

Sheet Pan Chicken – Quick and Kosher-for-Passover



I'm currently sitting in bed. I'm sitting in bed and I'm trying to take care of myself. It hasn't been easy lately. Every since having our second baby, I feel like I'm in a constant game of catch-up. I know this sounds crazy, but I'm not sure why having the second kiddo destroyed me as much as it did. OK, "destroyed me" is a little dramatic, but I can't seem to stay awake past 9pm, which means I average a decent night sleep. And, thank Gd, my kids are pretty decent sleepers. So why am I so tired?



I've decided there are tons of answers to this question. Maybe it's the fact that I over-schedule my day, just like most every other person I know. It also probably has to do with not exercising as much as I should but mostly I think it has to do

with the amount of stuff I have reeling around in my head. I appreciate the feminist movement and I consider myself a feminist but I'm not sure the feminist movement of the 70s knew what it was getting into when it rallied for fair and equal employment opportunities for women. But, I am grateful. I used to work in a school whose administration over-valued stress and exhaustion. People were heralded for working long hours; the bags under their eyes their little red badges of courage. Now I work for a school where taking a 'mental health day' is understood. I have a boss who openly talks about why she doesn't want us answering texts and phone calls after working hours – the boundary of work and life firmly in tact and celebrated. But still, I get home after picking up the girls and I still struggle with balancing all my responsibilities. When beloved friend and co-author, Sarah at The Patchke Princess started her Sheet-Pan Dinners Instagram handle, I started following immediately. She's a lot braver than me when it comes with experimenting with sheet-pan dinners, but nevertheless, she has inspired the recipe in this post. We eat meat at least once a week, aside from Shabbat, and being able to throw it on a sheet pan, combine it with roasted vegetables and the perfect seasoning without having to clean anything else makes me so happy. I mean seriously, it is the little things and no additional cleaning is to be celebrated as a big 'little thing'. Consider this sheet pan chicken a blank slate for which to experiment for further dinners. I hope you enjoy.





Sheet Pan Chicken

Ingredients:

2 chicken leg quarters, cut at bone and separated

3 carrots, skinned and cut into 1/4-inch rounds

5-6 Yukon Gold potatoes, quartered

1 medium onion, quartered

1/2 pint cherry tomatoes

3 garlic cloves, diced

1/4 cup olive oil

3 tbsp parve Ranch dressing mix powder

1/4 cup mayonnaise

1 tbsp kosher salt

1/2 tbsp black pepper

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Arrange a rack in the middle of the oven and heat to 400°F. Place a large 9 x 13" rimmed baking sheet in the oven while the oven is heating. While that's heating, combine Ranch dressing mix, mayonnaise, kosher salt and black pepper into a medium-sized bowl. Stir to combine. Set aside.

Clean chicken and dry well. Using a spatula or spoon, coat the chicken in the Ranch mayonnaise mixture. Place the chicken skin-side down on the pre-heated baking sheet. Let that cook for about 10 minutes.

While the chicken cooks, combine all the vegetables into a large bowl. Add olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper to the bowl and stir until well-combined. Once the chicken has cooked for 10 minutes, add the vegetable mixture to the sheet-pan, making sure that none of the vegetables overlap, and cook for another 20 – 25 minutes or until vegetables are soft.

Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Brown Rice Pesto Breakfast Bowl

Brown Rice Pesto Breakfast Bowl



Before arriving in Los Angeles, I heavily researched the city in order to figure out what part of the city we'd live in. And by research I of course mean that I watched old episodes of the original Beverly Hills, 90210 and poured over the most recent Bon Appetit at the time that had a lovely spread about hipster hangout, "Sqirl" (so hipster, in fact, that the 'u', 'r', and 'e' are apparently not necessary). In the article, they mentioned a sorrel pesto bowl that is the restaurant's number one seller. At the time I was absolutely not interested in trying a savory bowl of sorrel for breakfast. Why in the world would I want brown rice when I could have cinnamon rolls or sticky buns or brioche toast!?!? I mean, come on!!





So when we arrived in Los Angeles in the summer of 2014, my patient husband and even more patient daughter let me drag

them to the Mecca of hipsterville, Silverlake, to stand in line with every other sucker and wait for breakfast. And let me tell you, it was one of the greatest culinary decisions I've ever made (and not only because within my first 24 hours in LA I got to see the high Jewess of the world, Natalie Portman, who was also eating at Sqirl). This meal was so. friggin'. YUMMY. I was feeling adventurous and also feeling that there was no way my husband was going to be up for shlepping all the way to Silverlake from the Westside again so I went ahead and passed by all the brioche options and ordered the brown rice pesto bowl. When our meal arrived, I looked at my husband's brioche toast topped with chocolate ganache and thought, "I have made the greatest mistake in the world". But then I took my first bite of the pesto bowl, all mixed in with lacto-fermented hot sauce (still have no idea what that means), feta cheese and a perfectly cooked poached egg and I knew I was forever changed. Let me tell you. Putting pesto in brown rice and topping with a poached egg, feta, radishes and hot sauce is THE GREATEST IDEA EVER. Therefore, I went ahead and copied it as much as possible. This has become my go-to Sunday morning breakfast ever since that fateful day in Silverlake.



Brown Rice Pesto Breakfast Bowls

Ingredients for Bowl:

1 cup cooked brown rice
1/2 cup pesto (see below)
2 eggs (or more, depending on how much you love eggs), poached
1/4 cups feta cheese
3 radishes sliced thin
Optional: Sriracha

Ingredients for Pesto:

2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed (can sub half the basil leaves with baby spinach)
1/2 cup freshly grated Romano or Parmesan-Reggiano cheese (can omit and use 3 tbsp of nutritional yeast to make it vegan)
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil.
1/3 cup chopped walnuts
3 garlic cloves, minced

Directions:

Cook brown rice according to package. Remember that brown rice takes about 45 minutes to cook so make sure you plan accordingly. Once done, transfer rice to a large mixing bowl and leave about 3 – 5 minutes.

For the pesto. If you want to be kind to yourself and your time, you can please feel free to buy pre-made pesto. If you want to make your own pesto, place the basil leaves and walnuts into the bowl of a food processor and pulse a several times. Add the garlic and cheese and pulse several times more. Scrape down the sides of the food processor with a rubber spatula. While the food processor is running, slowly add the olive oil in a steady small stream. Adding the olive oil slowly, while the processor is running, will help it emulsify and help keep the olive oil from separating. Occasionally stop to scrape down the sides of the food

processor. Stir in some salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Set aside.

For the poached egg: I learned how to poach an egg via The Kitchn's tutorial so I'm sending you there for this recipe. Come back and read on when you're done. ☐

Once brown rice has somewhat cooled, add 1/2 cup of the pesto to your brown rice and combine. Top with 1 poached egg, feta, and sliced up radish. Serve hot.

Autumn Balsamic London Broil Salad w/Non-Dairy Ranch



Hello from the West Coast! It's been quite a while since my last post but I'm so grateful for those who keep coming back!

Thanks you! I've been finding it increasingly difficult to find the time, or rather, motivation to go through the whole process of cooking, taking pictures, editing pictures and then editing it a post. It's strange because lately I've been seized with a very strong urge to craft that the food blogging process is not really satisfying. It's not helping that my Instagram feed currently contains a hodgepodge of super creative women who somehow have the time and money to craft like there's no tomorrow. My beloved friend, Jessie, and I have created a semi-weekly holiday of "Wine Down Wednesday", which consists of the following activities:

1. Watching the latest episode of The Mindy Project.
2. Drinking (cheap) wine – no box wine is too good for us!
3. Dreaming up crafting projects that most likely will never happen (our current project is what is called a "silent book", an activity book for the kid made entirely of felt),
4. Waxing poetic about the state of the world.
5. Drinking more wine.







It's these little made up holidays that are getting me through this time and helping me remember that I gotta take care of myself by giving myself little outlets that allow me to be me and not just "mom" me or "school counselor" me. And yet, the biggest news in my world is not the invention of the greatest mini-holiday ever (aside from Fancy Coffee Friday). Nope, the biggest news is that, at 34 years of age, I have finally established and am living on (and understand!) a real budget. Friends, there are many things I can say that I'm good at

however, money is not one of them. Without getting too personal or divulging more than my genteel Southern upbringing would allow me, let's just say that money managing has never been my strong suit. That being said, this year of paying for 2 lives and Jewish Day school has meant that my family has no choice but live on a very strict budget and damn it but if it isn't the strangest mix of freedom and restriction I've ever felt. I now have visions of sipping coffee with Suze Orman and discussing the development of a teen girls money managing campaign where we teach teenage girls (as they are the population who are most targeted by the advertising world and thus more likely to spend, spend, spend as they try to buy their confidence rather than develop it internally). There's so much freedom and privilege in having money and knowing how to manage and maintain it. I get it now it (Mom, are you listening! It finally happened!)



So speaking of budgets, another way in which budgeting has helped me is by forcing me to get creative with grocery shopping and cooking. My favorite thing to do is to make one focus in a meal (like roasting a London Broil) and then remixing it in several different ways. Thus, this recipe. I made Jamie Geller's Balsamic London Broil recipe for her

latest cookbook, "Joy of Kosher: Fast, Fresh Family Recipe", for lunch on Sukkot. I then remixed it on the Sunday following that Shabbat and made it into a sumptuous open face sandwich for my husband and the salad featured in this post for myself.

The salad dressing I made for my salad was also used as a delicious sauce for the hubby's sandwich. The dressing consists of only a few simple ingredients and ultimately costs me way less than if I purchased bottled dressing. The recipe is very Shabbat-friendly and kid-friendly too. Plus, you know, it's really delicious. Have a great week!

Autumn Balsamic London Broil Salad with Non-Dairy Ranch

Recipe and instructions for London Broil found [here](#).

Dressing Ingredients:

1/2 Cup mayonnaise

1/2 Cup almond milk

Handful of fresh dill, finely chopped

3 Tbsp of finely chopped chives

1/2 Tsp salt

1/2 Tsp pepper

1 Tsp garlic powder

Dressing Instructions:

Combine dressing ingredients in a medium-sized bowl and mix very well. Add more mayo or almond milk based upon your preference of dressing thickness.

Salad Ingredients:

3 Cups of kale, chopped

2 sweet potatoes, chopped small and roasted (I roast mine

seasoned with olive oil, salt, and pepper at 400 degrees for 40 minutes)

1/2 Cup shredded carrots

Roasted garlic and onions from broil

1 Cup of green beans, blanched

Several slices of London Broil, sliced to 1/8 inch thickness (which basically means sliced thin enough to chew but not too thin that you can't find it in the salad).

*Assemble salad ingredients, pour on that dressing and enjoy!