Black Sesame Hamantaschen with Blood Orange Glaze



So if you read my Valentine’s Day post, you’ll know already that I recently attended an amazing conference centered on the topic of how to help adolescents thrive as they transition

into adulthood. You'll also know that the headliner of this conference was Jane Fonda. What you might not know is that this conference was one of the best professional/personal development experiences of my career as a school counselor. Not only for the sheer fact that I was in a room of committed individuals who were also passionately engaged in trying to be an ally for youth in an increasingly difficult world, but also because I left with actual, tangible resources that I can implement in my every day life.





One of the best directly relates to the images you have previously seen on this blog and my various social media handles – that of images of my kiddos. When I first started out in the blogging game, I filled my posts with images of my family. I wanted a blog that was not only delicious to look at but that also gave readers a glimpse into my personal life.

Here’s the thing though: My girls are growing up and, please Gd, they will continue to grow up. They’re going to grow up and become adolescents themselves and could quite possibly Google themselves, as Dr. Devorah Heitner so lovingly pointed out at this conference. I want to make sure that when that times comes, they don’t feel like their journey to adulthood was chronicled at every turn without their permission. In addition, and this is what really struck me, I don’t want my kids feeling like they always have to be ‘on’ because you never know when mom might be recording this for her blog/Instagram/Facebook. So, in an effort to give them more anonymity and to create a culture of consent in our family, I will now be ASKING their permission to take and subsequently publish their image (the baby is a bit too young for this so instead, I’ll just be more mindful of how much of her life I’m putting in front of strangers).







So what does this have to do with Purim and hamantaschen? Mostly nothing but I wanted to make mention of a change in

what you'll be seeing on this here blog for the future. Instead of the delicious faces of my kiddos, I'll be sharing more delicious pictures of food. How 'bout them apples?!

And about these hamantaschen? Welcome to your new fancy 'taschen. I have ALWAYS wanted to work with blood orange and black sesame. The flavors of each are delicious on their own but once combined with the yumminess of Joan Nathan's hamantaschen dough recipe as featured in her book, Jewish Cooking in America, well, magic happens. And, I mean, come on, anytime I can make something naturally pink, I'm on it. While there are many steps to this hamantaschen recipe, most of them can be done days in advance. In fact, all of it can be done days in advance. Also, note that the black sesame does look and taste like poppy seeds so if you can't find black sesame seeds (I found mine in Whole Foods), you could easily sub in poppy seeds.











Black Sesame Hamantaschen with Blood Orange Glaze

Dough Ingredients:

2/3 cup butter or margarine (room temperature)

1/2 cup sugar

1 large egg (+ 1 egg for glaze)

1 tablespoon blood orange zest

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp of salt

Black Sesame Filling

1/2 cup roasted black sesame seeds

1/4 cup almond milk (or regular)

1/4 cup honey

1 tbsp zest of blood orange

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/2 tbsp butter

Blood Orange Glaze

1/4 cup freshly squeezed blood orange juice

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 cup powdered sugar

Dough Instructions:

Using a stand mixer or hand-held mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the egg, vanilla, and blood orange zest and continue creaming until smooth.

Stir together the flour, baking powder and salt to a separate medium-sized bowl. Slowly add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and mix until a ball of dough is formed (if not using a stand mixer, do this step not with the hand-held mixer but with a wood spoon). Shape dough into a disk, wrap in saran wrap and chill for AT LEAST 3 hours (I chill mine overnight).

Filling Instructions:

Lightly grind the black sesame seeds in a food processor using the “pulse” function for roughly 30 seconds.

In a small saucepan, combine the milk and honey over low heat, stirring until the honey dissolves into the milk. Then add the

ground sesame seeds and bring to a simmer. Simmer for 7-10 minutes, stirring frequently. While it’s simmering, add the blood orange zest and vanilla.

Once the mixture has thickened considerably – or as desired, stir in the butter until it melts, cooking it for another minute or so. Remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature. You can make this a day ahead, when you first make the dough, and cover and store in the fridge.

Putting it all Together:

Once chilled, preheat oven to 375 degrees with rack in the center. On a floured work surface, roll out dough to a scant 1/4-inch thickness. With a 2 3/4-inch round cutter, or wide-rimmed drinking class, 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. Bake cookies on a parchment-lined baking sheet, 1 sheet at a time, about 10 – 12 minutes. Allow to cool completely before adding filling.

For Blood Orange Glaze:

Whisk together the ingredients until combined and smooth. Once cookies have cooled completely, drizzle on top until it’s perfectly covered in pink.

Chocolate + Tahini “Earthquake” Cake



Ok, since the last time we spoke, I have crossed a total of, um, nothing, off of “LA” to do list. I have, however, started rewatching all the seasons of Entourage. I figured it’d be a

great segue into the big move. You know, because my life will absolutely mirror the life of Vinnie Chase and his buddies from Queens, right?



Or you could just insert a straw and go to town.

I'm actually gearing up to head to LA this Sunday for four days of work and apartment-hunting. This will be my second solo trip out there and I gotta tell ya, I relish the 'aloneness' of it all for about 24 hours and then I start to really miss my people. It's weird, but I was single for so long in my 20s that I felt proud to be comfortable traveling by myself or just living life for myself. There were definitely times when I felt lonely but I was blessed to have an amazing group of friends who were in the same stage of life as I was. We were all there for each other and very present in each other's lives. Heck, I fancied myself as an openly-Jewish "Carrie Bradshaw"– grabbing life by the horns and really living it (albeit it with A LOT less cash, uglier shoes and a little less promiscuous). I think about my four years in Chicago, specifically, and I feel proud of myself for doing

my thing, you know? I was woman, could you hear me roar!?



Tahini, how I love it so.



But now that I've got this amazing kid and husband, I've gotten VERY used to being needed and always having someone around. And so while I sit in my seat on the plane, anticipating 5 or so hours of uninterrupted reading and movie-watching time, while also making a mental list of what I want to order from room service later that night for my eagerly anticipated, "dinner-in-bed-while-watching-uninterrupted-hours-of-Bravo", one of my most FAVORITE things to do while traveling solo (I know, I really live out loud, right?), I know the novelty of this aloneness will wear off very soon.

It's the second day of solo travel when I start to feel the homesickness and the weirdness of a few days by myself.



She got her hands on some lip gloss. That’s my big mouth laughing at her in the background. The kid cracks me up.



> This is what we do after dinner – hang out and goof off. It’s the best. P.S. Pink’s really his color, don’t you think?

Of course, I try to snap myself out of these pangs of homesickness or weirdness about not having my kiddo by my side by reminding myself that I’m THIS close to entering into my temporary single-parent status and I might just want to cherish this alone time while I got it, you know? Hashtag, get-it-while-you-can-sister.

The other thing I did besides start binge-watching Entrouage is bake a cake in honor of LA. Well, it’s not really a cake so much as a ‘loaf’, but whatever, I baked it nonetheless and it came out very tasty and very pretty. I had the idea after two incidents—-the news that there was an earthquake about a month ago, the epicenter of which was something like .5 miles from the school I’m about to work at, and my new-found obsession with tahini and chocolate. Thus, the chocolate and tahini ‘Earthquake’ cake was born. Do enjoy and don’t be afraid to replace your healthy, Whole30 breakfast with a slice of this and some coffee . . . just this one morning. I won’t tell anyone, I promise.



“Earthquake” close up

[amd-zlrecipe-recipe:9]

