

# **Herbed Cream Cheese + Roasted Eggplant Roll Ups.**

## Herbed Cream Cheese & Roasted Eggplant Rollups



So I'm having an affair. I am 100% falling in love with the State of California. Seriously, Cali, where have you been all my life!? Ok, well, I actually know the answer to that previous question but whatever. I guess the more appropriate question would be,

where have I been this whole time?! I mean, I figured I'd like California in general and kind of like Los Angeles but I never thought I'd like it this much. I mean, this morning I was at the farmer's market in my neighborhood and tonight I'm going to Drag Queen bingo. I mean, what's not to love in a city that offers a mommy that kind of diverse Sunday Funday?!



Choppin'

But in all seriousness, being away from my husband has been extremely hard and draining, but this city (along with my daughter and my mom) has kept me company and I'm so grateful.

This week at work has been full of orientation meetings, CPR

training, more meetings, ice cream and then even more meetings. My 'mommy guilt' has only increased with every work day that passes by. Even with my mom here, I still feel incredibly guilty every time I leave the house. I know this feeling is completely useless but it's still very real for me.

Tonight's night out with my dear friend, Jessie, is a huge personal triumph. I've tried several times to attend a workout class with her during the week, after work, but once I'm home the idea of leaving the kiddo again just tears at my heart-strings. I'm hoping that once she's at school and she has a more engaged daily schedule, I won't feel so guilty if I leave for an hour or so in the evening in order to take care of myself. I am such a frikkin' hypocrite right now because I am the first one to advocate for self-care and here I am completely ignoring my own advocacy pitch. I'll get there.

I'll get there eventually, right? So far, my nights have looked a lot like me putting the kid to bed by 8pm and then climbing into bed with a mug of Trader Joe's vanilla soy ice cream (covered with sprinkles, obvs.) and watching reruns of *Parks and Rec*, which, by the way, is my new favorite show (sorry *Nashville*). I'm not sure where I was around 5 years ago when everyone was on board with this show but whatever.

I'm here now and I'm completely obsessed with Ron Swanson, Leslie Knope and the whole lot. So yes, I guess this means I'm now 3-timing my husband with the State of California, the City of Los Angeles and a hilarious NBC mockumentary. That doesn't make me 'loose', right?





This Week's Highlights: Ice Cream at Carmela's,  
Homemade Chocolate Chip Cookies for New Co-Workers;  
Siona's First Love; Chickpeas in Spices

So the recipe below is for my go-to Shabbat lunch and/or picnic favorite meal. It's been revealed recently that some of my favorite people don't like eggplant because of the texture, but I've decided to keep them in my life, despite the CRAZINESS of not liking eggplant. I L-O-V-E love eggplant.

It's my favorite vegetable of all time. This recipe is easy, delicious and doesn't need to be assembled until the day of Shabbat so it's great for the last minute Shabbat meal scramble (y'all know what I'm talking about). Enjoy and have a wonderful week.



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## A Birthday Cake for Two – A Guest Post by Molly Yeh



Cake for Two

Hi dear readers! First and foremost, I'd like to start off this post by wishing my sweet Miss Siona Mae a very happy birthday. Yep, another year has gone by and the kiddo is 2.

I'm kind of shocked at what we've gone through together in the last 2 years. We've traveled to Montana, North Carolina, Kentucky, New Jersey, California, and a few other states I'm probably forgetting. We've had to say good-bye to her great grandmother while also meeting some of my oldest, dearest friends. She's learned how to walk, talk, swim, sing, feed herself, and ask for what she wants (while remembering her manners . . . most of the time). She's obsessed with Pharrel, sand and and the color purple (the actual color, not the book or movie. Give her time people). Forgive the extra layer of cheese with this paragraph, but I'm just so proud to be her mom.





WOW



My favorite picture of all time – in our custom-made Jewhungry aprons. The face she has is too much.

Ok, quick update before getting into this delicious guest post by the incredibly talented Molly Yeh of, My Name is Yeh. When last we spoke, we were gearing up for husband to go back to Florida. Well, the band-aid has been ripped off and he is officially back in Miami. Saying good-bye was ROUGH. I did my very best to keep the tears from flowing so that I could appear somewhat strong for the kiddo, but once we were outside and waiting for the Super Shuttle to arrive, the tears just came. I wrestled with how I should present myself for the sake of the kiddo for so long. Should I hold back the tears

and stay 'strong' for her so that it wouldn't freak her out to see mommy upset or should I just let go and let flow? Ultimately, what I realized was that it didn't matter what I 'decided' was the best course of action for in that moment, I was going to feel what I was going to feel. I want Siona to know that it's OK to feel things, ALL things, whether good or bad. I want her to know that emotions are not something to be ashamed of but rather, it's what we do with our emotions that truly makes the moment. And so, some tears came down and I explained why I was sad and where the tears were coming from, and then we immediately marched ourselves right upstairs to our neighbors apartment so that Siona could play with her bestie and mama could have a big ol' glass of wine. We now fill our days with lots of phone calls and FaceTime (I love technology). I truly don't know how folks existed before FaceTime. I really don't (\*\*this post was in no way sponsored by Apple. I just really, really appreciate technology).





A family portrait taken in the forests of Limekiln State Park

My mom is in town now to help and I've had to hire a



babysitter for a couple hours a day to take care of Siona during this time that I'm at work and her school is still not in session. I keep thinking about good ol' Hilary Clinton's message about how it takes a village to raise a child. One never really understands how true that statement is until you move, leave your established village behind and realize that the only way you're going to survive is to hire a village. We're in the beginning stages of this temporary single-parent situation and I'm balancing the emotions of panic and guilt. How fun! Guilt for every time I walk out the door to go to work and leave her with a babysitter and panic because I work at a school and there are back to school nights and parent luncheons and grade-level trips and how the @#\*\$ am I supposed to do all that when it's just me? I miss my Miami village. I miss my hubby.









my heart.

But, enough of that. There's a cake to get to! An adorable cake made by Molly Yeh! If you're living in a cave (albeit



with amazing WiFi because you're reading this post) and you've never heard of Molly Yeh before, let me please introduce you to her. She's got more charm in her pinky finger than I could ever hope to dream for. She's a Juliard-trained percussionist, recently engaged to her egg boy (MAZAL TOV!) and lives on his family's farm in North Dakota. She also happens to be incredibly talented in the art of baking/cooking and photography. We became modern-day pen pals when she wrote a comment on my shakshuka post and I couldn't breathe all day because Molly Yeh had read my blog! I decided I should write to say 'thank you for reading' and several months later I got the balls to ask her if she'd write a guest post for my beloved Siona's 2nd birthday. To no surprise at all, because she's that selfless, she said yes! Below is her birthday cake for Siona. It seems like such a yummy, user-friendly recipe I might actually attempt it myself. Happy birthday to my Siona and thank you Miss Molly.



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