

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.

Chocolate Almond Flour Donuts with Egg Creams

Chocolate Almond Flour Donuts *with* EGG CREAMS



I am an extremely scheduled person. I need my routine and schedule to feel 'contained'. I need it to feel safe. I'd like to be all, 'I go wherever the wind takes me', but with a full time job, 2 kids, a husband and a hobby or two, my structure

and routine is what gets me through the day. When I studied adolescent development and learned more about attachment theory and how structure and boundary-setting is not only beneficial for child development but also for caregiver attachment, I didn't quite understand just how much it is needed until I had kids of my own. Heck, I didn't realize how much I needed it as an adult until I had two little people and myself to care for. I recently started yet another side gig (this one in the home decor side of life – you can find my yarn art and boho mobiles [HERE](#) and see more pictures below) and when talking to a friend about it she asked me how I find the time. I reflected on that question a lot for some reason and realized it wasn't so much that I was 'finding' the time as 'creating' the time via my daily routine. By the time I get home, it's 'go' time. My husband and I are switching off between bathing children, doing laundry, cooking dinner, cleaning dinner, playing with children and then getting children ready for bed. Every afternoon/evening is a sprint but it's worth it because by 8pm, the kids are in bed and that's when I get my 'me' time. That's how I find the time. I create it in order to take care of myself so that, in the end, I can take care of them.





Speaking of time, I am finally on spring break and am loving every second of it. I also finally went camping with the kids for the first time. I had been kind of dreading camping with kids for a long time. I used to have this giant fear of being tired. It so consumed me, this fear of being tired, that it actually prevented me from doing things like camping with my husband and Siona. But a person learns a lot about themselves

after a year of solo-parenting while pregnant, including that one can survive and function on very little sleep and massive amounts of coffee. So, with that in mind, I told husband I was ready to give camping with kids a try . . . so long as he packed all the coffee in the world. Next thing you know, we're packing up the car and headed for Anzo Borrego, CA. It's not every day your husband plans a camping trip for you in the desert during a heat wave. Hot doesn't even begin to describe what this was. Sadly, because it was as hot as it was, our camping trip was cut short by a night and we ended up only staying one night. BUT, we truly made the most of it and the girls were friggin' champs. We also saw a real live roadrunner and heard coyotes howling at the moon so . . . worth it (pics from the trip are below).





Anyway, I wanted to bring you a chocolatey treat before you finish your Passover meal-planning. I also wanted to send a friendly reminder that egg creams are completely kosher for Passover and should absolutely be enjoyed. I had my first egg cream when I visited my now in-laws in 2009 and it is now a family tradition to enjoy one (or several) each Passover. It's honestly a simple thing and, truth be told, I would not really enjoy someone adding seltzer to my chocolate milk but for some reason, during Passover, it's so frikkin' delicious. I hope

you enjoy! Happy Passover!

P.S. This recipe is dedicated to my friend, David Wolkin, who is part Jewish Hipster superhero extraordinaire and part grouchy ol' Jewish zaidy who just wants to be left alone with his egg creams and his white fish. This is for you, buddy. Also, your wife is AWESOME. Seriously, how'd you score that one!?



Saying 'good night moon' in the Anzo Borrego desert.



My squishy face, Ed.



Sunrise in the desert



The last of the blooming cacti for the season.



One of my wall-hangings – found on my Etsy shop,
LadyPops Shops



A customizable mobile – found on my Etsy site.

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Quinoa Sushi with Matzah Crunch

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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