

# Cookbook author Ina Garten sweetens Hamptons in the Heights fundraiser



Ina Garten (right), TV's "Barefoot Contessa," with husband Jeffrey during the Hampton in the Heights fundraiser for the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden at the Allegheny Country Club.

By **Kate Benz**

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Figuring out how to keep tabs on the Barefoot Contessa amongst a sea of 425 mingling throughout the Allegheny Country Club was simple: Just look for the roving cluster of admirers.

**Ina Garten**, The New York Times best-selling author and Food Network darling, enjoyed a rock-star welcome throughout the evening during **The Hamptons in the Heights**, hosted by the **Pittsburgh Botanic Garden** on June 1.

"I'm a big fan of gardens, which is also why I decided to do this. I really believe in them and I think they're wonderful places to be. They're so inspiring," she said.

Also inspiring was the woman herself, whose widespread appeal clearly wasn't lost on a crowd that seemed to count just about everyone as the proud owner of at least one of her cookbooks. "Often my wife (**BJ**) will bring

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### About Kate Benz

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something to the table and, if it's good, she'll say, 'Ina showed me how to do it,'" PBG prez **Greg Nace** said.

From an ambience standpoint, if the storybook setting courtesy of Sewickley Heights wasn't enough to put co-chairs **Bridgette** and **Bill Kolano**, **David Thor** and board chair **Beverlynn** and **Steve Elliott** into a mood reflective of their surroundings, then the endless parade of loveliness surely was.

Embracing the 'garden chic' dress code and punctuating the evening with pops of pretty were **Laurie Bly** (with **James**), **Cindy Engler** (with **Rich**), **Kim McDonald** and **Rose Romboski** (with **Larry**), while the gents weren't too shabby, either, thanks to pastel ties, seersucker suits, straw fedoras and more than a few spring suit coats.

Indoors, **Nancy Byrnes** (with **Ed**) unveiled a vision that looked good enough to eat, highlighted by candy-colored paper lanterns strung whimsically across the ballroom, and vases filled with sorbet-hue petals from a handful of area florists including Cuttings, Roxanne's Dried Flowers, Allison McGeary, Toadflax, and Bill Chisnell Productions.

Making good on its promise to "celebrate the glories of summer," the evening epitomized the kind of warm night that you just don't want to see come to an end.

On the list were **Kathy** and **Lou Testoni**, **Jen** and **T.J. McCrady**, **Margot** and **Gregory Curran**, **Coco** and **John Rudolf**, **Debbie** and **Mike Barbarita**, **Dotti** and **John Bechtol**, **Annie Hanna Engel** and **Gus Engel**, **Cate Linn**, **Peggy** and **Steve McKnight**, **Catherine Loevner**, **Selma Sherman**, and **Bill** and **Lisa Worms**.

The evening raised \$200K.