



bella nonna

MATRIARCH & MUSE:
DORA FERRARA AT
WESTWIND ORCHARD
IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

photos by Genti and Hyers



LAURA AND
DORA FERRARA



Meet Dora Ferrara, known to the visitors of Westwind Orchard as Nonna. She is the mother of Laura Ferrara, who runs the orchard in Accord, N.Y., with her husband Fabio Chizzola. (The two also have full-time careers in fashion: Ferrara is the senior fashion editor at large at *Glamour*; Chizzola is a photographer.) Westwind is very much a family affair: everyone pitches in, from their son Matteo to Nonna Pia, Fabio's mother who visits each fall from Rome to make *ciambella*, *crosta di lamponi*, to Nonna Dora. It is a bustling, beautiful spot where you can pick your own organic apples; stop by the farm shop for honey, jam, or maple syrup (also available via mail order); or swing by the weekend pizza parties for a pie topped with the garden's bounty: basil, zucchini, squash blossoms, and tomatoes.

Dora Ferrara was born in Italy and raised her family in Park Slope, Brooklyn, where she would shop as if back in the old country. "On the weekends, we would embark on this ritual of gathering ingredients for the following week's meals, and each

store had a specific function," remembered Laura. "She would drag me from shop to shop on the hunt for the perfect overripe tomato for *carne alla pizzaiola*, *cavatelli* with *ragu*, and *braciola*. She would always ask, 'Is there anything better in the back?' insisting on getting the best of the best."

Dora would make everything from scratch—vinegar, pickled vegetables, cakes, *taralli* with fennel, *frittata* on *focaccia*, even *gelatina di maiale* that she would cool on the fire escape in winter. Today, at 87, she still forages, cooks, and farms.

"She raised us to value every bit of food with the awareness that a group of people took the time to grow, raise, or cook it for us," said Laura. "As an adult, I find myself partaking in the same market-gathering ritual. It's funny how things have come full circle, without me consciously *choosing* to have this 'lifestyle.' I realize that my mother has been my role model through all of this."

