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Joey + Rory Find Recipe for Success



A visit with celebrity chef Jon Ashton during CMA Music Fest gave husband and wife duo Joey + Rory a chance to chat about two of their favorite topics -- music and food. The British chef held court in the Family Fun Zone where he welcomed Joey + Rory to the stage for a question and answer session in front of a crowd of Music Fest attendees and played music from the duo's debut album, *The Life of a Song*.

"We'd never met Jon before," Joey told *The Boot* backstage after their segment. "He just really wanted to know who we were and what we were doing. I really liked him. He's very sharp."

The event with Jon Ashton was just one of the many activities the busy couple engaged in during CMA Music Fest. Rory Lee Feek has long been one of Nashville's most successful songwriters, responsible for such hits as Blake Shelton's 'Some Beach' and Jimmy Wayne's 'I Will.' Joey Martin recorded a solo album in 2005 titled *Strong Enough to Cry*. The couple merged careers to compete on CMT's 'Can You Duet?' series in 2008 and placed third in the competition. Soon after, they signed with Sugar Hill/Vanguard Records.

In addition to their burgeoning career as recording artists, Joey is co-owner of Marcy Jo's Mealhouse. The restaurant is located near Joey and Rory's farm in Pottsville, Tenn. "We opened it two and a half years ago and it's doing really well," says Joey. "For the first year, I was hands-on completely. Marcy is Rory's sister, so it's been a family venture having this restaurant together. It was just Marcy and I for the first year, and then Rory and I got cast on 'Can You Duet?', and I had to leave for about six weeks while the taping was taking place. Once the taping was over, I came back and continued working and then the show aired on TV and all of a sudden, people started finding out more about Marcy Jo's. So now, Marcy Jo's has really exploded. We have people that come from everywhere ... When we are home for a couple of days, I go down and still make biscuits and help with the breads and throw an apron on, serve coffee and take people's orders."

"That's always a big surprise to our customers that drive in from Ohio or Florida or Michigan or Kentucky," Rory says. "Joey worked last Saturday. She just came in and waited tables. Sometimes we sing for 20,000 people, and a day or two later she's waiting tables. That's always really neat to see and she enjoys it."

Rory is quick to point out that his wife's cooking skills aren't just for Marcy Jo patrons. "My wife is a great cook, and not only down at the restaurant," says Rory. "She wakes up in the morning and cooks for the family, even this morning when we have so many things going on. It's so important to her to make breakfast for us. She made eggs and bacon and everything."

It's obvious the couple compliments each other, as Joey points out Rory takes the lead on handling the couple's

business. "The whole time I'm making breakfast, he's on the internet," Joey points out. "He's always looking for new opportunities or to open doors, just outside the box things. That's where he really shines and I take the backseat."

Joey + Rory's career has taken off since the release of their debut album last fall. Their first single, 'Cheater, Cheater,' became a Top 30 hit and earned a nomination in the Top Vocal Duo category at the Academy of Country Music Awards. In May, they hosted their first annual Bib & Buckle Festival, which Rory refers to as a "baby Bonnaroo." Joey + Rory were also tapped to be spokespersons for Overstock.com and have been seen in the company's TV commercials.

"It's very taxing and draining," Rory says of the increasing demands of their career, "but it's also such a great opportunity that we both work as hard as we can. Then when we're home, we just concentrate on being together and just doing regular home stuff. So it's really working great. The best part is we're still as intact and as happy as last year when we didn't have this going on. That's saying a lot I think."

"We are best friends. We do everything together," Joey says. "If one of us were doing this by ourselves, it would be unbelievably hard. There would be so much stress on our relationship, because one would be on the road and one would be at home, and we'd be constantly away from each other. But the way that it is, we literally get to experience every single moment, good and bad, and see it first hand together. We get up together. We go to bed together. We go to neat hotels and great restaurants and travel the country together. So that's really the key in keeping our marriage strong."

The couple celebrated seven years of marriage on Monday, and their plans were simple. "I think we're going to go look for outfits for the CMT Awards," she says. "Although I think at the end of the evening we're going to have steaks on the campfire with a glass of wine."

Adds Rory, "That's our favorite thing to do!"

Joey + Rory shared one of their favorite recipes exclusively with The Boot:

Joey's Carrot Cake

2 cups all purpose flour	2 cups sugar
1 tsp baking powder	1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon	3 cups shredded carrots
1 cup vegetable oil	4 eggs
1 cup raisins (optional)	Cream Cheese frosting

Mix in large mixing bowl flour, sugar, powder, soda and cinnamon. In another bowl, combine carrots, oil and eggs. Mix the wet with the dry by hand or electric mixer. Stir in raisins. Pour into greased and floured 9x13 or round cake pans. Bake 30-35 minutes until done in center. Cool on wire rack. Frost with cream cheese frosting and store in refrigerator. Makes 12-16 servings.

Cream Cheese Frosting

8 oz cream cheese softened	½ cup butter softened (1 stick)
2 t. vanilla	4 ½ cups powdered sugar

Using electric mixer, cream the cheese and butter till blended well. Add 2 cups powdered sugar and mix well. Add remaining powdered sugar and vanilla and mix well. Will ice tops of two 9" cakes or one 9 x 13.