

# **Baked Chocolate Chai Donuts with Tahini Glaze**



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So you might be thinking to yourself, “Dude, Whit, it’s Chanukah time! Why aren’t you frying those donuts!?!” Well

friends, because I'd rather fry my latkes and bake my donuts then do both so my first recipe of the season is a baked recipe. Also, it's been seeming like every. single. person I work with is on a specialty diet and since every time I bake for a post, I take the extras into work, I figured baked donuts would have a better chance of actually being eaten than fried donuts. Even my beloved co-worker, Julee, who is like my appetite-twin, is on a specialty diet. She told me about how she made fried onions out of buckwheat flour and coconut oil and a little part of me died inside. No. No, no no. Sigh. So, therefore, I give you baked donuts.

So, with that out of the way . . . how are you? How was your Thanksgiving? I tend to think of Thanksgiving as my holiday 'off'. After the intensity (and expense) of the high holidays I want nothing to do on Thanksgiving but drink coffee, watch the Macy's Day Parade, maybe make a pie or two and then head to someone else's house for dinner, which is exactly what we did. Thank you, friends.



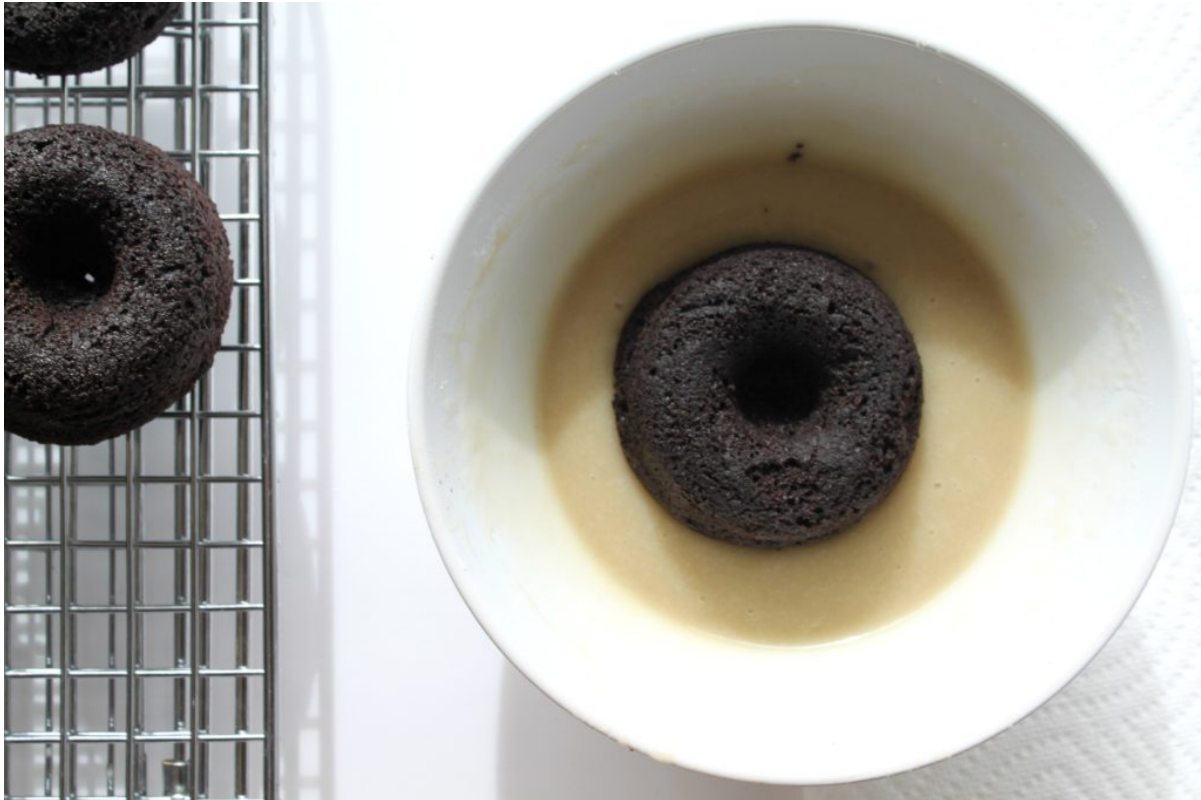


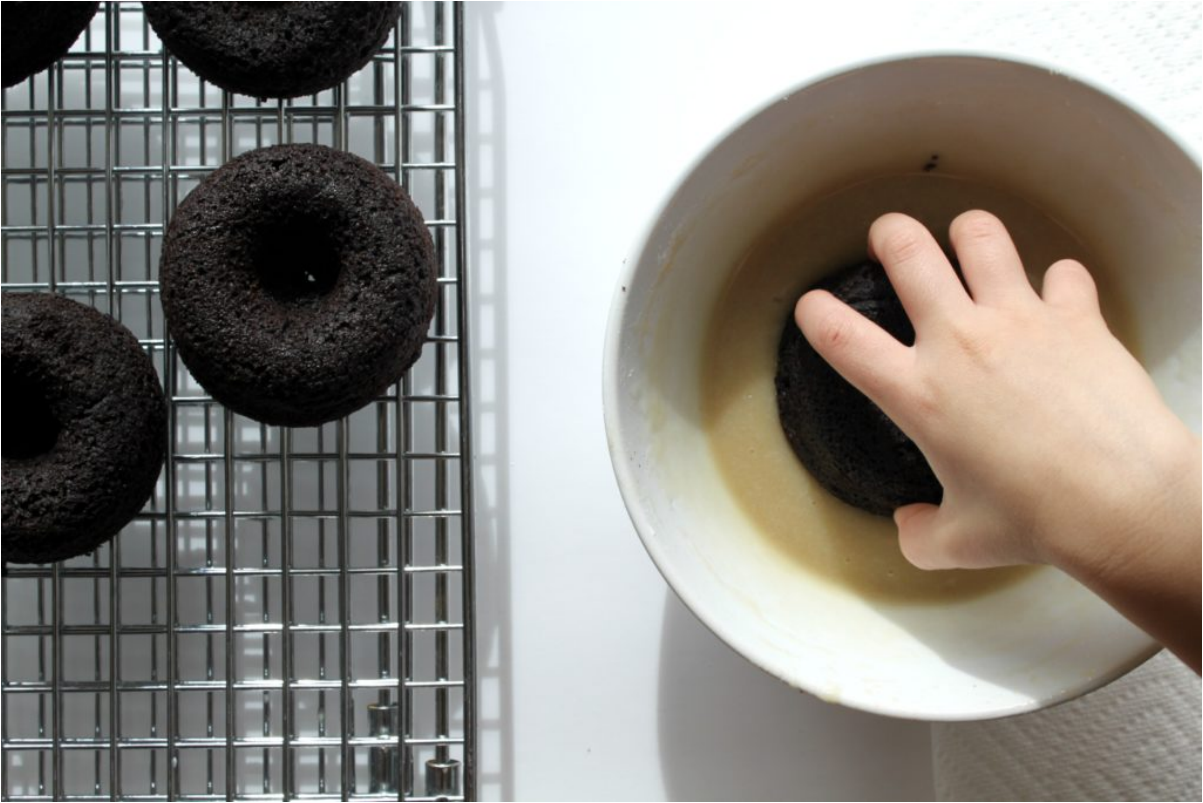


Donuts have become one of my new LA delights (along with ramen, tacos and specialty ice cream parlors). They aren't a foodie treat I really enjoyed until moving here. What's ridiculous is that apparently about a year ago, a Dunkin' Donuts opened in Downtown L.A. and folks were lined up around the block for it. There were articles written about it and people missed work just to get their hands on it. I personally do not get the obsession with the Dunkin'. Maybe it's because I grew up with Dunkin' Donuts but also cause it's a donut and as much as I love yummy treats, I don't love waiting in line for well, anything. That said, now that I've dabbled in baked donuts and realize how easy they are to make, I don't foresee heading to a lot of donut places anymore. Once you've got the foundation of the mixture for your donut down, you can mix in other spices or toppings as you see fit. Since I'm a MAJOR tahini fan, I, of course, needed to make something that paired nicely with tahini and so a nice moist chocolate donut spiced with chai flavors won out. I originally had no plans to top these bad boys with sprinkles but then my sous chef, Siona,



had to help me with this recipe, which meant that there would be sprinkles involved. And, to be honest, it totally elevated the donut. That Siona . . . I tell ya.













## Ingredients

- 1/3 c. + 1 tbsp. milk
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 c. unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1/4 c. white whole wheat flour
- 1/4 c. unsweetened cocoa powder (I like Hershey's Special Dark)
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 c. sugar
- 3 tbsp. cold brew coffee or cold espresso

- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1 large egg

### **Tahini Glaze**

- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 3 tbsp. tahini
- 3 tbsp. milk
- dash of kosher salt
- sprinkles (optional)

*Just a note – I use piping bags for getting the dough into the donut pan. I used to use a small spoon until reading about this little piping bag tip from an old issue Bon Appetit and haven't looked back. Also, when storing leftovers store uncovered, otherwise, donuts will get goopy.*

### **Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a small bowl, mix together milk and vinegar (Mazal! You've just made buttermilk!). Allow to sit for about 5 minutes to curdle. Melt butter in a small bowl and set aside to cool.
3. Meanwhile, sift together flours, cocoa, baking soda, sea salt, and chai spices in a large bowl. Set aside.
4. Into the cooled butter, whisk in sugar, honey, coffee, and egg until evenly combined. Add in buttermilk.
5. Whisk together wet and dry ingredients until just combined. Over-mixing will create a dense donut.
6. Spray donut pan. Add batter to a piping bag and pipe evenly into the pan (about 2/3 full). You will have a little extra batter. Make a couple donut holes or mini donuts.
7. Bake for 7 minutes. Allow to cool 1 minute before turning pan over to remove donuts onto a cooling rack.
8. Meanwhile, make glaze. In a flat-bottomed bowl, whisk together half and half and powdered sugar until smooth.
9. Once donuts have cooled completely, about 15-20 minutes,



dunk in glaze, flipping to cover the entire donut as expertly demonstrated by Siona in the pictures above. Place on cooling rack and allow to dry for a few minutes. If going for sprinkles, dump a bunch of them in another small bowl and dunk the glazed donut in just as you did into the tahini glaze.

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## **mini Pumpkin + Kale Mac n' Cheese Pot Pie**



We are done. The high holidays of 5777 have come to a close. Seriously folks who celebrated, give yourself a hand. That was exhausting, no? I feel like Rosh Hashanah was, like, 5 years ago. I haven't counted the number of meals I cooked this high

holiday season but suffice it to say, it was A LOT. I mean, gobs of roast chicken and potatoes, tons of salads and apple-themed desserts and more homemade challah than you can shake a stick at. I need a cleanse (if only I believed in 'cleanses').



Our Teahouse in Topanga Canyon





Epic tree swing

This holiday season we were home save for a quick little jaunt to the cutest little hippie commune we could find that was only 30 minutes from our apartment. I don't know how we stumbled across this little teahouse on Air B n' B but we snatched it up as soon as we saw it. The kitchen is on the porch, there's an epic tree swing in the front yard and a fully-stocked outhouse. We hit 'book' as soon as we saw it. Thank goodness. We needed to get away. We live in a community that is certainly bustling with religiously observant Jews as well as your fair share of non-observant Israelis but all of friends we've made through our synagogue live waaaaay too far away for a family walk for a dinner or a lunch on a high holiday. If you've read this blog before, you'll know that our family is religiously observant, which means that for every Shabbat and holiday, we adhere to the strict, "no energy-usage" rule. This means that we do not operate cars, our phones, the TV or computer or even the coffee maker (that said, Gd did invent the automatic coffee maker and I love her

for it). We have a pretty set routine for our Shabbat observance but these two-day holiday blackouts can get kinda exhausting after a while. I mean, I'm deeply in love with my little family but sometimes, we need a guest in the house to give us a break from each other.



wEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!





I feel like I'm being watched. Hmmm . . .

And so, since we did not have guests over for the first of the Sukkot holidays, we headed out to our little commune in Topanga Canyon for a bit of respite. It was kind of like camping but, like not. The kids slept great. We slept so-so. Husband and I drank copious amounts of coffee and we attempted a 'hike' but the roads were too narrow and not friendly enough for us wandering Jews. So we played board games and explored the other areas of the property and spent a considerable amount of time on that epic tree swing. We were sad to come home and even though we were exhausted, we were completely refreshed. Thank you, Air B n' B.





Siona's turn to play with the camera.



My reality . . . there's always someone at my feet or on my chest.



This baby. She makes me SO DANG happy.





Coffee tastes EVEN better when it's brewed in the French press in an outdoor kitchen.

OK, I'm not a huge pumpkin-eater (cheater, cheater?!), but I was asked by the lovely and talented, Sara Cornelius and Aimee Twigger of Cake Over Steak and Twigg Studios, respectively, who invited me to join in on their virtual pumpkin party! Sadly, the 'party' happened on Monday, Simchat Torah, but hey, isn't there something out there about being late and fashionable!? There are a TON of amazing bloggers involved in this here sweet pumpkin party and you can find them all by searching the hashtag, [#virtualpumpkinparty](#), on Instagram.









a dog, a penguin, a dolphin, a cat.





Close up of dog, cause it's too dang cute.



**mini Pumpkin and Kale Mac n' Cheese Pie**

### **Dough Ingredients:**

2 $\frac{1}{4}$  cups all-purpose flour  
1 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon kosher salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (1 stick) chilled unsalted butter, cut into pieces  
1 large egg, beaten to blend  
1 tablespoon distilled white vinegar

### **Pumpkin + Kale Mac n' Cheese Ingredients:**

2 cup uncooked elbow macaroni  
1 tbsp kosher salt  
2 tbsp unsalted butter  
2 tbsp all-purpose flour  
1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup milk, heavy cream, or half-and-half\*\*  
8 oz shredded Monterrey Jack cheese  
8 oz extra shredded sharp white Vermont cheddar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of pumpkin puree (read: NOT pumpkin pie filling)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup frozen curly blue kale  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp nutmeg  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp cinnamon  
1 tbsp kosher salt

### **Pie Dough Directions:**

Whisk flour and salt in a large bowl. Work in butter with your fingers until only pea-size pieces remain. Combine egg, vinegar, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup ice water in a small bowl and drizzle over flour mixture; quickly work in with your fingers until a shaggy dough forms.

Turn out dough onto a work surface and press together, working just enough to form a smooth ball with no dry spots. Wrap in plastic and chill until very cold, at least 2 hours.

### **Pumpkin + Kale Mac n' Cheese Directions:**

Fill a large stockpot with water, add your first tablespoon of kosher salt and bring to a boil. Add in the pasta and cook



ONLY 5 – 6 minutes or just before perfect al dente (the pasta will cook more while it's in the oven so you want to leave it a little underdone during the initial cook). Drain pasta over the sink and run cold water over it to stop additional cooking. Set aside.

While the pasta is cooking, melt the butter in a 4-quart sauce pan over medium heat. When the butter has melted and has started to bubble, whisk in the flour; cook for roughly 1 minute, whisking constantly. Gradually whisk in the milk until no lumps remain. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook milk mixture, whisking frequently, until it thickens and bubbles, about 8 minutes.

Remove sauce pan from the heat and by the handful (SET ASIDE about 1/2 a cup of shredded cheese to be added to the mac n' cheese bowl), stir in the cheeses allowing all of the cheese to melt into the sauce before adding more. Return the pot to the stove and turn the heat to low. Cook for an additional 1 – 2 minutes, stirring constantly, to ensure all cheese is melted. Add in the nutmeg, cinnamon and kosher salt. Taste and adjust seasonings as you see fit.

Add cooked pasta to a large bowl. Pour in sauce, followed by frozen kale, pumpkin and additional shredded cheese. Stir to combine.

### **Assembly:**

Next, divide your pasta amongst your ramekins making sure to fill it to the top (makes up to 8). Divide dough in half. Working with one at a time, roll out to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. Cut out 2 rounds about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wider than the diameter of ramekins. Gather up scraps, reroll, and cut out 2 more rounds (for 8 total – you might have leftover mac n' cheese, which, no one ever cried about). □ You do not need to cut a vent into your pie crust at all. I did that for fun but it is not necessary.

Whisk egg, a pinch of kosher salt, and 1 tsp. water in a small

bowl. Brush dough with egg wash; place over ramekins, brushed side down. Press firmly around sides to adhere. Brush tops of dough with egg wash. Set pot pies on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until crusts are golden brown and domed, 25 minutes.

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**Pimento  
Challah**

**Cheese-Stuffed**



Oh. Hi there. Remember me? No? Me either.

JUST KIDDING! I'm back . . . a little. To be honest, I haven't



really left. I've just been guest posting over at Busy in Brooklyn and writing for Interfaithfamily.com (recipe round-up for them is coming). I've also been knee-deep in adolescent mental health as the school year is in full swing and therefore, I'm back in the mix at the day job as a Director of Counseling at an area high school. I've also been trying very hard to leave some space this year for self-care, which started out really well. I joined a gym and subsequently actually attended the gym for a whole full 10 days . . . and then the kids got sick and my husband's work/PhD-writing schedule took over and I haven't been in 2 weeks. I miss it. I don't miss the intensity of some of the other patrons or the feeling that I'm not quite pushing myself hard enough as I enjoy my treadmill stroll while I watch other members just barely hold on while participating in their spinning class, but I do miss it. I had finally discovered the key to motivating myself into getting on the elliptical machine and really getting into it. What's the secret, you ask? Two words:

Beyonce Videos.

That's right, I'm the chick on the elliptical wearing outdated yoga pants from the early 2000s watching Beyonce music videos on Youtube while I sweat buckets onto the nicely polished gym floor. I'm telling you though, IT WORKS. I'm all, "Shoooooot, I can do this! I'm as fit, limber and coordinated as Beyonce! Heck, I have so much rhythm on this here elliptical machine, I could be one of her backup dancers!" And yes, once off the elliptical and back in my real life, I realize the power of endorphins and how they can play tricks on the mind, like convincing a 36 year-old Jewish white woman she is as fit, limber and coordinated as Beyonce. But hey, whatever works.



But enough about my meager attempts at self-care, we've got a challah to talk about. I want to acknowledge my homegirl, Molly Yeh, here as her Brown Sugar Challah with Pomegranate Glaze absolutely inspired this challah. I made it several weeks ago for the first time and fell in love with the ease of the dough recipe and wanted to experiment with fillings. I also wanted to make a challah that represented me and my flavor profiles and what's more Southern Jewess than pimento cheese-stuff challah!?!?! I get that the pimento cheese might not be everyone's favorite but I'm telling you, the feedback from husband and co-workers who enjoyed this loaf at work the next day was some of the most positive, re-enforcing feedback I've ever received on a recipe. So I say to you out there who is in doubt, give it a try. Just once. And if it's not for you as is, slice it up and make some bada\*\* grilled cheese with it or a savory stratta. Whatever you do, keep the dough recipe. It's so user-friendly. Enjoy and Shanah Tovah!!!







Recently, on the Jewhungry Instagram page.





Makes One Loaf of Challah

3/4 c warm water

1 tbsp dry yeast

1 1/4 c brown sugar

3 c all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting



1 tsp kosher salt

1 tsp of cayenne pepper

1/3 c sunflower oil

3 eggs

Pimento Cheese recipe from previous Jewhungry post

## Method

1. In a measuring cup or small bowl, combine the water, yeast, and 2 teaspoons of brown sugar. Let sit for a few minutes until it gets foamy on top.

2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl or bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, mix together 1/4 cup of brown sugar, the 3 cups of flour, salt, and cayenne. In a separate bowl, mix together the oil and 2 of the eggs.

3. When the yeast has proofed, add it to the dry ingredients, immediately followed by the egg mixture. Mix to combine and knead, either on a floured surface, or with the dough hook for 7-10 minutes, adding more flour as needed, until smooth (*please note I have never made this recipe with a stand mixer – only by hand so my results are based on the ol' fashion method of kneading by hand*).

4. Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover with a damp towel, and let rise until doubled in size, about 3 hours (*I like to preheat my oven to 500 and then turn it off and let the bowl sit on top of the oven with the oven door slightly ajar as it lets the heat escape and helps my dough rise, baby, RISE!*)

5. While challah is rising, make your pimento cheese and let sit in a cover bowl in the fridge for roughly 2 hours. You want it to be nice and chilled as the cheese is more manageable that way.

6. Turn onto a lightly floured surface, and roll the dough out into a large (approximately 10-inch by 14-inch) rectangle. Using a flat icing spatula or spoon, spread about 1/2 to 3/4

of your pimento cheese mixture onto the dough leaving about a 1/4 inch frame of uncover dough around the cheese (if you cover the dough completely in the cheese, it will be a messy disaster once baked). Next, roll it up like a jelly roll—rolling dough from one long edge to another as tightly as possible. Pinch the edges to seal them shut and then coil into a swirl shape with the seam side down. Place it on a baking sheet lined with parchment. Beat together the remaining egg with a splash of water, add another 1/2 tsp of cayenne and brush it lightly onto the challah. Let it rise for 30 more minutes while you preheat the oven to 375.

6. Bake the challah until it's golden brown and cooked through, about 45 – 50 minutes. Because this challah is round and stuff with delicious pimento cheese, it will take slightly longer to bake than a typical loaf. It may look done on the outside after about 20 minutes, but it will still be raw on the inside. You WILL need to tent the loaf with foil after 20 minutes to prevent it from getting too done on top.

7. Once done, expect that some of that gooey, delicious cheese has escaped. That's OK. There's more deliciousness inside!

8. Enjoy and don't forget to use the leftovers to make grilled cheese or cheese croutons!! Shanah Tovah!!!