

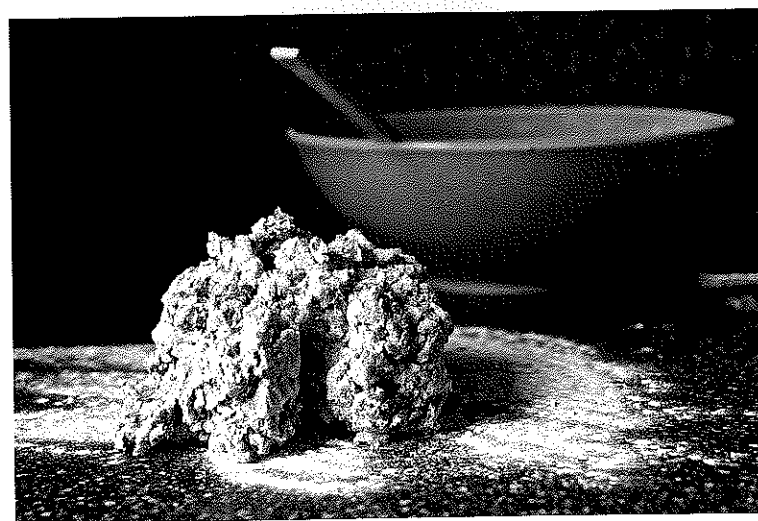
whole-wheat raspberry ricotta scones (continued)

mixture resembles coarse meal. Roughly chop the raspberries on a cutting board, and stir them into the butter-flour mixture.

**both methods** Using a flexible spatula, add the ricotta and heavy cream to the butter mixture and stir them in to form a dough. Then use your hands to knead the dough gently into an even mass, right in the bottom of the bowl. Don't fret if the raspberries get muddled and smudge up the dough. This is a pretty thing.

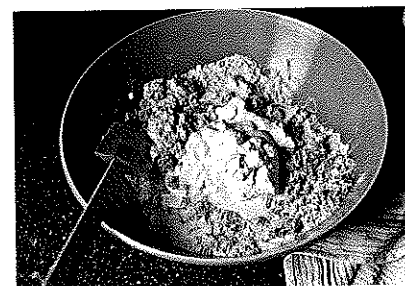
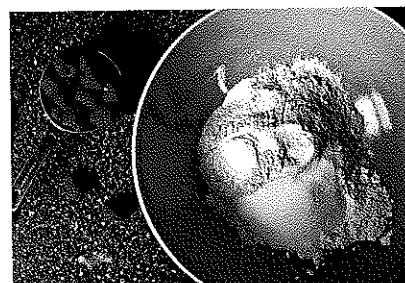
With as few movements as possible, transfer the dough to a well-floured counter or surface, flour the top of the dough, and pat it into a 7-inch square about 1 inch high. With a large knife, divide the dough into nine even squares. Transfer the scones to the prepared baking sheet with a spatula. Bake the scones for about 15 minutes, until they are lightly golden at the edges. Cool them in the pan for a minute, then transfer them to a cooling rack. It's best to cool them about halfway before eating, so they can set a bit more. I know, way to be a big meanie, right?

**cooking note** The trickiest thing about these scones is the dampness of the dough. Yet that same trickiness yields something that seems impossibly moist for a scone and, especially, for a whole-wheat one. Remember to keep your counter and your hands well floured and you won't have any trouble getting the scones from bowl to counter to oven to belly—which, after all, is the whole point.



### do ahead

Scones are always best the day they are baked. However, if you wish to get a head start, you can make and divide the dough, arrange the unbaked scones on your parchment-lined baking sheet, freeze them until firm, and transfer them to a freezer bag. If you're prepping just 1 day in advance, cover the tray with plastic wrap and bake them the day you need them. If you're preparing them more than 1 day in advance, once they are frozen transfer them to a freezer bag or container. Bring them back to a parchment-lined sheet when you're ready to bake them. No need to defrost the frozen, unbaked scones—just add 2 to 3 minutes to your baking time.



## chocolate chip brioche pretzels

When it comes to ludicrously delicious, butter-laden French breakfast treats, enthusiasts generally fall into one of two categories: croissant-eaters and brioche-eaters. Me, I'm on Team Brioche; I'd choose a buttery, lightly sweet, stretchy, and deceptively plain knob of bread over all thousand layers of a great croissant any day. It might be my inability in my mid-thirties to eat like a grown-up that has made this choice for me, evidenced by the telltale flakes I find still clinging to my coat and sweater hours after the croissant is a distant memory. Or it might be the fact that, if you're going to pick your breakfast indulgences based on the ease of making them at home, the brioche will win.

It is, after all, a fairly simple bread dough, enriched with milk, eggs, and butter, and even simpler after I got to it. Though I don't doubt that the flour-lidded starter, and butter that has been bashed into soft submission on a counter and then added in delicate dabs at the end, make a phenomenal proper brioche, I am not a morning person, and thus, this became lazy brioche. I've found out that you can squash the standard procedure into one rise and not miss out on as much as you'd think. And since I'd already long abandoned proper brioche etiquette, I went ahead and roped it into a stretchy, rich pretzel, brushed it shiny and a bit salty, and then studded it with coarse sugar. It was my husband who suggested adding chocolate chips—well, technically, that's his suggestion for improving every baked good, but on this I think it was especially inspired. Eat these warm from the oven and I promise there won't be a telltale crumb left behind.

\* \* \*

**make brioche** Whisk the milk and yeast together in a small dish until the yeast has dissolved. In the bowl of an electric mixer with the paddle attachment, stir together flour, sugar, and salt. Add the eggs and the yeast mixture, and mix at a low speed until the dough comes together in a shaggy pile. Raise the speed to medium, and beat for 10 minutes; the long

yield: eight 4-inch pretzels



### dough

- 1/3 cup (80 ml) whole milk
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast
- 2 1/4 cups (280 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (25 grams) granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten
- 8 tablespoons (115 grams or 1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup (6 ounces or 170 grams) well-chopped chocolate (for the best chocolate flavor) or miniature chocolate chips
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated orange zest (optional, but lovely if you're into that chocolate-orange thing)

### glaze

- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon table salt
- 1 teaspoon water

Coarse or pearl sugar, for finishing

chocolate chip brioche pretzels (continued)

mixing time creates the soft, stretchy strands brioche is known for. Add the butter, a third at a time, mixing the dough between additions. Now switch to the dough hook, and knead at low speed until a silky-smooth dough forms, another 5 minutes. Add the chocolate and zest, if using, and run the machine until it is mixed into the dough.

Transfer to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and allow to rise in a warm spot for 2 hours, until almost doubled. Alternatively, you can rest the dough in the fridge overnight (or up to 24 hours), bring back to room temperature, and let the rise complete before continuing to the next step.

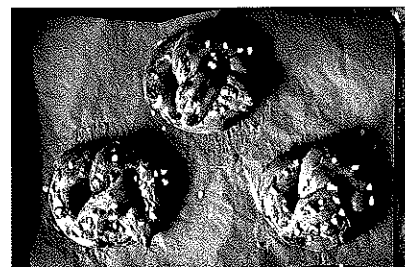
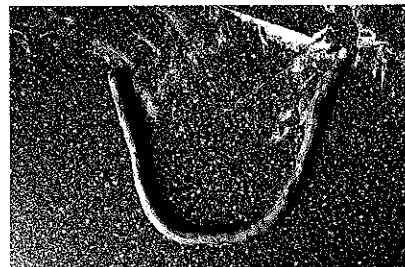
Meanwhile, line two baking sheets with parchment paper and set aside. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

*farm pretzels* Gently deflate the dough, and divide it into eight pieces, about  $3\frac{1}{4}$  ounces (93 grams) each. Working with one piece at a time, roll each piece into an 18-inch-long rope about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. Curiously, I find these ropes easier to roll and stretch on an unfloured or very lightly oiled surface, but if you find yours sticking too much, lightly flour your counter before continuing.

To form the pretzel, draw the ends of a rope together to form a circle. About 2 inches from both ends, twist the rope ends together to close the circle—a full twist, so that the rope end that started on the right side finishes there. Fold the twist down into the circle, adhering the loose ends of the rope at five and seven o'clock on the base. Repeat to make eight pretzel twists. Transfer them to prepared baking sheets, brush them with glaze, and let them rest for about 15 minutes, during which they'll puff slightly again.

*to finish* Brush pretzels with glaze one more time, sprinkle with pearl or coarse sugar, then bake for 12 minutes, or until puffed and lightly bronzed. Cool slightly on a rack before serving, if you can bear it.

*cooking note* Unfortunately, I find this to be the rare bread dough that's radically easier to make with a stand mixer. Nevertheless, should you feel up for the challenge, you can vigorously "knead" the dough in a large bowl with a wooden spoon for a good 10 minutes before adding the butter. Yes, this takes longer than your average bread dough, but that long kneading time is what yields the long, stretchy strands essential to great brioche.



kale salad with cherries and pecans (continued)

Thinly slice the radishes, and add them to the bowl. Coarsely chop the pecans and cherries, and add them as well. Crumble the goat cheese over the top. Whisk dressing ingredients together in a small dish, and pour the dressing over the salad. Toss the salad until it is evenly coated with dressing. This salad is great to eat right away, but even better after 20 minutes of tenderizing in the dressing.



## sugar snap salad with miso dressing

My friend Dan used to make fun of the salad-dressing commercials that would come on while we watched *Buffy* back in the day—you know, back when you had to suffer things like commercials. “Yuck! Vegetables are icky! Gotta drown them!” he’d say sarcastically as the thick ribbons of creamy dressing rained down over the bowls of greens and tomatoes. But he’s right, in a way. Fresh vegetables—especially the ones you wait all year to see at the stands, and when you do, they’re brighter and snappier and more peppy and sweet than you’d remembered, and you’d already remembered them fondly—are a fine thing. Why slick them into sameness?

So that’s the earnest side of this story. That would be, like, the speech I’d give my kid if he woke up one day and only wanted salad oozing with creamy stuff (which, realistically, is going to happen, if only out of rebellion). The other side is what happens when you taste sesame-miso dressing—you know, the stuff they put over your salad at sushi restaurants, usually with ground carrots inside. Sesame-miso is a game changer, a substance so delicious, so nutty and salty and toasty and sweet at once, that you start ordering salads just to get to it, kind of like how you order cupcakes just for the frosting. (You know you do.)

Realistically, this salad could contain anything, and as long as it was doused in sesame-miso manna, it would be hard to hate. But I especially love it in the early parts of the summer, when sugar snaps show up at the markets and are begging to be left crunchy. I back it up with ribbons of almost weightless Napa cabbage, mild green onions, and radishes, and then I don’t apologize for dousing it in dressing. Not this dressing, not this salad. I save the apologies for when I’ve polished off the salad before my husband got to try any.

\* \* \*

*blanch sugar snaps* Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil, and prepare a small ice-water bath. Boil the sugar snaps for about 2 minutes, or until just barely cooked but still crisp. Scoop them out with a large slotted

yield: serves 4 to 6



Table salt for pot

½ pound (225 grams) sugar snap peas, untrimmed

½ pound (225 grams) Napa cabbage, in thin ribbons (about 3 cups)

4 ounces (115 grams) radishes (4 medium-large), julienned, or quartered and thinly sliced

3 large scallions (about ½ bundle), white and green parts, thinly sliced on bias

3 tablespoons (¾ ounce or 24 grams) sesame seeds, well toasted (300-degree oven for 5 to 8 minutes)

### sesame-miso dressing

1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger

1 large garlic clove, minced

2 tablespoons (1¼ ounce or 36 grams) mild yellow or white miso, plus up to

1 more tablespoon (¾ ounce or 18 grams) to taste

2 tablespoons (½ ounce or 16 grams) sesame seed paste or tahini

1 tablespoon honey

¼ cup (60 ml) rice vinegar

2 tablespoons (30 ml) toasted sesame oil

2 tablespoons (30 ml) vegetable or olive oil

sugar snap salad with miso dressing (continued)

spoon, and drop them in the ice-water bath. Once they're cool, drain and pat dry. Trim ends and cut sugar snaps on bias into thin slices. Toss in large bowl with cabbage, radishes, scallions, and 1 tablespoon sesame seeds.

*make the dressing* Whirl all ingredients, using the smaller amount of miso, in a blender until smooth. Taste and adjust ingredients—use the extra tablespoon miso if desired. Don't fret if it is a tad salty, and try to resist the urge to compensate with extra honey. The sugar snaps have a mellow sweetness to them that balances well with a saltier-than-normal dressing.

*assemble the salad* Toss salad with half of dressing, and taste. Use more if you desire, which I bet you do. If not, be delighted that you will have extra for your next salad. Sprinkle with remaining sesame seeds. Dig in.

*cooking note*

If you can't get sugar snaps, this is also lovely with snow peas, green beans, and even thinly sliced cucumber. If you're not into radishes, grated carrot is a wonderful replacement.



## broccoli slaw

*M*y husband's cousin makes a fantastic broccoli salad. I can never remember exactly what's in it, but I have a vague recollection of uncooked broccoli, creamy dressing, and dried cranberries. I pretty much eat the whole thing whenever she brings it over for a holiday meal. On a table piled with crepes and caviar, potato pastries, mushroom salads, pickles, olives, garlicky roasted red peppers, smoked fish, black bread—and did I mention the caviar?—you can imagine why the broccoli doesn't get the love it deserves. But I never ignore it. In fact, now that I think about it, she probably makes it just for me. I married well.

When I tried to re-create it a couple years ago, I cut the broccoli into matchsticks and thin slices. I made a ranch-ish dressing with buttermilk and apple-cider vinegar. I toasted almonds. I chopped dried cranberries. I soaked onions in the dressing. And then I stood in the kitchen and ate nearly the entire bowl, the entire 2 pounds of broccoli salad. Sure, I was five months pregnant at the time. Apparently, pregnant women need their iron. I made fun of my broccoli habit on my website. And then, more than two years later, I decided to include the salad in this book, and when I went to retest it, the same thing happened. I inhaled it. I couldn't have been less pregnant at the time (though the result of the first pregnancy was sitting on the floor chomping adorably on a raw floret), which led me to the conclusion that this salad might just be good.

\* \* \*

Trim the broccoli, and chop it into large chunks; then cut each chunk into thin slices. I usually cut the stems into thin slices, then stack the slices and cut them in the other direction, into thin matchsticks; if you have a mandoline with a julienne blade, this will also do the job. Then I cut the florets vertically into thin slices, slicing from the stem up to the floret top. This helps them stay together, but keeps them lying nicely against each other in the salad.

*yield: about 8 cups slaw,  
serving several people  
or 2 pregnant ones*



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2 heads broccoli ( $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 pound,  
or 340 to 455 grams each)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (45 grams) thinly sliced almonds,  
toasted  
 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (40 grams) dried cranberries,  
coarsely chopped  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (120 ml) buttermilk, well shaken  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup (105 grams) mayonnaise  
2 tablespoons (30 ml) cider vinegar  
1 teaspoon granulated sugar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon table salt  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  small red onion, finely chopped  
Lots of freshly ground black pepper

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Toss the sliced broccoli with the almonds and cranberries. In a small bowl, whisk the buttermilk, mayo, vinegar, sugar, and table salt until smooth. Stir in the onion. You can let the onion marinate in the dressing for 10 minutes, to mellow it. Pour the dressing over the broccoli mixture, and add a generous amount of black pepper. Stir the salad until the broccoli is evenly coated with the dressing. Serve immediately, or keep covered in the fridge for 2 to 3 days; really, though, it's never lasted that long around here.



wild mushroom tart (continued)

occasionally, until they are soft, for about 2 to 3 minutes. Add the garlic, and continue to cook, stirring, for 1 minute more. Increase the heat to medium-high, then add the mushrooms and thyme. Of course, you'll likely realize right now that you don't have a chance of fitting your mound of mushrooms in the pan, but if you keep turning the cooked mushrooms from the bottom out over the uncooked ones on top, you'll find that within a minute or so you have room for all of your remaining mushrooms. Sauté the mushrooms until they are tender and the liquid they release has completely evaporated, about 9 to 10 minutes. Season with ½ teaspoon table salt and freshly ground black pepper, and transfer to a plate to cool.

Scoop your mascarpone into a medium bowl. Drizzle in the milk, while whisking continuously, until the milk and cheese combine smoothly. (If you forgot to take your mascarpone out of the fridge, drizzle the milk in slowly while you whisk them together.) Whisk in the eggs. Stir in the provolone and Parmesan, then the mushrooms.

**bake tart** Pour mixture into your tart shell, and bake for 35 to 40 minutes, until it is puffed and golden on top, and the tip of a knife inserted into the center and turned releases no wet custard. Let the tart cool for 10 minutes on a rack, and serve warm. It's also delicious served at room temperature.



## butternut squash and caramelized onion galette

Once upon a time, I was obsessed with savory galettes. To me, there were few higher callings than serving for dinner a big green salad and a free-form, rustic tart that you could fill with, well, whatever you pleased. I made a festive one with wild mushrooms and blue cheese; a wintry one with cabbage and hard-boiled eggs; and a summery one with zucchini and ricotta. But my favorite galette of all was the butternut squash and caramelized onion galette I made on a whim one October evening.

Years—and one kid—later, I went to make the recipe again for a potluck and was horrified at the amount of labor it took to yield a dinky galette that would barely serve four for dinner, despite the six servings I suggested. This happens a lot after you have a kid: Your time is pressed, your energy limited. Though I still delight in made-from-scratch dinners, they had better feed at least my family, with a glimmer of hope that there will be leftovers.

So I doubled the crust and 2.5-ed most of the filling, and replaced some white flour with whole-wheat (it's dinner, after all), and tweaked any number of other things; what came out of my oven was a small pizza-sized wonder of wonders that fed my family for three nights. Three! Nights!

Since then, this galette and I have been reunited, and we have never looked back. It is wonderful, either as a pleasant surprise on a weeknight or as a stepped-up appetizer for a Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner. Divide it into a few smaller galettes and it becomes the thing you can bring to a wine-and-cheese cocktail party that nobody will be able to stop talking about.

\* \* \*

**make pastry** In a bowl, combine the flour and salt. Add the whole sticks of butter and, using a pastry blender, break up the bits of butter until the texture is like cornmeal, with the biggest bits the size of pebbles. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, vinegar, and water, and pour this over the butter-flour mixture. Stir with a spoon or a rubber spatula until a

yield: 1 hearty 12-inch galette,  
serving 8



### for the pastry

2½ cups (315 grams) all-purpose flour (including ½ cup whole-wheat flour if you like), plus more for work surface  
½ teaspoon table salt  
16 tablespoons (225 grams or 2 sticks) unsalted butter  
½ cup (120 grams) sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt (i.e., a strained yogurt)  
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar  
⅓ cup (80 ml) ice water

### for the filling

2 small or 1 large butternut squash (about 2½ pounds or 1¼ kilo)  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1½ teaspoons table salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1 tablespoon butter  
2 large sweet onions, such as Spanish or Vidalia, halved, thinly sliced in half-moons  
¼ teaspoon sugar  
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste (optional)  
2 cups grated Italian fontina cheese (6½ ounces or 185 grams)

sandwiches, tarts, and pizzas 99

butternut squash and caramelized onion galette (continued)

dough forms, kneading it once or twice on the counter if needed to bring it together. Pat the dough into a ball, wrap it in plastic, and chill it in the refrigerator for 1 hour or up to 2 days.

*prepare squash* Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Peel the squash, then halve and scoop out seeds. Cut into ½-to-¾-inch chunks. Pour 2 tablespoons of the olive oil into one large or two smaller baking sheets, spreading it to an even slick. Lay the squash chunks on the baking sheet in one layer, sprinkle with ½ teaspoon of the salt and freshly ground black pepper, and roast for 30 minutes, or until squash is tender, turning the pieces occasionally so that they brown evenly. Set aside to cool slightly. Leave the oven on.

*caramelize onions* While the squash is roasting, melt the butter and the remaining tablespoon olive oil in a heavy skillet, and cook the onions over medium-low heat with the sugar and the remaining teaspoon of salt, stirring occasionally, until soft and tender, about 25 minutes. Stir in the cayenne pepper, if you are using it.

Mix the squash, caramelized onions, cheese, and herbs together in a bowl.

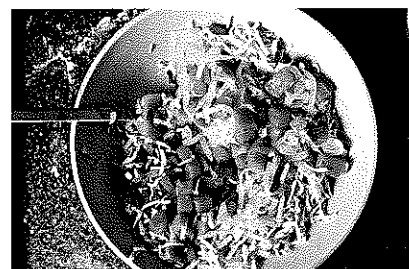
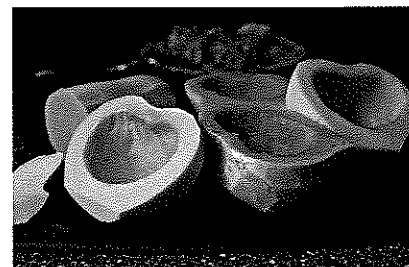
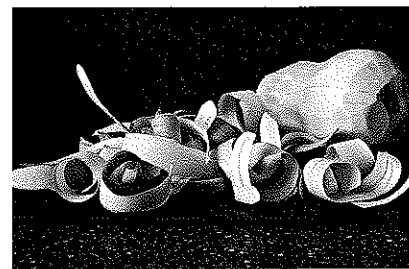
*assemble the galette* On a floured work surface, roll the dough out into a 16-to-17-inch round. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Spread the squash-and-cheese mixture over the dough, leaving a 2-to-2½-inch border. Fold the border over the squash and cheese, pleating the edge to make it fit. The center will be open. Brush the outside of crust with the egg-yolk wash, if using.

*bake* Bake until golden brown, 30 to 40 minutes. Remove the galette from the oven, let stand for 5 minutes, then slide it onto a serving plate. Cut into wedges and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

*cooking note* This recipe can be divided to make two 9-inch galettes.

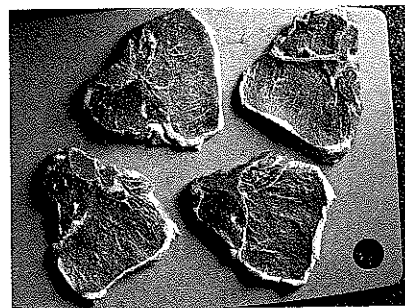
1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme,  
or 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage

1 egg yolk beaten with 1 teaspoon  
water, for glaze (optional, but makes  
for a croissant-looking finish)



pork chops with cider, horseradish, and dill (continued)

Pour glaze mixture into the emptied skillet. Bring it to a simmer, and cook until mixture thickens enough so your spatula leaves a trail when scraped across the pan, about 2 to 4 minutes. Return the chops and any accumulated juices from their plate to skillet; turn to coat both sides with glaze. Cook them over medium heat in the glaze until the center of the chops registers 140 degrees on instant-read thermometer, about 5 minutes. Adjust the seasonings to taste. Transfer the chops to a serving platter and pour the glaze from the pan over them. Sprinkle with dill, and eat immediately.



## balsamic and beer-braised short ribs with parsnip purée

I was not a cooking wunderkind. I did not braise my first cuttlefish at eight or roast a chicken at twelve. When I was twenty-eight, I decided to make short ribs for the very first time, and when our families came over for dinner that night, I was in a tizzy because I was convinced I'd wrecked the dish. The bones, they were all falling out of the ribs! It was my mother-in-law who gently informed me that meat so tender that it falls off the bone is a good thing.

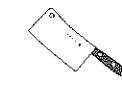
This began my ongoing love affair with short ribs. They are one of the most perfect dinner-party foods, because their cooking time is flexible enough that if people show up late your short ribs don't mind. If everyone cancels, it's cool, because they're better the next day. They're fairly inexpensive, which is helpful when that one friend brings another friend to dinner who also has two friends in town and you don't mind, right?

Finally, it's really hard to mess ribs up; pretty much any combination of wine or beer, something from the onion family and something tomatoish makes them weepingly delicious. Still, this version, which I like to call "midnight short ribs," is my favorite since I have a soft spot for foods such as dark ales and syrupy vinegars, and here, together, they make a pitch-dark, intensely flavored, infallible braise that drapes gorgeously over buttery mashed parsnips with a little kick of horseradish.

\* \* \*

*prepare the braise* Season the short ribs generously and on all sides with salt and freshly ground pepper. Heat a large Dutch oven (7 to 8 quarts) over high heat, and add enough olive oil to coat the bottom. Once the oil is hot, brown the short ribs on all sides, in batches. I take my sweet time in this stage, making sure I get a nice brown sear on all six sides. A single batch can take me 10 to 15 minutes to brown. Transfer the browned ribs to a plate, and then repeat with remaining ribs.

yield: serves 4 to 6



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5 pounds (about 2¼ kg) bone-in short ribs (English-style—i.e., separated; about 6 large or up to 10 smaller ones), at room temperature, trimmed of excess fat

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons (30 ml) olive oil

1 large red onion, chopped

4 garlic cloves, smashed and peeled

2 tablespoons (35 grams) tomato paste

½ cup (120 ml) balsamic vinegar (no need to use your best aged balsamic here)

3 tablespoons (45 ml) Worcestershire sauce

2 bottles (24 ounces or 110 ml) dark beer, such as a black lager

2 to 3 cups (475 to 710 ml) beef stock

Minced fresh flat-leaf parsley, to serve (optional)

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balsamic and beer-braised short ribs with parsnip purée (continued)

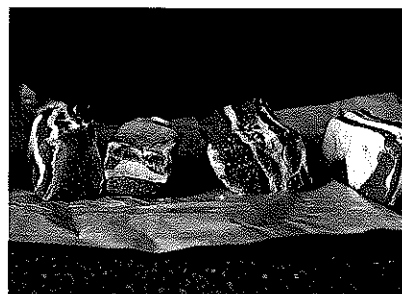
*braise the ribs* Preheat your oven to 325 degrees. Once all the ribs are browned and removed from pot, turn heat down to medium-high and pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the oil and fat. Add the onion, season with salt and pepper, and cook until softened and a little brown, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic cloves, and sauté for 3 minutes more. Add the tomato paste, and cook for another few minutes, until thickened; then add the vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, and beer, scraping up any bits stuck to the bottom. Return the browned ribs to the pot. If you can, arrange them all with their meatiest sides facedown. If you have too many ribs and not enough surface area, stand them up on their sides, with the bones vertical. Add enough beef stock just to cover the ribs. Bring the liquid to a simmer, then turn off heat. Cover the pot tightly with foil, then with a lid—I find when I don't use foil the liquid evaporates too much in the oven, leaving the ribs exposed and a bit dry.

Bake for 3 hours, or until the meat can easily be pierced with a knife, or pieces can be torn back with a fork. If the bones look as if they don't want to stay in much longer, that's another good sign. Remove from the oven and let the ribs rest for 15 minutes, uncovered. Skim as much fat as you can off the top.

*to serve* There are two ways to finish the dish. The first is the simplest route from oven to table; the second provides a little more texture and elegance.

*option 1* Simply serve the short ribs as they are, with a side of the parsnip purée.

*option 2* Preheat your oven to 420 degrees. Remove ribs from braise and spread them out on a large baking sheet. Roast them for 15 minutes, or until the edges start to crisp. Meanwhile, strain the braising liquid into a saucepan and simmer it over high heat for 10 to 15 minutes, until reduced by a third. The sauce should be fairly opaque and have more body to it. Arrange the roasted ribs on a serving platter and drape them generously with half the sauce. To serve, generously mound some parsnip purée on each serving plate or shallow bowl. Arrange 1 to 2 short ribs on the parsnips and ladle with additional sauce. Garnish with parsley, if using.



#### do ahead

When you are letting the ribs rest after cooking, it's a great time to take a break. You can chill the entire dish in its braising liquid in the fridge for up to one day. The advantage of this is that it will be very easy to remove the fat from the dish, as it will separate and firm up. Plus, ribs taste wonderful on day 2, and you'll look even better at your dinner party, having only had to reheat dinner, not cook it from scratch.

## parsnip purée

\* \* \*

2 pounds (905 grams) parsnips (about 6 medium), peeled, sliced into medium-sized chunks

4 tablespoons (55 grams or ½ stick) unsalted butter

½ cup (80 ml) heavy cream

1 tablespoon prepared horseradish sauce or freshly grated horseradish

½ teaspoon table salt

Freshly ground black pepper

In large, heavy pot, combine parsnips with enough cold water to cover. Place over moderately high heat, cover, and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce to a simmer and cook until tender, about 20 to 30 minutes, then drain.

Purée hot parsnips, butter, heavy cream, horseradish, salt, and freshly ground black pepper until smooth.



## cranberry crumb bars with mulling spices

When you really think about it, whoever invented the cookie wasn't really on our team. Between the butter that needs to be softened and whipped *just so* to the chilling, scooping, and arranging of dough on trays upon trays, only to rearrange cookies on cooling racks a short while later . . . Wait, why do we make cookies again? They're like the breakfast pancake of the dessert course, the maximum amount of labor one can squeeze from a single bowl of batter.

But the bar cookie, oh, the bar cookie is your friend. They're pressed and crumbled in pans; they feed a crowd and rarely take more than an hour, from beginning to end. The absolutely best bar cookies remind us of pie in flavor, but have none of the rolling, lifting, crimping, filling, lidding, eternal baking times, and shamelessly sloppy servings of the real deal. If you're lucky, there's buttery shortbread on either side of the fruit. These cranberry bars are the winter companion to a blueberry crumb bar on my site. A buttery cookie with a whiff of winter spice sandwiches a tart candy-red filling and the whole thing is so insanely simple to throw together that you might kiss your exacting #128 1.5-teaspoon cookie scoop good-bye forever.

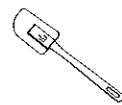
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Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with parchment paper, and butter the sides and the parchment. In a large, wide bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, and spices. With a pastry blender or fork, work the chilled butter and the egg into the flour mixture until the mixture resembles a coarse meal. Pat half the crumb base into the bottom of your prepared pan; it will be thin.

In the bowl of a food processor or blender, briefly pulse the filling ingredients until the berries are coarsely chopped but not puréed. Spread the filling over the crumb base. Sprinkle the remaining crumbs evenly over the cranberry mixture.

Bake cookies for 30 to 35 minutes, or until lightly brown on top. Cool completely before cutting into squares.

yield: 36 smallish rectangles



### crumb

16 tablespoons unsalted butter (225 grams or 2 sticks), chilled, plus more at room temperature for the pan  
3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour  
1 cup (200 grams) sugar  
½ teaspoon table salt  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg  
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves  
⅛ teaspoon ground allspice  
1 large egg

### filling

½ teaspoon freshly grated orange zest  
1½ tablespoons (25 ml) orange juice  
3 cups fresh cranberries (340 grams or 12-ounce bag)  
½ cup (100 grams) sugar  
1 tablespoon cornstarch

## gooey cinnamon squares

I was eighteen when I had my first snickerdoodle—a cinnamon-sugar-dusted soft butter cookie straight from the heavens—and I am still trying to make up for lost time. I believe that snickerdoodles have powers of coercion, of will-bending and heartwarming—powers that were once previously limited to brown sugar and chocolate chips. I know this because I made them to bribe as a gift for the Labor & Delivery nurses working when I had my son. And boy, were those nurses sweet to me.

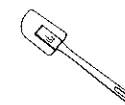
That kid was but five months old when I had my first St. Louis Gooey Butter Cake, possibly all of two hours after reading about it in *The New York Times*. I became consumed with sadness that I hadn't grown up in St. Louis, where I imagine I never would have had to spend thirty-two years denied the understanding that if you mix just the right amount (read: a lot) of butter, sugar, flour, and egg together and spread it over a cake batter, it will not bake into, say, more cake, but something akin to spun sugar or the burnt sugar lid of the best *crème brûlée* you've ever had.

The problem with gooey butter cake, if there could be one (and believe me, I had to think really hard to come up with a limitation), is that once you realize how utterly delicious a layer of sugary manna is on top of a simple cake, you start to wonder why it cannot be used as a topping for everything that goes in an oven—gooey butter baked French toast? Gooey butter breakfast muffins?

And this is what happens when snickerdoodles go to St. Louis, meet some gooey butter cake, and have little buttery, golden-squared children. You could say their meeting was inevitable, but I know the truth, which is that I wanted to make both for a party and didn't have time, so I mashed them up. The base is slightly more cake than cookie, the topping is a cross between a toasted marshmallow and cinnamon toast, and if you just read that and haven't shut this book to make this happen in your kitchen immediately, I've failed.

And, lo, I haven't separated them since. I hope you'll see why, soon enough.

yield: about 7 dozen 1-inch squares



### soft cookie base

8 tablespoons (115 grams or 1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for the pan  
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
½ teaspoon baking soda  
¼ teaspoon table salt  
¾ cup (150 grams) sugar  
1 large egg  
¼ cup (60 ml) milk

### gooey layer

¼ cup (60 ml) light corn syrup, golden syrup, or honey  
¼ cup (60 ml) milk, half-and-half, or heavy cream  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
12 tablespoons (170 grams or 1½ sticks) butter, at room temperature  
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (225 grams) sugar  
¼ teaspoon table salt  
1 large egg  
1¼ cups (155 grams) all-purpose flour

gooey cinnamon squares (continued)

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Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch cake pan with at least 2-inch sides with parchment paper and either butter the paper and sides of the pan or coat them with a nonstick spray. Set aside.

*prepare the cookie base* Whisk together the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt in a medium bowl. In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the 8 tablespoons butter with sugar until light and fluffy. Add the egg and the milk, and beat until combined, scraping down bowl and then beating for 10 seconds more. Beat in dry ingredients until just combined.

Dollop cookie base over the bottom of the prepared pan and spread it into an even layer with a butter knife or offset spatula. Set pan aside.

*prepare the gooey layer* Whisk liquid sweetener, milk, and vanilla together in a small bowl and set aside. In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter, sugar, and salt until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg, scrape down sides of bowl, and mix for 10 seconds more. Add  $\frac{1}{3}$  of flour and mix, then  $\frac{1}{2}$  of vanilla mixture and mix. Repeat again, twice, until all of the flour has been mixed until just combined. Dollop over the cookie base and spread carefully with an offset spatula or butter knife.

*make the topping* Mix the sugar and cinnamon in a tiny dish and sprinkle it over the entire gooey layer. It will be thick but will come out of the oven almost like a crême brûlée lid, i.e., awesomely.

*to bake and serve* Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until the cookies have bronzed on top. The gooey layer will rise and fall in the oven but will still be a bit liquidy under the cinnamon crust when the squares are done. Let cool completely on a rack, then cut into 1-inch squares.

*do ahead* The squares keep at room temperature for at least a week, although never in my apartment.

#### topping

2 tablespoons (25 grams) sugar  
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon

#### cooking notes

Traditional snickerdoodles have always been a slightly soft, cakey cookie. The base of these is even more so—and also, easier to spread in a pan—due to the addition of some milk. Snickerdoodle purists insist that they include cream of tartar as part of the leavening formula, essentially a homemade baking power holdover from a time when you couldn't buy it at the store. If you don't have and don't feel like purchasing cream of tartar (you'll find it in the spice aisle), you can replace *both* the tartar and the baking soda with 2 teaspoons baking powder.

The topping is a mash-up between several gooey butter cake toppings I have known and loved, plus a bit of milk to keep it even softer. Traditionally, corn syrup is used but I've found that both honey and golden syrup work equally well. You'll put a lot of cinnamon sugar on top of this and question the logic of it until you discover the cinnamon-crunched lid it creates in the oven.





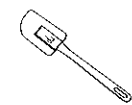
## peach dumplings with bourbon hard sauce

I'm perfectly aware that most people spend their time in the shower, waiting in line at the coffee shop, or trying to avoid a stranger's gaze on the subway thinking about normal things, like errands they need to run, or that they should call their mother. But I spend the better part of summer dreaming about peaches, and things one can make with them. I think about crumbles you could bake right on top of peaches, I dream about pecan toffees that you could shatter with a mallet and sprinkle over roasted peaches, I imagine brushing them with honey, grilling them until they are charred, and dolloping them with a sweetened lemon mascarpone. But I couldn't come to a conclusion about what kind of peach dessert I wanted to include here until one morning when I was awakened by an irate, nonsleeping toddler at 4 a.m. and afterward could not fall back asleep myself. Suddenly it was so obvious: apples. Why don't we do to peaches what we do to apples? Have you tried peach sauce (i.e., peaches cooked as you would applesauce)? It's amazing. Peach butter on biscuits? Deadly delicious, I promise. Country peach dumplings?

*Ding! Ding-ding-ding!* I hadn't even made them yet and I already wondered where they'd been my whole life. I was tempted to get out of bed right then and start a pie dough; it sounded more enjoyable than willing the Sleep Fairy to come back to me. But, sure enough, she did, and visions of flaky pastry-wrapped peaches, their bellies puddled with a buttery brown-sugar caramel, danced in my head—and twelve hours later, in our bellies.

The dumplings are packets of slow summer perfection. The pie dough, unhindered by a heavy filling, expands and flakes like puff pastry. As you tear in, your first impression will likely be an unenthusiastic "Oh, huh, it's a peach half . . ." until you cut into the peach half and a trickle of buttery brown-sugar caramel floods your bowl. (You're welcome.) From there, the dessert is a fantastic mess—chunks of peach, buttery layers of dough, and a mingled puddle of sweet bourbon and a dark caramel—and easily one of the best summer desserts I've ever made.

*yield: makes 6 large peach dumplings*



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### crust

1 recipe All Butter, Really Flaky Pie Dough (see page 226)

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### filling

3 large peaches  
1/3 cup (65 grams) light or dark brown sugar  
Pinch of salt  
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
Few fresh gratings of nutmeg, or a pinch of ground  
1 tablespoon butter, cut into 6 pieces, kept cold

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1 large egg, for glaze

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### hard sauce

4 tablespoons (55 grams or 1/2 stick) butter, at room temperature  
3/4 cup (95 grams) confectioners' sugar  
1 tablespoon bourbon

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peach dumplings with bourbon hard sauce (continued)

\* \* \*

**make crust** See page 226.

Roll crust to a 12-by-18-inch rectangle, and divide into six 6-inch squares. If dough gets too soft or warm while you're rolling it, continue to the square stage, but then transfer the squares to a parchment-lined baking sheet and chill them in the freezer for a couple minutes, until they firm up again.

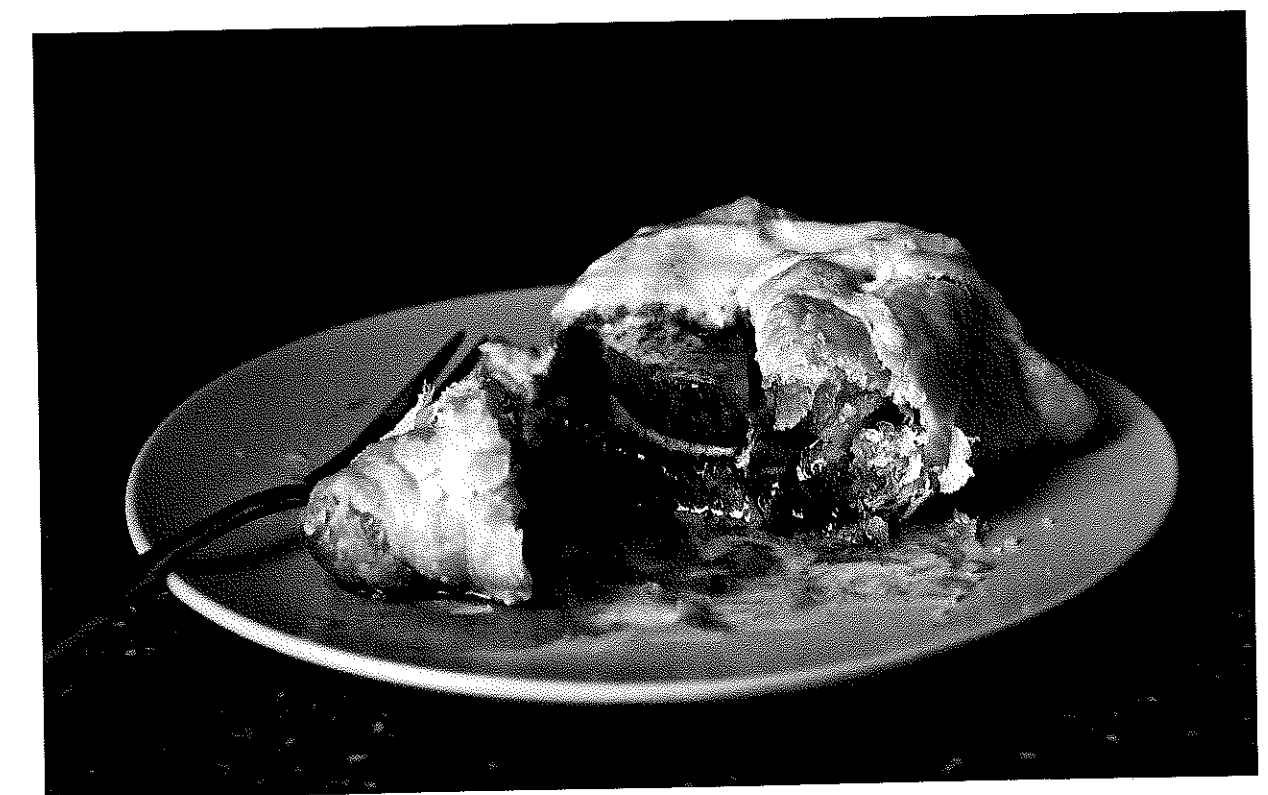
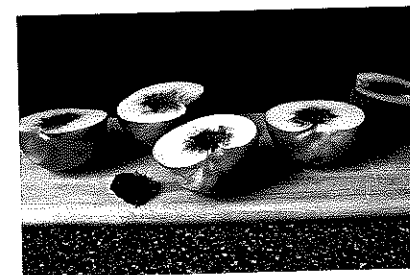
**make filling** Halve peaches, and cross your fingers that you've gotten freestone ones, because it makes life much easier. Remove pits. I like to scoop a little tiny extra out of the pit indentation with a melon baller (larger side) or knife, so that there is more room in the "belly button" to pack the filling.

**assemble dumplings** Mix brown sugar, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg together in a little dish. Spoon 1 lightly packed tablespoon on top of each peach, smooshing as much of the sugar mixture as you can into the center. Dot the top of each with a piece of the cold butter. Center a peach half, cut side up, in your first pastry square. Bring corners up to meet each other over the center—if it feels tight, or as if you're short of dough, make sure that the dough underneath is flush with the peach curve; it tends to get slack—and seal the seams together, pinching with your fingertips.

**bake dumplings** Arrange peach dumplings in a buttered 9-by-13-inch baking dish, and chill for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat your oven to 375 degrees.

Whisk egg together with 1 teaspoon water to form a glaze. Brush glaze over the tops and exposed sides of dumplings. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until pastries are puffed and bronzed on top.

**to finish** While baking, make the hard sauce. Beat softened butter, confectioners' sugar, and bourbon until smooth. Scrape into a serving dish. When pastries come out of oven, dollop each (or at least the ones that will not be served to children) with a heaping spoonful of the hard sauce, and serve pastries with the sauce melting over the sides.



#### cooking notes

Traditionally, apple dumplings are not cooked dry but in a bath of hard sauce, loads of it. I found that I preferred to go easier on the hard sauce and spoon it over the dry dumplings, so you could get the most flavor (and flakiness) out of this dessert.

The 6-inch squares suggested for each dumpling are based on an estimate that your peach half will be 3 inches in diameter, which is a fairly big peach. If it's smaller, you can reduce the size of the square accordingly.

If you don't wish to use the bourbon in the sauce, you could use a few dashes of vanilla extract, filling the rest of the tablespoon with water.

## cakes

- mom's apple cake
- grapefruit olive oil pound cake
- blueberry cornmeal butter cake
- olive oil ricotta cake with concord grape coulis
- tiny but intense chocolate cake
- golden sheet cake with berry buttercream
- chocolate hazelnut crepe cake
- s'more layer cake
- red wine velvet cake with whipped mascarpone



## mom's apple cake

Every year, my mother asks me what she should bake for Rosh Hashanah dinner, as if she doesn't already know the answer. I am always assigned baking tasks, you see, not because I can't pull off a brisket or matzo-ball soup; it's just that, when you know how to whip up an excellent cake, that's pretty much what people want you to do, again and again. (Nobody gets tired of excellent cake.) So, every year, my mother calls me and asks what she should bake, and I become immediately exasperated—she is my mother, after all—and likely say in my most bershon adolescent voice, “Have you seen my *Internet website*, Mom? I bet there are fifty casual cakes for you to choose from.” And then, “But you know you should just make your apple cake.” “Oh, that thing?” she says, because I think she's bored with baking it. But that's the way it is with showstopping dishes: The people have chosen. It's no longer up to you.

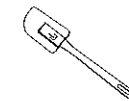
So consider yourself warned: Should you bake this cake once, you will bake it again. And I know you're thinking, “Apple cake? Apple cake is delicious. But it's not showstopping.” But this one is. It's ludicrously moist; days after it is baked, it only gets better. It contains nearly as many apples as a pie, and yet is clearly, unwaveringly, a cake. And it's enormous—it feeds a crowd, in fact, which is important, because it always draws one.

But beyond the High Holidays, this is a cake that will make you a good friend. It's perfect for housewarmings, for new babies, for co-workers and coffee. It looks humble, but it keeps well on a counter, and nobody, nobody who comes by will be bummed if you offer them a slice and a cup of tea.

\* \* \*

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 10-inch tube pan, or coat it with nonstick spray. Peel, core, and chop the apples into ½-to-¾-inch chunks. Toss them with all of the cinnamon and the 5 tablespoons granulated sugar, and set them aside.

yield: serves 12 to 16



Butter or nonstick spray, for the pan  
6 apples (2½ to 3 pounds, or 1½ to 1½ kilos); I always use McIntosh apples, because my mother does

1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
2 cups (400 grams) plus 5 tablespoons (65 grams) granulated sugar  
2¾ cups (345 grams) all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon table salt  
1 cup (235 ml) vegetable oil  
¼ cup (60 ml) orange juice  
2½ teaspoons vanilla extract  
4 large eggs  
1 cup (130 grams) walnuts, chopped (optional)  
Confectioners' sugar, to finish

mom's apple cake (continued)

Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt together in a large bowl. In a medium bowl, whisk together the oil, orange juice, remaining 2 cups of granulated sugar, vanilla, and eggs. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry ones, then scrape down the bowl to make sure all the ingredients are evenly incorporated. Stir in the walnuts, if you are using them.

Pour half of the batter into the prepared pan. Spread half the apple chunks over it. Pour the remaining batter over the apples, and arrange the remaining apples on top. Bake for about 1½ hours, or until a tester comes out clean, then transfer to a rack to cool. Cool completely before flipping cake out of pan and onto a serving platter. Dust with confectioners' sugar and serve.



## grapefruit olive oil pound cake

When it comes to baking, I keep waiting for the grapefruit to get the attention it deserves. Lemon layer cakes line bakery shelves, Key lime pies make even the president wax poetic, and you will never be unwelcome at brunch if you bring an orange-date bread. But grapefruit? Grapefruit seems to make people nervous.

It's particularly unfortunate if you, like me, are a grapefruit junkie. The grapefruit's peak season is, for me, the highlight of otherwise thanklessly cold Januaries, and its bracing flavor holds my interest longer than that of any other citrus fruit.

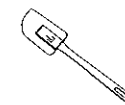
This recipe started as a rough adaptation of a pound cake made famous by Martha Stewart and Ina Garten. They both made it with lemon. Later, Ina made it with orange and chocolate. I waited and waited for one of them to use grapefruit, and neither of them did, so I took it upon myself, and we declared the results dreamy. But over the years I fiddled with it, because that's what I do. I discovered that, though the cake was good with butter, it was even better with olive oil, which complements the grapefruit's bitterness wonderfully. I started using some raw sugar as well, hoping to play up the natural flavors. But I kept intact the best parts of their lemon cake—the syrup that's brushed on it while the cake is still warm (though mine is less sweet, and I've found that poking holes in the cake helps to absorb it), and the glaze that should make it seem over the top but adds a great sweet contrast to grapefruit's intensity. This cake has become my favorite January treat—not too sweet, not too unhealthy, and bursting with ruby-red flavor.

\* \* \*

**make cake** Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan.

In a large bowl, rub the grapefruit zest into the sugars with your fingertips. This will bruise it and help release as much grapefruit essence as possible. Whisk in the oil until smooth. Add the eggs one at a time, and whisk until combined. Scrape down the bowl.

yield: 1 loaf cake, serving 12



### cake

Butter for pan

1½ cups (190 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for pan

2 tablespoons freshly grated grapefruit zest (from 1 to 2 large grapefruits)

½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar

½ cup (95 grams) raw or turbinado sugar (use granulated sugar if you can't find the raw variety)

½ cup (120 ml) olive oil

2 large eggs, at room temperature

1 teaspoon baking powder

¼ teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon table salt

2 tablespoons (30 ml) grapefruit juice

⅓ cup (80 ml) buttermilk or plain yogurt

### syrup

2 tablespoons granulated sugar

⅓ cup (80 ml) grapefruit juice

### glaze

1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar

2 tablespoons (30 ml) grapefruit juice

Pinch of table salt



## blueberry cornmeal butter cake

This recipe started with a whim: I imagined the place where a dense, buttery blueberry buckle would intersect with the kind of sweet, cakey cornbread that would make every Southerner I know shudder to hear it called “cornbread,” and I wanted to go there. And what fun I had trying! There were versions with less lemon, some vanilla, buttermilk in place of milk, then sour cream for buttermilk, less liquid, more blueberries, more streusel, a crunchier streusel, a slip of cinnamon, a square cake instead of a round. Each time, I planned my next tweak, hit the market for more berries, and went at it again. Are we friends? You’ve probably had this cake twice.

A summer later, I was still playing with this cake, and it was time to accept the truth: We just loved it so much that I created excuses to make it some more. It’s that kind of cake—dense and buttery, dotted with dreamy berries, portable, quick to make, and infinitely snacky—and I hope it won’t be long until your version of this page is as spattered with berry, batter, and grit as mine.

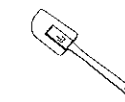
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Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of an 8-inch square pan with parchment, then either butter and flour the bottom and sides, or coat them with a nonstick spray.

Whisk the flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl, and set aside. Using an electric mixer, beat the butter with sugar in large bowl until pale and fluffy, for at least 2 minutes. Beat in the eggs one at a time, scraping down the bowl between additions, then add the vanilla and zest. Add a third of flour mixture, all of sour cream, and another third of the flour, beating until just blended after each addition. Scrape down sides of bowl. Mix the remaining third of the flour mixture with the blueberries. Fold the blueberry-flour mixture gently into the cake batter.

Spread the cake batter in the prepared cake pan. Use your original dry-ingredients bowl (see how we look out for your dishpan hands?) to

yield: 16 squares of cake



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8 tablespoons (115 grams or 1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature, plus more for pan

1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour, plus more for pan

½ cup (60 grams) cornmeal

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon table salt

1 cup (200 grams) sugar

2 large eggs

¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest

⅓ cup (80 grams) sour cream

2 cups (190 grams) blueberries, rinsed and patted dry

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### streusel

½ cup (100 grams) sugar

6 tablespoons (45 grams) all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons (15 grams) cornmeal

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Pinch of table salt

2 tablespoons (55 grams) unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

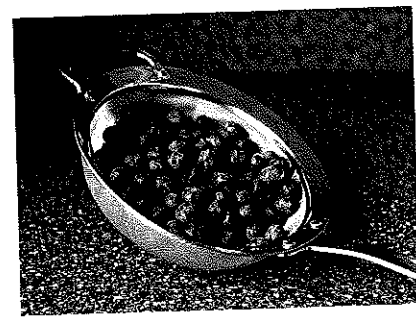
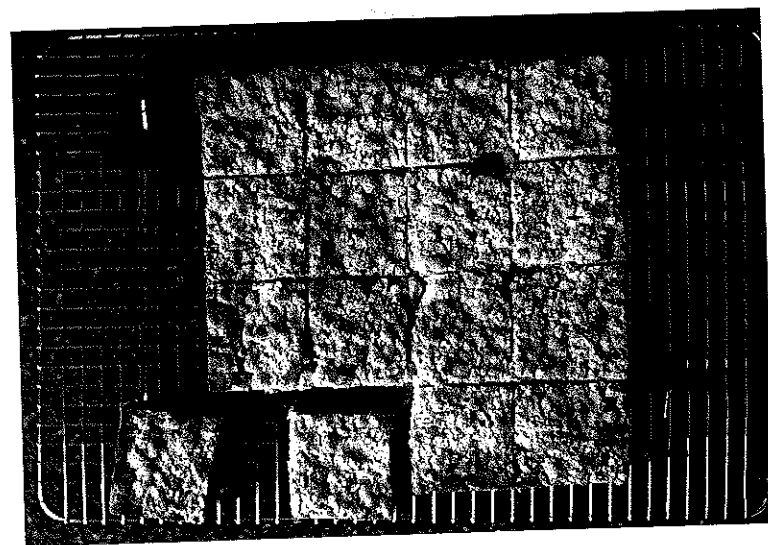
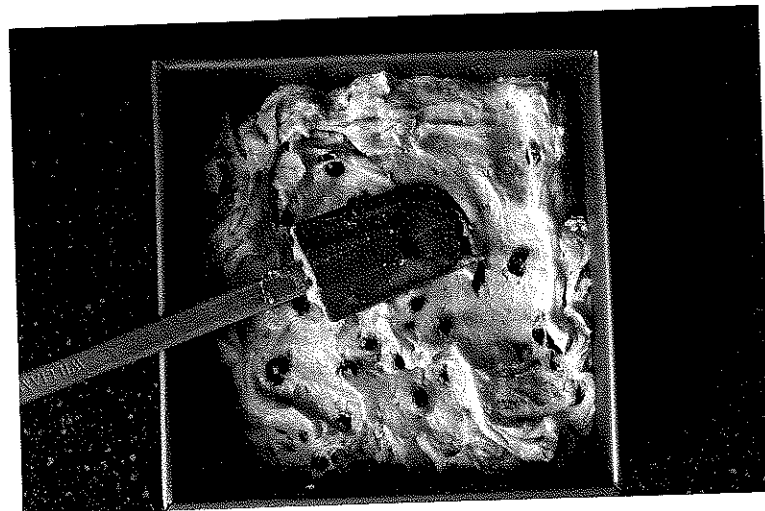
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blueberry cornmeal butter cake (continued)

combine the dry topping ingredients with a fork. Mash in the butter with your fork, fingertips, or a pastry blender. Scatter the topping over the batter.

Bake the cake until the top is golden brown and the tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Cool the cake in the pan on a rack for 5 minutes. Run the spatula around the edges of the cake to loosen it, then flip out onto a cooling rack.



## olive oil ricotta cake with concord grape coulis

In a world of cakes named for special occasions—rolled Christmas *Bûches de Noël* (or should we say “Yule Logs”?), architecturally staggering Wedding Cakes, tufted and towering Birthday Cakes—I don’t think every cake needs such a respectable reason to exist. In fact, I think that everyone should have in their repertoire a few cakes that are around only for lesser occasions, such as an Of Course We Can Come for Dinner Tonight, I’ll Bring Cake, or a Just Because It’s Tuesday Cake.

They needn’t be fancy—in fact, they shouldn’t be. They should be mildly sweet, as good with morning coffee as they are after dinner. They should keep at room temperature, preferably with a knife left on the cake plate on the counter, for when you walk by and the cake looks like it needs to be “evened.” Ideally, they should be made in one bowl, and they should include things you already have around, like berries if they’re in season or, in this case, a Concord grape sauce for September, when they’re everywhere.

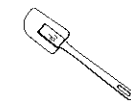
This is actually a riff on one of my favorite classic everyday cakes, the French yogurt cake. As things often do in my kitchen, this version came about one day when I realized I was out of yogurt but had a big tub of ricotta—no, not even the good stuff—languishing in my fridge. With the ricotta, olive oil seemed a better fit than a more neutral oil, and putting the Concord grapes in a sauce gave me a great way to make them toddler-friendly by removing those pesky seeds. The ricotta gives it an unmistakable richness, but the overall flavor is so mellow, the shot of grape sauce provides the perfect balance.

\* \* \*

*make the cake* Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Line the bottom of a 9-inch springform pan with parchment paper. Coat the paper and sides of the pan with butter, oil, or a nonstick cooking spray.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the ricotta, olive oil, granulated sugar, and lemon zest. Add the eggs one by one, whisking well after each

yield: one 9-inch cake,  
serving 8 to 12,  
and 1½ cups sauce



### cake

Butter, oil, or nonstick spray, for pan  
1 cup (250 grams) full-fat or fresh ricotta  
½ cup (80 ml) olive oil  
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar  
½ teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest  
2 large eggs  
1½ cups (190 grams) all-purpose flour  
1½ teaspoons baking powder  
¼ teaspoon baking soda  
¼ teaspoon table salt  
Confectioners’ sugar, for dusting  
(see cooking note for other toppings)

### grape coulis

¾ cup (155 ml) water  
3 tablespoons (40 grams) granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice  
Pinch of salt  
2 cups (185 grams) Concord grapes