

Shakshuka: Meal of my heart.



So last night we had a heavy metal vomit party. What's a heavy metal vomit party, you ask? A heavy metal vomit party is a party in which people drink a lot, listen to heavy metal, maybe they punch each other just for fun, etc. It's what I picture an Anthrax after-party would look like. Only, we didn't have any heavy metal and there were no dudes in leather

and chains punching each other just for funsies,. We did, however, have lots of vomit as the kiddo had a bout of food poisoning. Why oh why are you talking about this on a food blog, you might find yourself asking? Because I'm in a weird place that can only be described as halfway between delirium and the twilight zone. Last night, I slept from 8:30 – 9:30pm, and then again from 12:30 – 1:30am. The rest of the time was spent snuggling with the kiddo and feeding her sips of water, of which she only calls 'agua', thank you Miami life and our Spanish-speaking daycare providers. I finally called in the big guns, a.k.a. Dada, at about 5:15 so that I could sleep for a few hours. It was such a shame because yesterday was the first day of my winter break and we had such a wonderful day with my husband's parents. We drove the 45 minutes to the Bubbe-capitol of the world, also known as Boca Raton, Florida. We went to a science museum, rode a beautiful carousel and had overall joy and merriment. And then, in a classic parenting moment, things switched to disaster on a dime. We were not 5 minutes in the car for our 45 minute drive home when the kiddo let us have it ("it"being everything she had eaten for the past 3 hours). And then, because I'm the world's greatest mom, when I finally calmed her down and was putting her back into her carseat, I pinched her tiny thigh skin with the seat buckle. That only escalated the crying and general discomfort of our poor kid. This discomfort and vomit continued for roughly 6 more hours from that point. Good times.

And so, at 2:30am, when I was begging for sleep that couldn't come because I was sharing a bed with a sweaty, uncomfortable toddler, I started thinking about the things you don't realize you're going to need when you agree to marry someone. Now bear with me, this has a connection. While I was snuggling with the above-mentioned sweaty toddler, my husband was in our room sleeping. We had agreed that he would sleep during the night and then he would cover me during the day so that I could sleep. When things went to hell earlier in the day, we went back and forth between cracking each other up over the

ridiculousness of cleaning vomit off a carseat on the side of a highway off-ramp to biting at each other when she vomited for the 4th time in 3 hours and we had reached our new-parent point of 'WHAT THE @\$* DO WE DO NOW!?". But, we never once felt alone in our worried-parent ineptitude because we had each other. When my husband proposed to me in 2009 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC, I immediately said 'yes'. I had known I wanted to marry him from the moment we met. But a person has no idea what they're going to need when they're down in the fox-hole of food poisoning h*ll because you can't possibly understand what that foxhole will be like. Heck, you don't even know that foxhole exists. You just know you're in love and you've really enjoyed life together so far so let's keep this thing going. Therefore, at 2:30 in the morning, when I was feeding the little one her sips of water, I was thinking about my husband in the other room and how there would be no way in h*ll I would be able to get through any of it without him. Food poisoning comes and goes and it's really not a big deal in the grand scheme of things. However, the way we work together in these situations is a big deal in the grand scheme of things. I'm not sure of anyone else who could have me laughing like he did at 11pm last night when we knew we had a looooooong sleepless night ahead of us. What I am sure of is that, thank Gd, the food poisoning seems to have come and gone from our home at this point while we remain, lovingly, whole (copious amounts of coffee helps too).



Watch out, she'll get ya.

Oh, I finally had another post up on The Times of Israel. You can find it [here](#). It's about growing up and experiencing Christmas with my dad and his family, who just happen to not be Jewish (that should seem obvious, I hope). The following recipe, which was enjoyed yesterday before Food Poisoning 2013, is my interpretation of shakshuka, eggs poached in a delicious, spicy tomato sauce. I first had shakshuka in 2001 when I was studying abroad at Ben Gurion University of the

Negev in Beer Sheva, Israel. I went over to a friend's place for lunch and there she was, cracking eggs directly into what I thought was spaghetti sauce but what I later realized was so much more. Shakshuka can be intimidating if you've never had it before but truly, it does not require a lot of skill in the kitchen (this is according to me, at least). It does require patience though as the tomatoes and the peppers need time to get all sugary and flavorful as they sit on a low heat.



Not quite tall enough, but almost there.

You can add anything you want to liven up your shakshuka but for me, I just can't seem to depart from the addition of feta and cilantro. The flavors compliment each other so nicely. If you are looking for a healthy and flavorful dish for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner, this is it. Heck, some might think it's even a nice dish for Christmas morning? Maybe?



One might say this would be a perfect Christmas morning breakfast, might one?



A perfect pair.



It's about to get egg-y in here.

The following is a completely unnecessary but completely awesome action shot of the first egg being dropped into the shakshuka. Make sure you dig a little hole out for the egg to nestle into before cracking. Mad props to my hubby, who is also my hand model, for indulging me in this one.



Step 1



Step Two



Step Three



Almost There



So Close



Nailed It.

Shakshuka with Feta and Cilantro

Ingredients:

5 tbsp Olive or Coconut Oil

1 Medium onion, diced

4 Cloves of garlic, diced
1 Red pepper, chopped
1 Green pepper, chopped
1 Can of whole tomatoes
1 Can of diced tomatoes
5 eggs
Kosher salt + pepper to taste
1 tsp, Cumin
Sriracha
Handful of cilantro leaves and stems, diced
Feta cheese (to your discretion)

How's That Now?

Heat a deep, large skillet or sauté pan on medium. Slowly warm oil in the pan. Add chopped onion, sauté for a few minutes until the onion begin to become a little translucent. Add a dash of salt, pepper and cumin to the onions and stir. Finally, add the garlic and continue to sauté till mixture is fragrant. Next, add the bell peppers and continue sauteeing for another 6 – 8 minutes or until peppers are starting to brown.

Add both cans of tomatoes to pan, stir till blended. Throw in a bit more of the cumin and add some Sriracha to the pan of vegetables. Stir well, and allow mixture to simmer over medium heat for 6 – 8 minutes (you can break apart some of the whole tomatoes at this point too – just push down with a spoon to break them apart a bit). At this point, you can taste the mixture and spice it according to your preferences.

Before cracking each egg into the pan, make a little divot in sauce for egg to go into. Crack the eggs, one at a time, directly over the tomato mixture, making sure to space them evenly over the sauce. It's common shakshuka practice to place 4 eggs around the outer edge and 1 in the center. The eggs will cook "over easy" style on top of the tomato sauce.

Cover your pan and allow to cook on a simmer for an addition 10 – 15 minutes. Keep an on the eggs to make sure that the yolks remain 'over easy' to 'over medium'. Add the feta, if using, halfway through your last 10 – 15 minutes of cooking. Once done, garnish with cilantro. Enjoy with a big piece of crusty bread.



Pretty, pretty shakshuka



Finally, we can eat.