

Savory Mashed Purple Potato Pie with Garlic Cream Cheese (a.k.a. Galaxy Pie)



Writing about food these days seems extra weird. I mean, I've talked about the privilege of food writing before (and how I struggle with it) but I'm tellin' ya, ever since that election 2 weeks ago . . . boy oh boy, the things I love to do, and I'm talking the trivial things like food blogging and Instagramming, seem sooooooooooooo extra silly. I mean, for the love of Gd, some racists a**holes vandalized a playground dedicated to MCA from the Beastie Boys. A young Muslim student at my graduate alma mater, University of Michigan, was approached by a stranger who threatened to light her on fire if she didn't remove her hijab and a Muslim teacher in Georgia found a letter in her classroom telling her that her "headscarf isn't allowed anymore." The note, scribbled in black ink, also told her to "tie" her headscarf around her

neck and “hang yourself with it.” I mean seriously, world, WTF!? So yeah, you see what I’m getting at with the food thing?





I've been seriously wrestling with how to make sure I don't stand idly by while all this hate is being spewed. I am not a fan (for myself – good for you, not for me but good for you) of Facebook as a means of protest but have been known to post the occasional shocking article or two. That said, Facebook is already saturated with the same articles and I am trying to be mindful of participating in any armchair advocacy. The day after the election I led 6 guided meditation sessions at work for those colleagues of mine who were struggling with the results and that felt good. That felt purposeful and productive. I've got a list of Senators and State Reps. to call though, to be completely transparent, I'm a little nervous to do so as I've never done that before. I've signed up to bake for a bake sale whose profits will go to support causes I believe in but the thing I'm most wrestling with is whether or not to march and if so . . . do I take my daughter? I always imagine myself marching for something I believe in right alongside my own daughter, if I were blessed to have one and now I have two! I came of age marching against

the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I marched for fair wages in Chicago and for the equal rights of the LGBTQ community in Marietta, GA. But, truth be told, I'm scared. I'd love to take my oldest but I'm scared that something bad might happen and then what? Was I marching because I need her to have an experience or because *I* need to have an experience? I really don't know the answer to that question just yet.



Before the bake.



The one thing I have done this week is visit the opening night gala for MAZON's extraordinary installation called, This is Hunger. This Is Hunger is an experiential learning tool whose goal is to bring about community engagement, awareness and education around the issues of hunger in the US. Basically, This Is Hunger is a high-impact, experiential installation on wheels—literally, it's a big rig. When the 53-foot-long double expandable trailer is parked and open on both sides, it provides almost 1,000 square feet of interior space to take participants on a voyage of awareness and activism: to help them understand the stark reality of hunger in America and to spark their commitment to taking action that will help end hunger once and for all.

The big rig is touring LA (locations here) and the country. Tickets are free but do need to be reserved. I hope you are able to make it there. It is astonishingly powerful, provocative and creative and I am so grateful for MAZON and especially Emily for inviting me to attend.



But OK, seriously, this pie!! I had to. I just had to make a purple pie with cheese. I mean, why not? And let's just get

something out-of-the-way . . . I did not make the pie crust. Nope. Not at all. Gang, I have 2 kids, an intense full-time job and my husband is prepping to defend his dissertation. Time is the greatest of currencies and our household these days so if I can present you with a tasty pie that came in a ready-made crust, well so be it. The thing to note about purple potatoes is that they are a lot starchier than russet potatoes so you will need to counter act the starchiness with the moisture of the milk, butter and cheese. Do not worry that you'll lose some of the purple of the potatoes with the additions of the add-ins. The purple becomes more pronounced during baking. Oh, also, I call it "Galaxy Pie" because I had made the moon shape on purpose but once it was baked and I sprinkled the coarse sea salt on the pie, I thought it looked like stars along side the moon against the night sky. No?





Savory Mashed Purple Potato Pie with Garlic Cream Cheese

Ingredients:

2 pounds small purple potatoes, peeled
1 frozen pie crust
1/2 cup of whole milk
1/4 cup (half a stick) butter
2 eggs
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1/2 tablespoon ground black pepper
1/2 tablespoon garlic powder
1 5 oz. package garlic and fine herb Boursin
Maldon or other flaky sea salt for topping

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Make sure your pie crust is mostly defrosted. Once it is, prick the bottom all over with a fork and set aside.

Cook the potatoes in a large pot of boiling salted water until they are very tender, about 20 minutes. Drain; return the

potatoes to the same pot and mash well. Mix in the milk and melted butter. Season with garlic powder, salt and pepper. Add more seasoning depending upon preferred taste.

Crack the eggs into a small bowl and whisk until well combined. Add the eggs to the mashed potato mixture. Now, here's where you can do 1 of 2 things (or both, it's up to you). I made 2 pies for this recipe. 1 pie has 1/2 of the Boursin mixed in and the other has it lovingly dotted along the side as a moon decoration. You can either dump all that Boursin into the potato mixture for an extra creamy, garlicky potato pie OR you can decorate the top of your pie with the Boursin. I let it soften a bit more and then just dotted it along with sides with my fingers. It's totally up to you. Both are delicious options.

Once you've fully prepped your pie, place it into the oven and bake for roughly 20 – 25 minutes. Add a last sprinkling of coarse sea salt (like Maldon) to the top and serve hot.