

The Gospel of Curry Garbanzo Fries w/Cilantro Lime Yogurt



Let's talk for a minute about gospel choir. I love gospel music. I love hip hop, soul, funk, R&B, and basically anything that played on V103 in the 90s (Atlanta folks, you know what I'm talking about). I didn't discover gospel music though until I went to college, which I get is a weird place for a Jewish girl to pick up gospel music, considering the fact that I went to a private, Presbyterian liberal arts college located in the middle of Amish country, Ohio. But pick up gospel music I did. Just how much did I pick it up? So much that I ended up getting a solo during my freshman year called, Near the Cross.

Now, before you start hurling knishes at me in the name of blasphemy, let's back up a minute or two to dissect how it is a Jewish girl finds herself singing about Jesus in a large church auditorium in front of hundreds of people.

I grew up loving music. As a children of the 80s, my brother and I listened to everything from Run DMC and the Beastie boys to Michael Jackson and Madonna. However, we also were raised by a Jewish mother and if you think we went through life without listening to Barbra Streissand's The Broadway album, you'd be crazy wrong. A direct result of listening to this album on repeat during the 7 hour car ride from Atlanta to Louisville, KY where our grandparents lived (there was also some Neil Diamond and Dan Fogelberg thrown in there to spice things up), was my undying love for show tunes and of course, Stephen Sondheim. When it was discovered that I had a decent voice and I loved singing, my mom started me with piano lessons and eventually voice lessons. The piano didn't stick but I loved my vocal coach, who looked a lot like Annie Potts' character from Ghostbusters, Janine Melnitz. My coach also happened lived in what can only be described as a gingerbread house that was shrunk in the wash and had an affinity for Yorkshire Terriers so visiting her once a week was a trip. It was like visiting your weird Aunt that never had kids and spent all her money on crap from the Home Shopping Network (before it was dubbed, HSN) and portraits of her dog dressed as various historical figures but who also just happened to be crazy talented too. She taught me amazing technique and to appreciate my alto voice, which led me to gospel music.



Nowadays I relegate my singing to Israeli karaoke bars and the shower.

In choral music, the alto is rarely going to get a solo. It's not quite high enough and most popular choral arrangements are written to showcase the soprano or highest female vocal range. When I entered college and wanted to fill my need for singing, I joined the regular ol' choir. It was nice enough. We sang traditional hymns and the like but it just wasn't doing it for me. Then a friend told me about the gospel choir and I figured I was already singing hymns in the regular choir and neither we're going to take me up on my offer to try out "Light One Candle" or even Barbra's version of Jingle Bells so what does it matter? Might as well give gospel choir a shot. Well my friends, let me tell you, even the warm-ups during gospel choir rehearsal were soul-shattering. I mean the first time I heard all of our voices in that soulful harmony I gotta admit, I got a little teary-eyed. This was exactly what I was looking for. And, to top things off, by the fifth or sixth rehearsal, our Director asked me to audition for a solo that required an alto. When she told me the name of the song I hesitated a bit and then decided to quietly mention that I am, in fact, Jewish and would she mind that. Well, of course she didn't mind that

because yes, the song was about Jesus but more than anything, the song was about faith, which led her to ask me if I felt comfortable singing a song about faith. That, I did not have a problem with. Of course, I was a little concerned that folks might think I had converted. I also, quite inexplicably, felt very strongly that somehow, my childhood rabbi would find out about this and haul me back to Sunday School so I wore the biggest Star of David necklace I could find come performance day, you know, just to be clear about things.



Garbanzo fries, a close up

I don't really remember what happened to the gospel choir or why I stopped attending rehearsals after my freshman year but that solo was to be my one and only foray I to gospel music stardom. I have no real connection between my need to tell you the story of my onetime solo except that lately, I've been thinking about all those little incidences of life that add up to make the person we are today. I think about the person I was in college or in high school or even in my twenties and

the person I am today and I can see some stark differences--mainly in the fact that I have a child, I'm married and I have a bit more confidence/sense of self--but there are also a lot of similarities. I would still get up on a stage and belt out a song about faith that just so happened to also be about Jesus. I'm just not sure I'd do it at synagogue . . . or at the Jewish Day School I work at . . . or my kid's Jewish day care center . . . or Shabbat dinner . . .



Garbanzo flour and water



The mixture should be thick like cement.

Curry Garganzo Fries with Cilantro Lime Yogurt

(Adapted from a Colicchio & Sons recipe)

Ingredients

Nonstick vegetable oil spray
2 1/2 Cups chickpea flour
1 Tsp. kosher salt, plus more
4 Cups low-sodium veggie broth
1 Garlic clove, finely grated
2 Tbsp. curry powder

1 Tbsp. Turmeric
1/2 Tsp. Ground coriander
1 Tsp. Sriracha
Vegetable oil (for frying, about 1 1/2 cups)

How:

1. Lightly coat a 13×9" baking dish with nonstick spray. Whisk chickpea flour and 1 tsp. salt in a large bowl, breaking up any clumps in flour. Make a well in the center and gradually pour broth into well, whisking to incorporate dry ingredients; add garlic, spices and Sriracha and whisk until batter is smooth.

2. Transfer mixture to a large heavy saucepan and cook over medium-high heat, whisking constantly, until bubbling and very thick (you will be able to see bottom of pan when whisking), 8–10 minutes.

3. Pour chickpea mixture into prepared baking dish and smooth top. Press plastic wrap directly onto surface and chill until firm, at least 3 hours.

4. Turn chickpea mixture out onto a cutting board and cut into 3×1½" pieces. Pour oil into a large skillet, preferably cast iron, to a depth of ¼" and heat over medium-high heat until oil bubbles immediately when a small piece of chickpea mixture is added. Working in batches, fry until fries are deep golden brown and crisp, about 2 minutes per side; transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and season with salt.

DO AHEAD: Chickpea mixture can be made and poured into baking dish 2 days ahead. Keep chilled.

See below for yogurt recipe



Using his brute-force to press down the mixture.



One more shot just cause.

For Yogurt Sauce:

Ingredients:

1/2 Cup, Greek Yogurt

1 Tbsp, Lime juice

Handful of cilantro, finely chopped

How:

Place all ingredients into a small mixing bowl and whisk together until well-combined. Add additional lime or cilantro per taste.



Curry and Greek yogurt = yum!

