

The Mother of Days



Wynwood Walls decorated for Mother's Day. Can you spot me and my girl?

I like to to fight the establishment. I do. It's one of the reasons I wanted to be a social worker and why my focus in social work school was community outreach. I've participated in many the protest and spent a decent amount of time on a picket line. And while I really wanted to jump on board my husband's cry of 'down with all Hallmark holidays", this time I could not. And no, before you jump to conclusions, it's not because I wanted a new, shiny present (we decided to make a donation to a children's organization on Mother's and Father's Day instead of doing gifts). It's because in this day and age, when work and other people's needs take precedent over our own, having a day here and there when you can say, without apologies or guilt, "I can't work today or I can't do ____ for you today, it's Mother's Day and I'm spending time with my family" and actually have folks accept that and back off, well, it's nice and I'll take it when I can get it. Sure, there are actual holidays but as Jews, I feel like our

extensive holiday list kinda starts cancelling out the “I’m with my family now. I’ll get back to you later.” Especially when we start rolling into the High Holiday time period and you’re having to take off day after day for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, etc. You try explaining Shemini Atzeret to your boss. I dare you to try to ignore the, ‘I’m so not buying this as a holiday’ look from her eyes. For sure your boss thinks you just made that word up. Seriously? Shemini Atzeret!? So, when it’s a nationally agreed upon, bi-partisan holiday that affords me unapologetic time with my family, I’m on board.



Something for Everyone.



“You Can’t Tell Now, But I’m Gonna Give My Parents Hell When They Try to Put Me to Sleep in an Hour”.

See, the hubby and I were chatting last night and we realized something, In the chaos of Siona’s first 2 weeks of life, people backed off. People forgive you for forgetting them or for putting them lower on the priority list than usual. Work lets you not return phone calls and emails and text messages go unanswered with no apology needed. People give you that time and it’s really, really nice. In fact, it’s kind of the nicest gift anyone can give—space and time. As I’ve been back at work for about 6 months now, I’ve really had to fight for my time with my family. I let so much take priority over my time with them and it’s no one else’s fault but mine but it’s really hard work trying to lay those boundaries. One is so available with Smart Phones that there really isn’t an excuse as to why you didn’t answer an email or text right away. I love my job but I don’t have a lot of role models there when it comes to work/life balance. So when there’s a day on the calendar that’s kind of, “national-take-a-breath-and-hang-with-the-people-who-love-you-unconditionally-day”, I’m gonna go ahead and celebrate that and even be thankful for it.



Close Up at Wynwood Walls



Family Photo

Now, because I'm a big lover of food, today's day revolved around just that--food. We started the day at my most favorite coffee shop in the whole world, Panther Coffee. It's located in the very trendy, very hipster-heavy neighborhood of Wynwood in Midtown, Miami. So, suffice-it-to-say, the people watching does not disappoint. Not only is Wynwood known for it's hipsters and eateries but it's also known for it's amazing art and graffiti (see pictures before). Next on the agenda was a visit to the Pinecrest Gardens Farmer's Market to visit our dear friend, Zak the Baker, who is a bit of a bread celebrity (look for an interview with Zak in a forth-coming post). Zak's sourdough is the stuff of legends and as soon as we got home, the multigrain loaf he gave us sandwiched a delectable grilled cheese made with sharp white cheddar, balsamic carmelized purple onions and avocado. We also picked up some limes, which I used in a cheesecake recipe I made later in the day while the little one napped. We're finishing this beautiful Sunday with some sushi and a movie and a dessert of warm fuzzies**. What blessings. Happy Mother's Day!

**Quick Update: Warm fuzzies and sushi were put on hold as baby girl spent a solid hour and a half fighting sleep. That a'girl.

Oh! Before I forget! I made some quinoa 'meatballs' last week for a customer. I made them sort of off-the-cuff and didn't take a lot of pictures (and the ones I did take aren't that spectacular). I was just going to do a practice round but they came out so nicely I saved myself another go round and sacrificed the pictures. Sorry 'bout that. Anyway, I wanted to share. See below.



Quinoa Balls – Wish I Took More Pictures!

Baby Bella Quinoa “Meatballs”

What!?

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 3 tsp. coconut oil
- 1 shallot, minced

- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 baby portobella
- 1 zucchini, finely chopped (skin off)
- 1 tsp. basil or oregano
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste*
- 1/2 cup matzoh meal, bread crumbs (if going gluten free or paleo, try 1/2 – 3/4 cup almond meal)
- Sea salt and pepper

How's That Now?!

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Heat the coconut oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the shallots saute for about 3 minutes or until a transparent. Next, add the zucchini and garlic and saute for another several minutes or until fragrant (you may need to add a bit more coconut oil at this point). Next, add the mushrooms and saute for another 3 – 4 minutes. (The mushrooms naturally have a little more moisture in them then the zucchini so it will soften the other ingredients as it cooks. I like my zucchini a little brown so that is why I add it first). Finally, add the oregano, tomato paste, sea salt, and pepper. Cook another several minutes until all ingredients are well combined. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.

Add to a bowl with the quinoa and stir to combine. Add the whole wheat bread crumbs and continue mixing until completely combined. Roll into 12 – 14 meatballs, each about the size of a ping pong ball, and place on the baking sheet. Bake for 12 minutes on the first side. Flip over and bake for 12 more minutes.

*Because I made these vegan I omitted any egg that could have been used as a binding agent. The tomato paste coupled with the bread crumbs worked out perfectly and I didn't see a need for the egg but if you do, please feel free to add one.