

**Pimento
Challah**

Cheese-Stuffed



**Pimento Cheese-stuffed
Challah**

Oh. Hi there. Remember me? No? Me either.

JUST KIDDING! I'm back . . . a little. To be honest, I haven't really left. I've just been guest posting over at Busy in Brooklyn and writing for Interfaithfamily.com (recipe round-up for them is coming). I've also been knee-deep in adolescent mental health as the school year is in full swing and therefore, I'm back in the mix at the day job as a Director of Counseling at an area high school. I've also been trying very hard to leave some space this year for self-care, which started out really well. I joined a gym and subsequently actually attended the gym for a whole full 10 days . . . and then the kids got sick and my husband's work/PhD-writing schedule took over and I haven't been in 2 weeks. I miss it. I don't miss the intensity of some of the other patrons or the feeling that I'm not quite pushing myself hard enough as I enjoy my treadmill stroll while I watch other members just barely hold on while participating in their spinning class, but I do miss it. I had finally discovered the key to motivating myself into getting on the elliptical machine and really getting into it. What's the secret, you ask? Two words:

Beyonce Videos.

That's right, I'm the chick on the elliptical wearing outdated yoga pants from the early 2000s watching Beyonce music videos on Youtube while I sweat buckets onto the nicely polished gym floor. I'm telling you though, IT WORKS. I'm all, "Shoooooot, I can do this! I'm as fit, limber and coordinated as Beyonce! Heck, I have so much rhythm on this here elliptical machine, I could be one of her backup dancers!" And yes, once off the elliptical and back in my real life, I realize the power of endorphins and how they can play tricks on the mind, like convincing a 36 year-old Jewish white woman she is as fit, limber and coordinated as Beyonce. But hey, whatever works.



But enough about my meager attempts at self-care, we've got a challah to talk about. I want to acknowledge my homegirl, Molly Yeh, here as her Brown Sugar Challah with Pomegranate Glaze absolutely inspired this challah. I made it several weeks ago for the first time and fell in love with the ease of the dough recipe and wanted to experiment with fillings. I also wanted to make a challah that represented me and my flavor profiles and what's more Southern Jewess than pimento cheese-stuff challah!?!?! I get that the pimento cheese might not be everyone's favorite but I'm telling you, the feedback from husband and co-workers who enjoyed this loaf at work the next day was some of the most positive, re-enforcing feedback I've ever received on a recipe. So I say to you out there who is in doubt, give it a try. Just once. And if it's not for you as is, slice it up and make some bada** grilled cheese with it

or a savory stratta. Whatever you do, keep the dough recipe.
It's so user-friendly. Enjoy and Shanah Tovah!!!





Recently, on the Jewhungry Instagram page.





Makes One Loaf of Challah

3/4 c warm water

1 tbsp dry yeast

1 1/4 c brown sugar

3 c all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting

1 tsp kosher salt

1 tsp of cayenne pepper

1/3 c sunflower oil

3 eggs

Pimento Cheese recipe from previous Jewhungry post

Method

1. In a measuring cup or small bowl, combine the water, yeast, and 2 teaspoons of brown sugar. Let sit for a few minutes until it gets foamy on top.

2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl or bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook, mix together 1/4 cup of brown sugar, the 3 cups of flour, salt, and cayenne. In a separate bowl, mix together the oil and 2 of the eggs.

3. When the yeast has proofed, add it to the dry ingredients, immediately followed by the egg mixture. Mix to combine and knead, either on a floured surface, or with the dough hook for 7-10 minutes, adding more flour as needed, until smooth (*please note I have never made this recipe with a stand mixer – only by hand so my results are based on the ol' fashion method of kneading by hand*).

4. Transfer to an oiled bowl, cover with a damp towel, and let rise until doubled in size, about 3 hours (*I like to preheat my oven to 500 and then turn it off and let the bowl sit on top of the oven with the oven door slightly ajar as it lets the heat escape and helps my dough rise, baby, RISE!*)

5. While challah is rising, make your pimento cheese and let sit in a cover bowl in the fridge for roughly 2 hours. You want it to be nice and chilled as the cheese is more manageable that way.

6. Turn onto a lightly floured surface, and roll the dough out into a large (approximately 10-inch by 14-inch) rectangle. Using a flat icing spatula or spoon, spread about 1/2 to 3/4

of your pimento cheese mixture onto the dough leaving about a 1/4 inch frame of uncover dough around the cheese (if you cover the dough completely in the cheese, it will be a messy disaster once baked). Next, roll it up like a jelly roll—rolling dough from one long edge to another as tightly as possible. Pinch the edges to seal them shut and then coil into a swirl shape with the seam side down. Place it on a baking sheet lined with parchment. Beat together the remaining egg with a splash of water, add another 1/2 tsp of cayenne and brush it lightly onto the challah. Let it rise for 30 more minutes while you preheat the oven to 375.

6. Bake the challah until it's golden brown and cooked through, about 45 – 50 minutes. Because this challah is round and stuff with delicious pimento cheese, it will take slightly longer to bake than a typical loaf. It may look done on the outside after about 20 minutes, but it will still be raw on the inside. You WILL need to tent the loaf with foil after 20 minutes to prevent it from getting too done on top.

7. Once done, expect that some of that gooey, delicious cheese has escaped. That's OK. There's more deliciousness inside!

8. Enjoy and don't forget to use the leftovers to make grilled cheese or cheese croutons!! Shanah Tovah!!!

Baked Sweet Potato + Pimento Cheese



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I'm not sure if you've noticed, but it's summer time. We moved from the Westside of Los Angeles to the Valley in January and it's fair to say that it feels like we officially live ON THE EQUATOR. Holy cow, it's HOT! Last weekend it was a balmy 110 degrees. The husband was out of town and so entertaining 2 kids while not really being able to go outside was challenging, to say the least. We finally settled on a local mall that, lucky for us, was super fancy and so had installed

an outdoor splash fountain that kids were allowed to play in. Not so lucky for them (them being the fancy outdoor mall we were at), was the site of my oldest attempting to strip down to her undies so as to really get the full cool-down experience that the fountain had to offer. Luckily, we were with our girl, Aunt Jessie, who quickly and loudly pointed out to us that there was a GIANT sign close by the read, "All patrons must remain clothed". Oops.







Summer brings on a lot of goodness – vacation/break from work, an excuse to eat ice cream every day, and, most especially for me as I get older, LOTS of memories of growing up. I don't know why but every summer for the last couple of years, I have been getting strong hankerin's for the South. I'm talking fireflies and fishing excursion, sweet tea and ski-tubing at the lake, and Southern food. This week alone saw some Southern dishes emerging during meal time. I started Monday off with biscuit making. Then mid-week brought us a peach cobbler (on request from the husband) and, of course, pimento cheese! Sweet merciful Lord, I L00000VE me some pimento cheese dip. When I was living in Athens, GA for a hot minute (working at the University of Georgia's Hillel), I used to hit up a little local cafe and order the same thing – their homemade pimento cheese. I have yet to be able to replicate their perfect cheese dip until I found Sean Brock's recipe in Garden & Gun. Sean Brock is the chef at McCrady's and Husk, in Charleston, South Carolina as well as Nashville so I think it's safe to say he knows a thing or two about about Southern food. I've changed a few things but really, very little of his recipe. In

my mind, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. You can use this recipe as a basic recipe for both the sweet potato and the dip and eat them separately or independently. We ate the dip all week-long. We had it with cut vegetables and pita chips as well as on this here sweet potato. And hey, it's a gluten-free recipe so, I guess you can kinda consider it healthy, right?



Lately, on the Jewhungry Instagram page.

[amd-zlrecipe-recipe:30]



Crockpot to the Rescue! BBQ Pulled Chicken Sandwich w/Zucchini Slaw

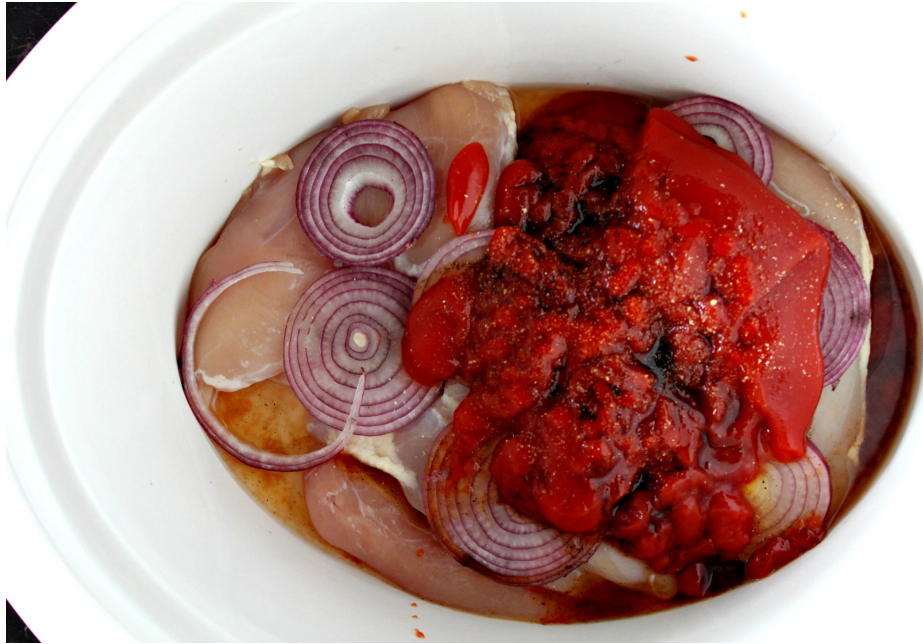


This month's Kosher Connection round-up was all about comfort food. I feel as though I jumped the gun a bit with my last post, which was dedicated to that siren of temptation and comfort—Macaroni n' Cheese. So since I already have that box checked, I went for more specific and that's comfort food, Southern Shabbat-style.

As a full-time working mom, I struggle daily with trying to get all I need to get done. As much as I love blogging and cooking, I'd say the number one thing that keeps me up at night are thoughts like, "When am I going to have time to get this done?!" Grocery shopping and cooking for Shabbat have kept me for roughly a week, if you combined all those hours laying awake trying to concoct a plan for getting it all done. As a side gig (because I have SO much time), I've taken on doing some personal cooking for a family of 9 in conjunction with my regular client, whom I still cook 3 Paleo meals a week

for. So, by the time I'm done with cooking for all my clients, including my own family, I'm in no mood to cook for Shabbat.

It happens every Thursday evening. I finally sit down after a loooooong day at school where I spend an hour or so trying to convince my daughter to eat dinner then followed by everyone's favorite pastime, the bedtime routine. By the time it's all done, I cannot be bothered to spend the next couple hours cooking for Shabbat. There are a few occasions when I can trick myself into actually cooking but that usually involves copious amounts of coffee from earlier in the day and not sitting down AT ALL. That's usually when all goes to hell—sitting down. The minute I do, it's all over cause mama is not getting up for no one once I finally allow myself to relax (unless, of course, it's to get more wine or some chocolate. Mama's gotta take care of mama, am I right?). So because I wait until the last-minute to cook anything for Shabbat, I am forced to break out that holy grail of suburban living, the crockpot. Sure, I could go cholent, but we live in Miami and when it's 80 degrees outside, the last thing we want to eat is cholent. Therefore, as long as I have chicken breasts on hand, we will be having BBQ pulled chicken sandwiches with zucchini slaw. It's delicious, it's easy and it's messy but, whether you're crunched for time or you just love a nice, sloppy sandwich, this recipe never disappoints. Enjoy y'all (and don't forget your wet-naps).



Set it and forget it.

Oh, before I forget, my latest piece for the Huffington Post was posted last Friday! You can find it [here](#). The feedback has been humbling and nicely overwhelming. I was nervous about putting it all out there but, thank Gd, the crazies kept at bay . . . this time. Thanks y'all and enjoy your sandwiches!



A lone sandwich.

Crockpot BBQ Chicken Sandwiches w/Zucchini Slaw

Ingredients for Chicken:

2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 purple onion cut into thin rounds
1 cup barbecue sauce (a flavor you like)
3 tablespoons honey
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Ingredients for Zucchini Slaw:

2 medium zucchinis
Kosher salt
1 small purple onion, diced
1 bunch cilantro plus stems, chopped
1 jalapeno, diced
1/2 cup mayonnaise (warning: I like mine slaw SUPER mayonnaise-y so start with 1/4 cup and add if you want more)
3 tbsp apple cider vinegar
Dash of celery salt
Garlic powder

How to – Chicken:

1. After washing and rinsing your chicken, place it in the slow cooker and top it with your purple onion rounds. Top your chicken and onions with the ingredients for the BBQ sauce. Set it for 6-8 hours, tasting along the way (after chicken is cooked). Add spices if need be.
2. Once chicken is ready, remove the chicken to a cutting board. Using two forks, shred the chicken into small shreds. Return the shredded chicken to the slow cooker and stir. Add additional barbecue sauce if more sauce is needed or desired. Cover and continue cooking on low for 45 minutes.

How to – Zucchini Slaw:

1. Using a knife, food processor or julienne peeler, cut the

unpeeled zucchini into thin matchstick-sized pieces, though perfection is not necessary here. Place the julienned zucchini into a container, toss with the salt and refrigerate for an hour.

2. Drain off the excess liquid, and then place the julienned zucchini in a medium bowl with the rest of the ingredients **EXCEPT FOR CELERY SALT AND GARLIC**. Stir until they are well-combined. Add a pinch of garlic powder and salt to taste.

The Final Step:

Once all is prepared, scoop some chicken on one side of the bun (we used mini challah rolls) and some slaw on the other. If you're feeling extra spicy, add some pickles in there too. Put them together, put a bib on and enjoy!



Upclose, messy and amazing.



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