

{Guest Post} Leaning on Others – A Post by Jackie

Hi Again,

Below is the second guest post for this week that I'm away on vacation and this one is from my dear friend, Jackie. Before you read a bit about her story, I wanted to share a bit about who she is to me. Jackie and I met while I was working at the University of Michigan Hillel. We met at a happy hour. We started chatting about who knows what and then she asked if I like to dance and well, the rest is a very sweet history. We spent 8 months going dancing, drinking tons of coffee, laughing until the point of tears and almost piddling our pants, supporting each other through the hell that is dating and, of course, eating. I went to live in Israel within a year of us meeting and yet, our friendship deepened even though we were several time zones away. Her ability to give advice and listen without judgement is so frikkin' rare and I'm grateful for it. So, please do enjoy her story and recipe and note that this woman has eaten in the finest restaurants in the world so hers is a palate to trust. Shabbat shalom, Whitney



My girl, Jackie, giving me blessings at my wedding.

Thank you to my dear friend Whitney for letting me share my story and recipe on this amazing site. It is both her tomato salad recipe and endless advice that have inspired this post.

I'm just about the last of my married friends to get pregnant. During the year I was trying to conceive I struggled with this fact, and was often filled with feelings of jealousy and anger. It seemed the whole world was fertile including all of my lovely girlfriends. It took a lot of personal work to get to a place where I could truly be happy for my friends and right around that point I finally got my double line.



Pregnant at last after a year of heartache

Now that I am pregnant (thank you G-d!) I am thrilled to have this wealth of knowledge and support from friends. For every question, concern and query I have a variety of mom-friends to turn to. I never feel alone and am thankful for this team of women behind me. I've found the silver lining in being the last to be pregnant and the advice is already priceless.



Jackie and I doing what we do best, dancing up a storm (circa 2007).

Just like in cooking, I am taking a little bit of this and a little bit of that from each of my friends. Some moms have been instrumental in building my registry. Other moms have shared with me their breast feeding stories and have helped me to be aware of future issues. Several moms have loaned me

maternity clothes and my closet is full of fun outfits to wear. And every single mom friend has been willing to share her journey and hear mine. Thank you ladies for every text, gchat and phone call.

Being pregnant in the summer means trying to find light dishes that are filling and nutritious which is just what this salad is. I remember visiting my girl, Whitney, when she first moved to Miami. She told me she was hungry for a snack and I expected her to pull out a granola bar or maybe a few pretzels. Instead she diced a tomato, red onion, avocado and added feta cheese and olive oil. Delicious. To fill out this salad I add toasted Israeli couscous and some other tasty treats. It's the perfect summer picnic salad, pregnant or not!

Jackie's Couscous Salad inspired by Whitney's snack salad

Ingredients

Israeli cous cous, 2 cups (for a party)

Water, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups

Pad of Butter

Almond slivers, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup

Tomatoes, diced

Seedless cucumber, diced

Avocado, diced

Yellow bell pepper, diced

Feta (pasteurized if you are pregnant)

Parsley, finely chopped

Salt and Pepper, to taste

Lemons

Olive Oil

How

1. Heat pan and add cous cous, shaking pan frequently until cous cous takes on a golden brown color.

2. Add water and salt and bring to a boil. Cover and turn to simmer until all liquid has absorbed. (Tip: You can also use veggie broth, or chicken broth and omit cheese to add

additional flavor to your cous cous).

3. While the pearls are cooking, dice all your veggies. Add as much or as little as you want!

4. Toast almonds in a pad of butter. Enjoy the smell of melting butter.

5. When cous cous has cooled mix together with veggies, feta, toasted almonds. Now it's time to grab a fork. Top with olive oil, freshly squeezed lemon juice, salt, pepper and chopped parsley. Taste. Decide what you need more of (usually for me it's lemon and salt). Adjust. Taste. Adjust. Etc.

