

# two for one

I owe this blog a recipe AND a conversion question. Today? I'm giving you both. How does that sound? Try to contain yourself. We're running out of really juicy questions, so I'm going to have to go with a pretty easy one.

**If you were filling out a form today, which asked you to fill in your religion, what would you write in?**

Seriously? This is a conversion question? I mean I guess I get having to pause for a second? Listen, I've been saying I was Jewish since before I really even knew what that meant. My Facebook profile, for instance, has said that I'm Jewish pretty much since my profile went up. It's kinda a non-issue. The thing I've been wondering lately is the exact opposite. When do other people start seeing me as Jewish? Maybe that's a weird question. I feel like I'm becoming more and more sensitive about my Jewish identity. I'm not worried if I'm Jewish enough, I'm more concerned that people think converting is somehow fake or inauthentic. I'm not going to temple just because I'm converting, I'm not celebrating Jewish holidays to put on a big Jewish show. I just wonder lately if the folks around me understand that. I'm definitely going to temple more often now, than I was before the conversion process began. I don't know. I'm not going to come to some sort of solution in this blog post. I guess it's an ongoing process for everyone in my life, not just me. It's a growth process? I guess this is where I get to practice patience.

Can we talk about food now? I finished reading *Eating Animals* this weekend. In the last week? I haven't really been eating animals, y'all. The book really changed me. Maybe the word change is going to get me into trouble. The book really forced me to think a little more about my food choices. I'm

not saying that I'll never eat meat again. Meat is delicious. I'm just not going to eat it every time I sit down for a meal. I had a turkey burger last night. I hadn't eaten meat in about a week. I wasn't even really trying to do avoid meat. In fact, I didn't even realize that I hadn't eaten meat all week until Friday night when we sat down for a little pre-Shabbat dinner.

How on Earth could I possibly not realize that I hadn't been eating meat? Well, I was inspired by my friend Julie to make a pot of vegetarian chilli. When I say a pot of chilli, what I really mean to say is a GIANT pot of vegetarian chilli. We've been eating it all week. The recipe that I found is crazy simple. Like it takes only about an hour to cook, which is sorta out of character for making chilli. Once we were at the end of the chilli I realized that I hadn't really missed meat. How could I with stories of factory farming running through my head.

I don't know what your connection to meat is or how you feel about giving it up. I'm not judging you and I'm certainly not here to try to convert you to vegetarianism. But...what about a vegetarian challenge. Could you do it? Could you even make it a week? I've said it before and I'll say it again. Eating Kosher style really asks me to think about the food that I'm eating. It forces me to be cognizant. So, I ask you. Are you aware? After my turkey burger last night? I think I've decided that I don't really miss meat. It has only been a week and who knows what I'll want to eat for lunch tomorrow, but for now? I think I'm not that interested.

Want to have a vegetarian moment? Here's a quick and easy vegetarian chilli for you. The best part about this chilli is that it's sorta fall themed.

## **WHAT?**

1 large butternut squash

1 (12 oz.) bag frozen onions and peppers  
2 (15 oz.) cans stewed tomatoes, Mexican style  
1 can black beans, drained  
1 can red beans, drained  
2 cups vegetable stock  
2 tablespoons chili powder  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cumin  
1 tablespoon olive oil

## HOW?

In large soup pot sauté chopped onions in olive oil until tender. Stir in chili powder and cumin. Chop your butternut squash into half-inch or inch size pieces. Add butternut squash and vegetable stock. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer for 15 minutes or until squash is tender but not mushy. Add tomatoes and drained beans and simmer and simmer for 5 minutes.

It's seriously amazing. I think the best part might be that it's so fast. I let my chilli simmer for about 20 minutes, because my husband wasn't home yet...