

DAFFODIL HILL



Book Club Kit

JAKE KEISER

A Note from Jake

Hello Readers!

Thank you for choosing my book, *Daffodil Hill*, for your book club read!

It's been almost ten years since I took the life-changing plunge into living a more authentic life. That choice was the catalyst that forced me into dealing with past trauma and ultimately gifted me with immense emotional freedom.

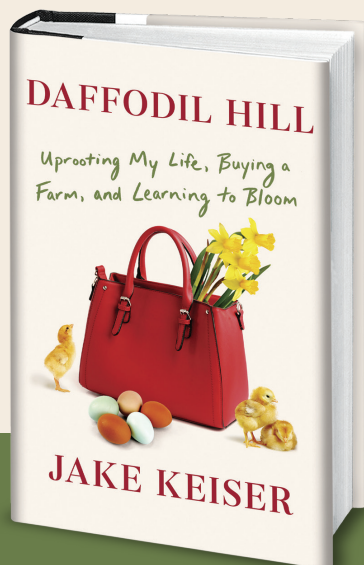
Each day, living with nature presented new experiences and sometimes epic challenges that rocked me to the core. Over time, as I settled into peacefulness, I began to delight in being creative again. Inspiration wasn't something I'd felt since I was a child and the creative outlets seemed endless. Whether it was crafting with items provided by Mother Nature or exploring new culinary delights in the kitchen, there was always something new to learn.

I've included a couple recipes I mentioned in the book. One is for cajeta (goat milk caramel sauce) and one is for watermelon mint lemonade. Should you decide to make the cajeta, you can serve it over ice cream, with sliced apples or other fruits, or even use it to sweeten and flavor coffee or hot cocoa. Or, if you prefer the refreshing watermelon mint lemonade, you can always enhance it with champagne or add some kick with your favorite spirit.

Once you've finished *Daffodil Hill*, I'd love to hear what resonated with you. Have you experienced loss or trauma you thought would destroy you? Have you ever examined your own behavior, patterns, or relationships and wondered why you put up with things you did? Have you ever lived an entirely separate life in a secret fantasy, if only in your own imagination? If you'd like to share what you related to, feel free to reach out via my website guccitogoats.com/.

It is my sincere hope that each and every one of you is loving to yourself and finds the presence that allows you to bloom.

<3 Jake





Discussion Questions

1. What surprised you about *Daffodil Hill*? Did you have any emotional reactions to elements of Jake's story? Discuss.
2. Which scene in the book stuck with you the most? Why?
3. Did you resonate with the author's search for a different way of living and the search for something more? If so, how? If not, why not?
4. While living in Tampa, Jake was accustomed to doing many things she disliked. She makes a mental list and reevaluates each person, activity, or behavior and, "in the name of not being a fraud in her own life," eventually disconnects from anything that doesn't serve her or "simply wasn't truly satisfying." Follow this exercise and make your own list. What would you let go of in your life?
5. As we meet the animals in *Daffodil Hill*, we get to know their unique quirks and personalities. Which of Jake's farm animals would you love to meet the most? Why?
6. Jake exhibits a sense of humor even during times of hardship. What for you were the funniest moments in the book? What does humor add to the overall effect of the author's story?
7. Compare Jake's "city life" to her "farm life." What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which most closely resembles your way of life? Did reading this memoir challenge the way you view any of your lifestyle choices?
8. Jake writes, "The quietness of this life was actually allowing me to learn about who I really was, and who I wanted to be." Why do you think the stillness of farm life inspired such a fundamental change in the author? To what extent do you think we need solitude and silence to truly understand ourselves?
9. In what ways does the past manifest itself in the author's new life in Mississippi? How does Jake deal with the pain of her history? What does this tell us about the relationship between past and present? Why is this important in her healing process?
10. Jake is very forthcoming about the traumas and challenges she has suffered, as well as her feelings of inadequacy, grief, anxiety, and depression. Did you relate to or find comfort in the author's sincerity? Discuss.
11. Motherhood has always been one of Jake's greatest desires and not having children means one of her worst fears in life comes true. Nonetheless, Jake finds the purpose and happiness she always searched for in life. What can we learn from Jake's story about the ways our plans can shift, and how to move forward with acceptance and joy?
12. Jake says, "Choosing your truth isn't always the easy choice." Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?



Meet the Animals



COCO CHANEL



CLOVER



POPPY



HAZEL



LUCA

Check out more pics of the farm on Jake's Instagram and Facebook:



@jake_keiser_author



@GuccitoGoats

Cajeta (Goat milk caramel sauce)

“I followed the scent of warm bubbly goodness into the kitchen . . .
I’ve never been hugely into sweets, but seeing and smelling the
creamy caramel made my mouth water.” —*Daffodil Hill*

Whenever I have a couple extra quarts of goat milk, I love to make caramel sauce (Cajeta). It can be made with fresh cow’s milk too, but then it’s called dulce de leche.

It’s simply decadent! Kids love it, adults love it. I always give extra jars to family and friends, otherwise I can’t stop eating it. Drizzle it over ice cream, use as a fruit dip, mix it with popcorn and bake, add it to sugar cookies, however you wish you use it you’ll love this creamy treat

Ingredients:



- 2 quarts whole milk
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 to 2 tsp. vanilla
- ½ tsp. baking soda—dissolved into a little milk—a tablespoon of milk is fine
- Salt (optional). I use this for salted caramel: add slowly a couple pinches at a time and to taste—be careful to not over-salt.

Process:

1. Add the milk and sugar in a large (preferably tall) pot and bring to a slow, rolling boil.
2. When it’s simmering, remove from heat and slowly add the baking soda mix. Usually it will bubble up and can often double in size—which is why you want a large pot.
3. Once the mixture has settled, put it back on the heat and stir often while you cook down the mixture. You’ll start to see it thicken and turn caramel color. I usually use medium to medium-high heat, but I prefer a slower process and tend to keep it a more to medium. This can easily take an hour or longer.
4. When the caramel is the consistency of syrup, you can add the vanilla (and salt) and remove from the heat. It will thicken a bit as it cools. I also add it to jars before it cools for ease of pouring.

Depending upon how much you reduce it, this usually makes 3 small jars of sauce. Sometimes I have an extra quarter jar. ENJOY!

Fresh Watermelon Mint Lemonade

“The perfect cooling afternoon beverage.” —*Daffodil Hill*



Ingredients:

- For simple syrup: 1 cup granulated sugar and 1 cup water
- 10 cups watermelon (use seedless if blending or you can use varieties with seeds if you juice it)
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup mint leaves



Process:

1. Simple syrup: Over medium-high heat, combine the sugar and water until the sugar is dissolved and remove from heat. If you want to kick up the mint flavor you can add a few mint leaves to the mixture while it cools.
2. Prep the watermelon—there are two ways to do this:
 - Option 1: Less waste and healthier (but can result in chunky bits):
Puree the watermelon in a blender until fine.
 - Option 2: Juice the watermelon in a juicer. What to do with leftover pulp?
Chickens and goats love leftover pulp!
3. Add the watermelon liquid to the blender with the lemon juice and mint. Blend until the mint is fine. Taste for sweetness: some melons and lemons are sweeter than others, so this part is important!
4. Pour simple syrup into watermelon mixture a ¼ at a time, tasting as you go (be sure to remove any mint leaves added to the syrup first).
5. Pour the Watermelon Mint Lemonade into a lovely pitcher, chill.

Serve chilled as is, with champagne, or add your favorite alcohol.