always instinctively had.

Both of her young daughters already have a zest for the arts and travel like their mother. Sylvie Webber, Tina's oldest daughter, is 13 years old in eighth grade at Old Saybrook Middle School. She enjoys painting, lacrosse, learning languages, playing instruments, taking art classes, babysitting and pet sitting. "I am learning German, like my mom did, and learning other languages too. I am also learning to play the electric bass guitar. When I was ten years old, during Covid, I started a dog walking business ("Claws n' Paws"). When I grow up, I'd like to be some kind of Doctor of Medicine." Younger daughter,



The girls enjoying some artistic down time

Selene Webber is eleven years old and in sixth grade at Old Saybrook Middle School. Like the rest of her artistic tribe, she enjoys drawing, reading and baking. As an avid lover of languages, Selene is currently studying French, Japanese and German. "My favorite subject in school is art class because it's fun and I love it." One of the things she enjoys most about living in Old Saybrook is that she can walk to her friends' homes, mini-golf or downtown. "When I grow up, I'd like to be a fashion designer and photographer!" The girls enjoy spending time at home with their mom and their beloved kittens, Ava and Alvin.

Life in Old Saybrook has been nice for Tina for her daughters. "We love it here. It's a great location, being surrounded by water. It's such a family-oriented town with fun events like the Torch Light and Memorial Day



Mom & her girls

Parades," says Tina and adds, "I've seen the town change for the better right before my eyes. It's really prospering now. It's the place to be!"

The family loves the beach, and they enjoy the fall, especially Halloween season. "We throw an annual trick-or-treating party for friends and neighbors each year. We love to take walks together through North Cove or the Causeway and are involved in a lot of activities." Tina entertains often, loves traveling, flower gardening, yoga, baking, reading and hiking.

Giving back to their community comes natural to them. Tina volunteers for the Architectural Review Board, Habitat for Humanity, and hosts fundraisers for her daughters' sports team. They all also help out at Daniel Cosgrove animal shelter.



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