

Roasted Eggplant Matzah Lasagna



Hello and happy Passover! I hope everyone had wonderful Sedarim. We went low-key this year as it's been a tough couple weeks. Unfortunately, my husband lost his beloved father to cancer the week before Passover. He had been sick for only a handful of months and, as cancer tends to do, it took him quickly. We are still in shock, even a week after his funeral. I flew to Jersey for a quick and emotional 48 hours in order to be with the family as we said our final good-byes. While I lost my grandparents at a relatively older age, this is the closest I've come to losing a parent and I'd like to not do it again, thank you very much.



My husband was gone for a total of 2 weeks prior to Passover

and while it was tough to go through all of that with the two kids at home, I gotta say, I continue to be overwhelmed by the support of friends and the community we've made here in Los Angeles. People sent food and prayers and showed up at 8am on a Sunday morning for the shiva in order to stand by Yonz and I as we ended the shiva week. It's amazing how truly wonderful people can be when you ask for help (and accept it).



Now, about this recipe. It wasn't until I went to Teaneck and had my first Passover at my would-be in-law's house that I had my first matzah lasagna. When I saw my mother-in-law making it I was like, "ummm, matzah soaked in water and then baked with sauce and cheese? Hard pass". But then I took a bite and I became a believer. Since then, matzah lasagna has been on our Passover table at least once every year. I pair it with some baked salmon and a spring green salad to help off-set the immense cheesy-ness of it and I have to say, it's a delightful little lunch (if I do say so myself). Pay attention to the directions below. You do need to soak but not for too long as it will turn into mush if it's soaked for too long. I hope you

enjoy!





Roasted Eggplant Matzah Lasagna

2 large eggs

1 15-ounce container of ricotta cheese

1 1/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

1 tbsp kosher salt

1/2 tbsp ground black pepper

1/2 tbsp garlic powder

1 jar of marinara sauce or 3 cups of homemade sauce

8 standard sheets of matzoh

1 eggplant, roasted (<— [click for roasted eggplant recipe](#))

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Fill a baking dish with about an inch of room temp. water and set aside.

In a medium bowl beat the eggs then add 2 Tablespoons Parmesan, ricotta and 3/4 cup of mozzarella. Next, add the spices and combine well.

Spread 1/2 cup of sauce on the bottom of an 8 x 8-inch baking dish,

Soak 1 sheet of matzah in the water for about 30 seconds in order to soften (note: You might need to soak 2 matzah slices or 1 1/2 as matzah never seems to be fully the right size for a lasagna baking dish. Just make sure your matzah covers the majority of the length and width of the baking dish). It's important that you not let it soak for longer than 30 seconds, you don't want it to fall apart or become mush. Place the soaked sheet of matzah in the baking dish.

Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ of the ricotta mixture on top of the matzoh. Spread $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sauce on top of the ricotta and then at least 4 slices of roasted eggplant. And sprinkle with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mozzarella cheese.

Soak the second sheet of matzah for 30 seconds and place in the baking dish. Repeat with remaining ricotta, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sauce, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup mozzarella.

Soak the last piece of matzah for 30 seconds and place in the baking dish. Spread with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sauce (or more) and top with a few slices of roasted eggplant. Top with remaining mozzarella cheese and a tablespoon of grated Parmesan.

Cover baking dish with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until cheese is golden and lasagna is bubbling, about 10 more minutes. If sides are bubbling, but you want the cheese more golden quickly, stick it under the broiler for 10-30 seconds.

Matzah Chilaquiles



Matzah Chilaquiles

I remember sitting at lunch one day at a restaurant on the corner of 3rd and Harper in Los Angeles with my peeps, Keeli and her husband David (hi, Wolkin!) when Keeli ordered a dish I had never heard of before—chilaquiles. When the word left her mouth I was like, “Umm, do what now?”. For a Jewish lady born and raised in Marietta, GA, I had never heard of

chilaquiles before. I was a bit embarrassed because I consider myself a pretty 'with it' individual, especially when it comes to food, but I had never heard of chilaquiles until that moment. See now, Keeli was born and raised in California so homegirl was aware of all the best SoCal foods. So when the dish was delivered to the table and I realized it was basically a Mexican version of shakshuka (if shakshuka was made with pita chips, which, by the way, we should make happen), I was in.



As with a lot of dishes, chilaquiles varies amongst regions. You can make it with green or red sauce and I chose red for this one though I think a green sauce would be awesome as well. While I made this recipe with a cast iron skillet, you definitely don't need to though I do recommend a frying pan that can go straight from stove top to oven. The recipe for this can be found on Interfaithfamily.com. Happy Passover!









Quinoa Sushi with Matzah Crunch



Passover was different for me as a kid than it is for me as an adult. With the best of intentions and tradition at heart, my mom set out to make sure we celebrated and observed Passover as best she could. There was no looking for chametz and certainly no mysterious final search complete with feathers and a candle (Do me a favor and try to explain that tradition to someone who isn't Jewish. "Oh, we go around the house with a feather, a candle and a paper bag looking for pieces of bread that we've intentionally laid to be found. It's totally normal." Trust me. We don't. seem. normal).

But anyway, I digress. My point is we didn't grow up with a

lot of observance but we definitely grew up with a lot of tradition. For example, as a young kiddo, my beloved grandpa would say, in a clear, booming voice, “LO! This is the bread of affliction!” He was so loud that I’m positive our Christian fundamentalist neighbors heard us (and loved it!). But, as we got older and our grandparents couldn’t travel, that job fell to my brother. The Seder meal food was always the same. Every year, every attendant received an elegant dish full of the saltiest water and one hardboiled egg, which at no other time in life seems good but during an incredibly long Seder seems akin to eating a bagel and lox. It’s that good (and Seder is that long).







My beloved brother and my girls

But now that I'm an adult and living a bit more of an observant life and my oldest is finally old enough to actually have memories and like, keep them and stuff, I've been thinking a lot about what Passover memories she'll take with her as an adult. Maybe it'll be that time last Passover when

we drove from Asheville, NC to Atlanta to visit family and had to stop at a local mountain gas station so that I could make us a Kosher for Passover meal of egg salad and matzah (the locals thought we were craaaaaaaaay). Or maybe it'll be this year as she sits through her first Seder (or at least some of her first Seder). Who knows? Whatever those memories are though, I hope they bring her happiness as mine do for me.



My little loves. What memories will they take with them?



So, the recipe! One glorious thing that the health food world has given us is quinoa and though the Rabbis TRIED to take it away from us by deeming only certain kinds of quinoa Kosher for Passover, I have clung to it like white on Sephardic rice. The recipe for this post can be eaten with or without the matzah crunch. I just LOVE sushi with tempura crunch so thought, why not matzah!? Fry it up in some butter and let those bad boys sing! Also, Kosher for Passover nori DOES exist so before you write me telling me it doesn't, know that I've done my research.

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