

# Oreo Hamantaschen



Hello and happy (almost) Purim! Can you believe that it's almost Purim time? I seriously feel like it was JUST yesterday that I was making cheddar Sriracha latkes on The Feed Feed and now I'm making hamantaschen? How can this be? My waist line is not ready for all the holiday hamantaschen baking! Blargh!







I'm back from my little jaunt to exotic Dallas, Texas for the BBYO International Convention. I was there giving two separate presentations – one on food sustainability through the kosher lens plus a joint session with my girl, Amy from What Jew Wanna Eat. Amy and I had a session up against Aidy Bryant from Saturday Night Live and while our workshop was heavily attended, I'm not convinced that the majority of our audience weren't students who weren't able to get into the Aidy Bryant workshop. But that's OK! They got to learn about food blogging so ha! Suckers! Ya learned something new!

I had SUCH an amazing time with Amy and meeting so many teens who frikkin' love their Jewish selves. It was a bit of a mind-trip to be at a BBYO conference as a 36 year-old mother of two. My days as a Jewish high school convention-attendee were so much fun but also so incredibly awkward (here's to being a teen in the mid-90s). It felt crazy to be walking around this convention with the confidence that a grown woman should have while my 16 year-old self was screaming out, "Look

at me now! I'm a grown a\*\* woman. Now watch me lay in bed for an hour and read before turning out the lights for a sensible bed time of 9pm!"



But these hamantaschen! Oy! These hamantaschen. I did some research on Pinterest to get some inspiration for this year's hamantaschen flavors. I have another flavor combo in my back pocket for the next week but for now, I'm really loving on the intensity of the chocolate in this dough and the realness of the fluffy middle. My official taste-tester for these was my husband as he ate enough Oreo/Hydroxy cookies as a child to consider himself an Oreo/Hydroxy expert and he swears it tastes like the real deal. Only, be warned, this chocolate dough is chewy and soft, the way I prefer my hamantaschen. You MUST be vigilant with your refrigeration/freezing of dough. Do not skip these parts of the process. They are vital. But, in case you do miss a bit and end up with wonky-shaped hamantschen, just delicately squeeze some filling over it and no one will ever know!



busy licking the spatula



a journey through Amy and Whitney learning how to pose for a picture.



*(Heads up, this is NOT a hard cookie dough. I am not a fan of hard cookies so I made a soft, chewy cookie dough. See narrative and notes in the directions on maintaining the dough's form while baking. Happy eating!)*

## Ingredients for Cookie

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup Earth Balance (or butter), room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp Almond milk
- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  Tbsp cold, brewed espresso or strong coffee
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{8}$  cup cocoa powder (I prefer Hershey's Special Dark)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt
- 1 egg + 1 tsp water (egg wash)

## Ingredients for Cream Filling

- $\frac{1}{2}$  stick unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup vegetable shortening
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups confectioners' sugar, sifted
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla extract

## Directions for Cookie

In the bowl of a stand mixer (or using handheld mixers), beat the butter and sugar together until smooth. Add egg, milk, espresso or coffee, and vanilla until mixed thoroughly.

In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, cocoa powder, and salt. Slowly add dry mixture to wet mixture until incorporated. *(Note: if the dough is too soft, increase flour amount by  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of flour until firm – see notes written in narrative regarding the chilling and softness of the dough).*

Shape dough into a disk, wrap in saran wrap and chill for AT LEAST (I chill mine overnight) an hour. Once chilled, preheat oven to 350 degrees with rack in the center. On a floured work surface, roll out dough to a scant  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. With a  $2\frac{3}{4}$ -inch round cutter, or wide-rimmed drinking glass, cut

out circles; place on parchment-lined baking sheets. Gather scraps, chill while previous cookies are baking, and repeat with your roll-out and cutting until all dough is used.

Whisk together remaining egg and 1 teaspoon water in a bowl. Brush circle edges with egg wash; pinch seams together. Freeze until firm, about 30 minutes. Bake cookies on a parchment-lined baking sheet, 1 sheet at a time, about 10 – 12 minutes. Allow to cool completely before adding filling.

### **Directions for Filling:**

Using a mixer, cream the butter and shortening until fluffy. Beat in the confectioners' sugar and vanilla. I used an icing bag with a small, round tip for filling centers of the cookie. You could just as easily 'ice' the centers with a knife or spoon but I do not think it will be as easy as using an icing bag and tip.

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## **One-Pot Creamy Kale + White Bean Pasta**



## **One-Pot Creamy Kale + White Bean Pasta**

Hello from Dallas, Texas! I'm blogging at you from the BBYO International Conference. Yes, that makes two blog posts from conferences so clearly, I clearly pay close attention to presentations and am not distracted at all when you invite me

to a conference.

Anyway, It's an honor to be here for so many reasons! First, I love teenagers! They're inspiring and motivating and hilarious and loud and sometimes smelly but I love them anyway. Second, I got to speak on using social media and blogging as a means to build understanding for issues that I'm passionate about, like food justice and mindful living. But, most importantly, it's an honor because on Shabbat, I get to speak in partnership with the one and only Amy Kritzer from What Jew Wanna Eat! After years and years of being Internet friends and even co-authoring a e-cookbook together, we finally got to meet in person! Amazing! We met at the airport upon arrival into Dallas and have only paused from each other's side to sleep and do our presentations. I'm tellin' ya folks, if loveliness exists in this world it is house within Amy. What an amazing individual! This lady is so amazing for tons of reasons but the thing I honestly love the most about her is her willingness to support other bloggers – competition be damned! She sees the success of other Jewish bloggers as a success of her community and gosh darn it, that is beautiful!

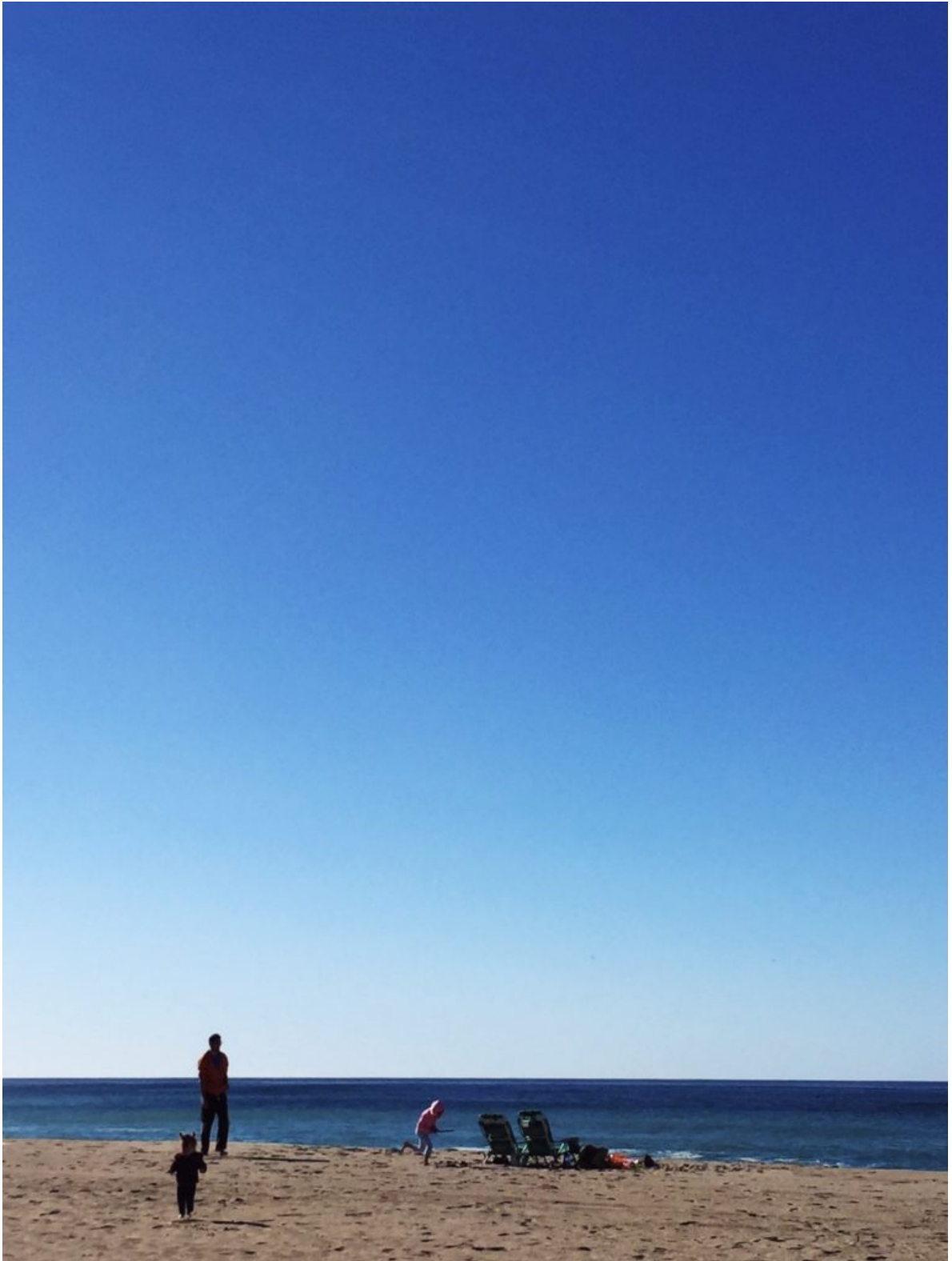




So aside from gushing about Amy, I'm here to write about one of my favorite subjects – PASTA! If you've met me you'll know already that carbs and I are besties. If I could, I'd eat pasta every single night. Back in my younger years when I was living in Chicago, my favorite dinner for myself was a giant bowl of spaghetti, dripping in sauce with layers and layers of cheese on it (most specifically, American cheese but, whatever). Because I no longer have the metabolism of a 24 year-old, I don't eat like that anymore. However, as a working parent in her late 30s with two young children, pasta certainly visits our dinner table at least once a week. In

order to assuage some of my guilt of eating pasta, I like to mix in healthier, easy proteins and vegetables. Two of my favorites are frozen kale and canned beans. This is a dish I often throw together on those later evenings when I leave work later than normal and don't have as much time to cook dinner. Feel free to omit the cream but I like the tanginess it brings to the dinner. And, if you're like me and you are looking for little more nuttiness to your pasta, go ahead and top it with mounds of Parmesan cheese. Trust me, your taste buds will thank you.





My squad in Malibu.



Me and my soul-sista, Amy from What Jew Wanna Eat

### **One-Pot Creamy Kale + White Bean Pasta**

- 1 box whole wheat spaghetti
- 5 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic, smashed
- 1 cup frozen blue curly kale
- 1 can, Cannellini bean, rinsed
- 2 cans diced tomatoes with juice
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream or half and half
- 1 tbsp kosher salt + more for final dusting before serving
- 1/2 tbsp coarse ground pepper
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1/2 tbsp dried fennel seed

Using a large stock pot, cook pasta as indicated on the back of the package. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Set both pasta and cooking liquid (separately) aside.

Wipe down stock pot. Add olive oil to pot and place back on stove over a medium-high heat. Once smoking just a bit, add diced onions, garlic and kosher salt. Sauté for roughly 3

minutes or until fragrant. Add pepper, basil and fennel seed to the onion and garlic mixture and saute for another minute. Next, add the diced tomatoes and tomato paste, mix and bring to a boil. Turn the heat down to low and let mixture simmer for about 5 – 7 minutes. Taste and add more salt if necessary depending on your flavor preference. After mixture has simmered for a bit, using a handheld immersion blender, blend tomato and onion mixture until semi-smooth (I like to leave mixture a bit chunky but this is my personal preference). Add in the whipping cream and stir until combined.

Next, add the beans, kale and about 3/4 of your cooked pasta back to the pot. Mix until almost combined. Add in about half of your reserved cooking liquid to help coat the pasta and allow for sauce to adhere to the pasta. Taste. Adjust seasoning to your liking. Serve hot!