

The International Center's Women's Book Club – Update!

## A FEAST OF FRIENDSHIP

January 2023

After two years meeting weekly at the home of the book club's facilitator, it had been two long years without an in-person gathering. The International Center's Women's Book Club had been meeting every week on zoom since the start of the pandemic. As the women welcomed their fifth year of discussing their books and their lives, everyone agreed, "Enough!" It was time to meet in person again!

On Tuesday, January 3, 2023, to welcome in the new year, the book club women met at Safia's apartment in Brooklyn. Safia had told everyone she was preparing Couscous. We arrived to find a six-course meal for lunch! As you might imagine, there was no book discussion that day! We caught up on our lives with lots of hugging and laughter! We, also, had such fun playing with Liam, Safia's 21-month-old son.



What was the feast, you might ask? First picture the table set with cloth napkins, water by each person's side, and an array of beautiful plates and bowls. We began with an appetizer of roasted peppers and tomatoes ("Hmiss") and homemade bread ("Aghroum"), followed by a delicious soup of crushed green wheat and meat ("Chorba Frik"), then fried savory pastries filled with ground beef and cheese ("Bourek"), Couscous with meat, carrots and more, and finally, a green salad with feta. Did I say "finally?" Not at all! Our dessert was individual Tiramisus! As we departed after hours of joy together, Safia handed each of us a box of homemade cookies! Here's a photo to see the Couscous, the Bourek, the Hmiss, and the salad. A fine Algerian restaurant worthy of three Michelin stars!

Here we are L-R: Liam, Safia (Algeria), Tamara (facilitator), Iryna (Ukraine), Ladya (Indonesia), and Ana (Mexico). Missing: Elida (Albania). Iryna made my beret. We've decided that we'll meet in person every four or five weeks and that no one can match the feast of friendship!

