

Mexican Egg Bake: Bring on the protein!



I couldn't access the accent over the "E", so please do excuse my spelling of "Olé"

Shalom! How was everyone's holiday? Fantastic? Not so much? Ours was frikkin' fantastic. I'm sorry, I can't contain it. My regular life consists of work, entertaining/making sure my toddler turns into a nice person, episodes of Call the Midwife and sleep. So when the holidays came around and school went on break and my husband came into town for 2 whole weeks, I decided we were going to live it up. And by "live it up", I mean scour Air b n' b for cheap deals on other people's finished basements so that we can take a family trip to Joshua Tree. We finally found a place and it was heaven. It's weird if you think about it--the fact that we spent 3 nights and 4 days in someone's attached studio apartment for our vacation--

but the inexpensiveness of it all helps one to get past that weirdness. Anyway, our small little family hit the road for Joshua Tree. We went hiking in the park, broke out the husband's birthday gift, a toddler backpack for carrying the kiddo during hikes, and climbed a bunch of cliffs. There were multiple occasions when I thought to myself "For sure, if my mom was here, she'd have passed out by now out of sheer anxiety/fear not only because of the heights but because our 2 and a half year-old also did a little rock climbing herself".

Ahhh, oh well. We made it out alive and discovered that the kid likes to climb. Since returning home, she's attempted to climb into her crib just for the thrill of it.





We've got one more week of winter break left and there are big plans for some home improvement projects and d.i.y. craft projects. I've got the husband for one more week and I hope to

use my time wisely. I've gone crazy on Pinterest lately (if you follow me you'll notice that my board, "Suuuuuure, I'm gonna make that" has been seeing A LOT of action in the last week). The other thing I'm going to do is cook . . . a lot. It's embarrassing to admit, but now that I'm officially in my mid-30s, it's time I FINALLY regulate my carb intake, which means I'm making a lot of smoothies and a lot of egg dishes.

Below is one of those dishes. The inspiration came from an AMAZING baked egg dish I had for brunch at Michael's Genuine Food and Drink in Miami. It was ooey, gooey and smothered in cheese. Pretty much how I like all my food. But since I'm obsessed with cilantro and black beans, I decided to add my own flair to the dish. This dish is packed with protein and perfect for brunch, lunch and/or dinner. It really doesn't matter. It's also extremely adaptable. If black beans and cilantro aren't your thing, try using what you like-- cubed butternut squash and parmesan or spinach and feta. The choice is yours, my friend. Whatever you decide, I hope you enjoy! Oh! Also, I included a few photos from our Joshua Tree vacation just for funsies.









Mexican Egg Bake

Ingredients:

- 1 can diced tomatoes (preferably with jalapeno)
- 2 tbsp tomato paste

4 eggs (or more depending on how many ramekins you need)
1/2 cup black beans
1/2 tbsp kosher salt
1 tsp black pepper
1/2 cup shredded cheese
Fresh cilantro for garnish

Instructions:

*Serving size will depend upon how many ramekins you have. The instructions below reflect the amount needed for 4 ramekins.

1. Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees. Empty diced tomatoes into medium saucepan and heat over medium high heat. Add the tomato paste and stir. Bring to a boil and then let simmer for roughly 3 minutes or so. Taste and add seasoning as needed.

2. Remove pan from heat. Place 2 heaping tablespoons of tomato sauce into the ramekins. Top with 1 big scoop of black beans and top with sprinkling of shredded cheese and another tablespoon of tomato sauce. Finally, make a little divot into the mixture and crack one egg into each ramekin. Top with a sprinkling of salt and pepper.

3. Place ramekins onto a baking sheet and place into oven. Bake for 8 minutes. Take out of oven and top with a bit more cheese and then let it bake for another 2 minutes or so. You want the middle of the ramekins to be soft and jiggly (yes, 'jiggly' is a completely legitimate cooking term). Take out of oven and garnish as needed.

