



## Garlicky Beet Dip with Walnuts

makes about 2 cups

- 1 pound beets or carrots, tops removed and scrubbed, or sweet potatoes**
- 1/3 cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated**
- 1/3 cup walnuts, hazelnuts, or almonds, toasted (see page 14)**
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar or white wine vinegar, plus more as needed**
- 1/2 cup sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt (optional)**
- 1/4 cup fresh dill, coarsely chopped**

**NOTE** Traditionally made with roasted red peppers and sometimes tomato, romesco is a tangy, lightly spiced, nutty saucy spread. It's good as a dip for raw vegetables, but also as a spread for things like "stuff on crackers" and also "stuff on toast"—which, yes, can also mean it's good on a sandwich, but there are no sandwiches in this book. Sorry.

Here, roasted beets take the place of the roasted red peppers in this romesco-esque dip. (I have a very inflexible "no bell pepper" policy.) But it's also a concept so versatile that it's definitely worth exploring with different roasted vegetables. I can give you a head start and tell you that roasted carrots, sweet potatoes, and eggplant are all winners. This version, which is in no way authentically representing *romesco* (just inspired by it!), doesn't have any spices added, since I find the raw garlickiness and the sweetness of the beets to be interesting enough; but ground turmeric, ground cumin, and paprika would all work here. Beets always need a bit of tangy fattiness to counter their sweetness, so I swirl in a bit of yogurt or sour cream, but that's definitely optional if you're going dairy-free.

**1** Preheat the oven to 425°F.

**2** Place the beets in a large baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast until totally and completely fork-tender, 60 to 70 minutes, depending on size. (If you're doing this with sweet potatoes, they'll take about the same amount of time; carrots will take less time—40 to 45 minutes.)

**3** Remove from the oven and let cool enough so that you can peel them, then cut into smaller chunks.

**4** Place the beets, garlic, nuts, olive oil, and the vinegar in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until you've got the texture of your dreams, which is different for all of us. For me, it's not perfectly smooth but processed enough to spread. If you like chunkier or smoother, then go for it.

**5** Once your desired texture is reached, fold in the sour cream, if using. Season with salt, pepper, and more vinegar. Transfer to your cutest bowl, drizzle with more olive oil, and top with dill.

**DO AHEAD** Dip can be made up to 1 week ahead, wrapped tightly, and refrigerated.

## Creamy Sesame Turmeric Dip

*makes about 2 cups*

**8 ounces cream cheese or ricotta,**  
preferably room temperature

**¾ cup sour cream or labne**

**¼ cup tahini**

**2 tablespoons water**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground  
pepper**

**¼ cup olive oil**

**2 tablespoons white sesame seeds**

**1 teaspoon ground turmeric**

**Flaky sea salt**

**NOTE** *This is a rare occurrence where I prefer whipped cream cheese to unwhipped cream cheese, because it eliminates the need to use a food processor, but both work.*

Everyone needs a “house snack,” meaning a snack that friends can come to expect every time they come over. I have two: parmesan cheese and this dip. The ratio of cream cheese to sour cream changes depending on what I’ve got on hand, and sometimes I add handfuls of herbs or a pinch of crushed red pepper flakes, whatever. The basic idea is something creamy laced with tahini and swirled with a magic mixture made from toasted sesame, dried turmeric, and so much olive oil. My favorite thing to eat it with is a box of Ak-Mak crackers, but anything you like to dip, please dip away.

**1** Combine the cream cheese, sour cream, tahini, and water in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse until well blended and creamy (alternatively, use a fork or spoon; there might just be a few lumps, which is actually fine). Season with salt and pepper.

**2** Heat the olive oil and sesame seeds in a small skillet or pot over medium heat. Cook, swirling occasionally, until the sesame seeds are toasted and fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the turmeric and remove from heat.

**3** Transfer the cream cheese mixture to a cute serving bowl and top with the sesame-turmeric oil. Finish with flaky salt and more pepper before serving.



Debbie T

Loetta

## Vinegar-Marinated Butter Beans

serves 4 to 8

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil  
2 (15-ounce) cans butter, lima, or gigante beans, drained and rinsed  
1 small garlic clove, finely grated  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup red wine vinegar or white wine vinegar  
Freshly grated lemon zest

These butter beans are just as much a snack as a side for me; I love them as part of a larger spread (perhaps with lamb, like on page 204), alongside raw vegetables (page 54), Tangy Roasted Mushrooms (page 60), and/or all the cheeses. Technically, any bean will work here, but for snacking purposes, the larger the better because trying to elegantly eat an individual cannellini bean would be nearly impossible. (On that note, they really are best eaten with toothpicks, because it's both cute and practical, two of my favorite qualifiers.)

- 1 Heat the olive oil in a small pot over medium heat. Add the beans and garlic and season with salt and pepper.
  - 2 Cook a minute or two, just to warm them through and remove the I-just-came-from-a-can flavor.
  - 3 Remove from the heat and add the vinegar, swirling to combine. Let sit at least 30 minutes.
  - 4 Transfer the bean mixture to a small bowl or serving dish (if you want to drain them, that is okay too, but I like to serve them in their marinade) and finish with more black pepper and lemon zest.
- DO AHEAD** Beans can be marinated up to 2 weeks ahead, covered, and refrigerated. Bring them to room temperature before serving.



## Tangy Roasted Mushrooms

serves 4 to 8

**2 pounds fresh mushrooms, such as maitake, oyster, or trumpet, sliced, cut, or torn into large, bite-sized pieces**

**¼ cup olive oil, plus more for drizzling**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

**1 small white onion or shallot, thinly sliced into rings**

**¼ cup white wine vinegar**

**Fresh herbs, such as parsley, chives, or cilantro, tender leaves and stems, finely chopped (optional)**

**NOTE** *This recipe also works well with eggplant. To do this, cut an eggplant into ½-inch-thick slices and roast as you would the mushrooms, cooking until the slices are completely tender and nicely browned, 25 to 30 minutes. Proceed with the recipe.*

Know that these are not pickled mushrooms; rather, they are deeply roasted mushrooms that are doused in vinegar and left to marinate. The main difference for me is the texture. If you've ever had a mushroom from the giardiniera jar, you may have found that texture a bit slimy and squeaky, but these are not those mushrooms. These mushrooms get roasted so their mushroomy flavor concentrates and the texture changes from soft and slimy to firm and meaty. From there, they get covered in a mild vinegar bath to marinate, rather than pickle. You can go all in with one type of mushroom, sure, but I like to mix it up for varying textures, flavors, and price points because, damn, mushrooms can be expensive.

**1** Preheat the oven to 425°F.

**2** Toss the mushrooms with the olive oil in a large cast-iron skillet, on a rimmed baking sheet, or in a large baking dish. Season with salt and pepper, and roast, tossing occasionally (to help steam escape and promote even cooking) till browned and crisped, 20 to 25 minutes.

**3** Remove from the oven and place in a medium bowl. Add the onion and vinegar, tossing to coat. Let sit at least 20 minutes before transferring to a serving bowl or plate. Drizzle with more olive oil and finish with a handful of fresh herbs, if you like.

**DO AHEAD** Mushrooms can be marinated up to 5 days ahead, covered, and refrigerated. Add the herbs just before serving, if using.



# Overnight Focaccia, Tonight

serves 6 to 10

- 1 (¼-ounce) packet instant dry yeast or 2¼ teaspoons**
- 2 teaspoons honey**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus lots more for coating the bowl and pan**
- 2 cups warm-ish water**
- 5 cups bread flour (all-purpose flour will also do the trick here, although the dough might be slightly less elastic), plus more for the work surface**
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1 small red onion, thinly sliced into rings (about ⅛ inch thick)**
- Flaky sea salt**

I have a lot of strengths, but “planning ahead” is absolutely not one of them. The idea that I’d make a bread dough and leave it to proof overnight so that it can develop flavor and structure to bake the next evening is a really great idea, and something that I have done before. But a more likely scenario is that around 3 p.m. the day I’m planning on having people over, I think *Wouldn’t it be nice to have fresh focaccia with dinner tonight?* Yes, it would be!

And so, because I am the master of my own destiny, I spent some time cheating the system and disgracing professional bakers everywhere, developing a focaccia that can be made in just a few hours. Does it use freshly milled grains and a naturally fermented 58-year-old starter? No. Is it fluffy and light and oily and crispy and tender and chewy? Absolutely. If you *do* have the time, it will of course benefit from an overnight rest in the refrigerator, but if you *don’t* have the time, just know that you will still have something truly excellent.

I like this focaccia on the simple side, with a ridiculous amount of olive oil, lots of flaky salt, and thin slices of red onion that get all caramelized and crisped, but you could absolutely get creative, topping it with chopped herbs, chopped garlic, a sprinkle of sesame seeds, anchovies (!!), thin slices of ripe tomato . . . the list goes on. Just know that there is a fine line between focaccia and pizza, so don’t overdo it with the topping (unless, of course, you’re looking for pizza, in which case, check out page 266).

**1** Whisk the yeast, honey, 2 tablespoons olive oil, and water in a large bowl. Add the flour and, using a wooden spoon, mix to casually blend (it will still be a craggy mess; that’s fine). Add the kosher salt and continue to mix until it goes from craggy to kind of wet and shaggy (the dough is going to be too wet and sticky to knead at this stage, so don’t worry about getting it nice and smooth yet). Cover tightly with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm spot until it doubles in size, about an hour or so.

**2** Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and, using the palm of one hand, press into the dough, turning and folding it onto itself (a.k.a. kneading) a few times (the dough will still be sticky but much more manageable) until it comes together and starts looking smooth and elastic. Feel free to dust with flour occasionally but not too much.

**3** Once the dough is looking nice and smooth, drizzle a bit of olive oil into that same bowl to grease it up and put dough back. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm spot until it doubles in size again, another 45 to 60 minutes.

**4** Pour enough olive oil onto a rimmed baking sheet (approximately 12¾ by 17¾ inches) to generously coat the entire sheet. Using your hands, spread it all around. Turn the dough onto the baking sheet and again using your hands, coax the dough into a flat, even layer. (It doesn’t need to stretch to the exact size of the sheet pan; it’ll puff up and fill in as it proofs and bakes.) Drizzle the top with lots more olive oil and lightly drape a piece of plastic over for its final nap, letting it rest in a warm spot for another 45 to 60 minutes.

**5** Preheat the oven to 425°F.

**6** To know when the dough is ready to bake, it should look light, puffy, and buoyant. To test this, use your fingertips to press the dough lightly. It should bounce back ever so slightly. (If it sinks and deflates, well, you’ve overproofed the dough and it might never recover. But let’s not assume the worst. Even then, you’ll still have something edible; just call it flatbread.) Using the tips of your fingers to lightly dimple the surface, kind of like you’re playing the piano, scatter the top with the onion rings and drizzle again with, yes, more olive oil, and sprinkle with flaky salt. Bake, rotating if needed to avoid hot spots, until the bread is deeply golden brown and the onion rings are caramelized and cooked through, 35 to 45 minutes.

**7** Remove from the oven and let cool slightly before slicing and serving.

**DO AHEAD** The dough can be made 1 day ahead. Just wrap tightly after step 3 and refrigerate.



## Spicy Red Cabbage with Sweet Onion and Lime

serves 4 to 6

- 1 jalapeño or fresh red chile, finely grated or chopped
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup fresh lime juice, plus more for seasoning
- 1 tablespoon mild honey, such as orange blossom
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, plus more for seasoning
- 2 teaspoons ground sumac, plus more for seasoning
- 2 small heads (or 1 large head) of red cabbage, cores removed, very thinly sliced
- 1 red or sweet yellow onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil, for drizzling

### EAT WITH

Crushed Baby Potatoes with Scallion, Celery, and Lots of Dill (page 135)

+  
Sausage Party (page 184)

I know this will make a lot of eyes roll, but I hate the word *slaw*. Worse, *coleslaw*. I don't want to "yuck anyone's yum," but this is my book and if I decide not to call something a slaw, even though anyone could see that clearly it is, that's my prerogative. So, here we have a spicy red cabbage SALAD, which is exactly the kind of crunchy, lime-y, spicy thing that you crave when eating anything that feels kind of heavy, like stewed, braised, or grilled meats. It can also be served as sort of a bonus salad, since it takes about 3 seconds to throw together using ingredients you can easily and affordably procure.

Feel free to mix this up, using green cabbage instead of red, adding an apple if you like things on the sweeter side. It should be tangy and crunchy, and taste just how you want, so if a shredded carrot is what you want, go for it. It should also be mentioned that while, yes, it will soften slightly, this salad keeps for days in the fridge, lightly pickling and getting better with age—just like all of us.

**1** Combine the jalapeño, lime juice, honey, crushed red pepper flakes, and sumac in a large bowl. Add the cabbage and onion and season with salt and pepper; let sit a few minutes.

**2** Toss again to coat and season again with salt, pepper, and more crushed red pepper flakes, sumac, and lime juice, if you like. Drizzle with olive oil just before serving.

**DO AHEAD** Cabbage can be sliced up to 2 days ahead, kept in a zippered plastic bag or otherwise covered tightly, and stored in the refrigerator. Salad can be made 3 days ahead.



## Crushed Baby Potatoes with Scallion, Celery, and Lots of Dill

serves 4 to 6

**1½ pounds small, waxy potatoes, such as golden creamers or fingerlings (preferably the size of a golf ball, no larger than a tangerine)**

**Kosher salt**

**⅓ cup olive oil**

**¼ cup finely chopped fresh dill, plus more for garnish**

**1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest**

**2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, plus more as needed**

**4 scallions, white and green parts, thinly sliced**

**Coarsely ground black pepper**

**4 celery stalks, thinly sliced on the bias**

**1 cup celery leaves or tender leaves and stems of fresh parsley**

**1 tin of sardines, anchovy fillets, or other fish of your dreams, torn or cut into bite-sized pieces (optional, but come on)**

I love to keep boiled potatoes around for out-of-hand snacking, to place on my platter of “thoughtfully arranged vegetables” (page 54), and as a quick addition to things like a skillet full of chicken fat. But aside from the crispy kind, there is no better application for smashed boiled potatoes than a potato-y salad. No, not potato salad, a potato-y salad. (Calling this a “potato-y salad” allows me the freedom to express myself without judgment since defining potato salad really gets people riled up—Mayonnaise? *No mayonnaise!* Celery? *Always!*).

Here, the potatoes are crushed so the chunkiness (for texture) can coexist with the more broken-up pieces (for creaminess) while those exposed craggy edges absorb that lemony, scalliony, salty dressing. The tinned fish are optional, but they are truly good in this application—little pieces of fatty, salty fish to be snacked on between bites of dilly, tangy potatoes and crunchy celery.

**1** Boil the potatoes in salted water until they’re completely tender, 10 to 15 minutes depending on the size of the potato. Drain and let sit until they’re cool enough to lightly crush with the palms of your hands.

**2** Meanwhile, combine the olive oil, dill, lemon zest, lemon juice, and half the scallions in a small bowl; season with salt and pepper and more lemon juice.

**3** Add the crushed potatoes and celery and toss to coat; season with salt and pepper.

**4** Transfer the potatoes, celery, and any dressing to a large serving platter. Top with the celery leaves, remaining scallions, more dill, and more pepper. Serve with sardines or anchovies alongside or scattered over.

**DO AHEAD** Potatoes can be boiled up to 1 week ahead, covered, and refrigerated. Potato salad can be made up to 2 days ahead, covered, and refrigerated.



## Just-Cooked Cabbage with Butter, Anchovy, and Lemon

serves 4 to 6

- 3 tablespoons olive oil, chicken fat, pork fat, or duck fat
- 1 large head of savory, cone, or white cabbage (do not use red or napa here), quartered lengthwise
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4–6 anchovy fillets
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 1 lemon, halved crosswise
- Flaky sea salt

**NOTE** *Olive oil always works, but this is an excellent opportunity to use any leftover fat from something you may have just cooked in that same skillet (chicken thighs, pork chops, steak) to cook many vegetables, like fennel, mushrooms, garlic scapes, and radishes.*

This recipe almost didn't make it into the book, but after preparing it for a friend who is often my toughest critic, she demanded that it be included here, if only so she could cook it herself. Seared in a skillet until charred and tender, basted with butter and sizzled anchovies, and finished with a ridiculous amount of black pepper and fresh lemon, this cabbage is one of the most unsuspectingly delicious things in this book.

After eating an entire head of cabbage between the two of us, we both agreed that if more people had cabbage this good (and easy to make) cabbage would be a lot more popular. So here is this recipe, a last-minute gift from us to you, all in the name of spreading the cabbage gospel.

The key here is to stay true to the recipe name—which is to say, cook it just long enough so that it's *softened* but not *soft*. You'll know you've reached this point when the cabbage starts to kind of wilt onto itself but maintains its structure without totally collapsing into a pile of rags.

**1** Heat your chosen fat in a large skillet, preferably cast-iron, over medium-high heat.

**2** Season the cabbage with salt and pepper. Once the fat is super hot, add the cabbage, cut side down, and cook until it's well browned and caramelized, 4 to 6 minutes. Using tongs or a spatula, turn the cabbage and sear on the other cut side until it's just as browned and caramelized, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer the cabbage to a large serving platter.

**3** Add the anchovies and butter to the skillet, letting it foam up and get all browned while the anchovies melt into the fat, about 2 minutes.

**4** Spoon the butter mixture over the cabbage and squeeze all over with both lemon halves. Sprinkle with flaky salt and pepper.

**DO AHEAD** This should be made right before you sit down to eat, which is to say, sorry, there are no do-aheads here!



## Hard-Roasted Spiced Cauliflower

serves 4 to 6

- 1 large head cauliflower, about 2 pounds
- 4 garlic cloves, finely grated
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup finely chopped fresh chives, mint, parsley, or cilantro, tender leaves and stems (optional)
- Crumbled feta, seasoned yogurt, or labne (optional)

**NOTE** *I find myself satisfied without the addition of crumbled feta or saucy yogurt here, but it's no secret that either would be super delicious served on top, underneath, or alongside.*

Something special happens to cauliflower when it's roasted for a very long time. It transforms from simply tender and soft to complexly crispy and toothsome, a word I really try to avoid using but sometimes can't. It's important to resist the urge to take out the cauliflower once it's just cooked through. You must push through, continuing to roast until the flavors have concentrated, the sugars have caramelized, the spices have toasted, and the bits have crisped.

The spices are light enough to vibe with nearly anything on your table, and this side dish can easily take the place of a grain or other starch. Not to complicate things, but you can even add a can of rinsed and drained chickpeas to the cauliflower before roasting. They'll cook and crisp along with the cauliflower, and then maybe you put a fried egg on top and serve with a crispy and crunchy salad, and then all of a sudden you have dinner.

- 1 Preheat the oven to 450°F.
- 2 Break the cauliflower into very small florets, about the size of a large bean. I just use my hands to do this, but you can use a knife.
- 3 Toss the cauliflower with the garlic, crushed red pepper flakes, fennel seeds, coriander, turmeric, and olive oil on a rimmed baking sheet and season with salt and lots and lots of pepper. Place in the oven and don't even think about touching it for at least 15 minutes. No, it won't burn! I promise.
- 4 After 15 minutes, toss the cauliflower occasionally to promote even browning, until each little friend is deeply browned and caramelized, another 15 to 20 minutes, with the smaller bits even darker and crispier (those are my favorite parts).
- 5 Transfer the cauliflower to a large platter and top with the herbs. Serve alongside feta, yogurt, or labne, if you just must.

**DO AHEAD** Cauliflower can be roasted a few hours ahead, covered loosely, and stored at room temperature.

## Creamy Cauliflower and Onion Gratin

serves 6 to 10

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2½- to 3-pound cauliflower, leafy green parts removed
- ½ small sweet or yellow onion, very thinly sliced
- 6 ounces Gruyère or white cheddar cheese, grated (about 2½ cups)
- Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- 2 cups fresh coarse bread crumbs (see page 14) or panko (optional)
- 3 tablespoons white sesame seeds
- ¼ cup olive oil (if using bread crumbs)

### EAT WITH

- Chicories with Preserved Lemon, Yogurt, and Mint (page 85)
- +
- Slow-Roasted Oregano Chicken with Buttered Tomatoes (page 189)

I am one of those people who'd never entertain the idea of replacing carbs with vegetables à la zoodles or cauliflower rice, but once this dish was born, I realized I was essentially using cauliflower as a replacement for pasta in this pasta-less version of what reminds me of macaroni and cheese. Believe me, I, too, was horrified, but it was so good that I did not and could not care.

This gratin is the easiest and most delicious way to make superlatively tender, creamy, cheesy cauliflower without any additional steps (no bechamel, roux, or other fancy sauce required). Bake the cauliflower, covered, in the cream, just to cook it through and get it tender, then uncover it so the cream can reduce, becoming thick and rich, and the cheese can get all browned and crispy.

It may seem like a crazy thing to do, but I left the bread crumbs optional for two reasons. One, because without them, it is a really great time for people who don't indulge in gluten to get on the gratin train (which is usually either bolstered with a roux made from flour, covered in nonnegotiable bread crumbs, or both); and two, I think this gratin is really, really good (and, superficially, more beautiful) without them. So good in fact, I couldn't choose between the two preparations, but would rather saddle you with this Sophie's Choice. Alternatively, make both versions and then decide for yourself.

- 1 Preheat the oven to 425°F.
- 2 Bring the cream, butter, and garlic to a simmer in a small pot over medium heat. Season with salt and pepper and remove from heat.
- 3 Slice the cauliflower into ½-inch-thick slabs (some of the bits will fall away and crumble into tiny florets; this is fine).

(recipe continues)

**4** Place the smallest bits of cauliflower on the bottom of a 9-inch pie plate or cake pan (I like the roundness of the pie plates and cake pans, but a 2-quart baking dish of any shape will work). Scatter with some of the onion, followed by some of the cheese. Repeat with the remaining cauliflower, onion, and cheese until all of it is used, ending with the cheese.

**5** Pour the cream mixture over (leave the garlic in or remove), followed by a good sprinkle of crushed red pepper flakes, if using.

**6** Cover with aluminum foil and bake until the cauliflower is tender and cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes.

**7** Remove the foil and continue to bake until the top is bubbly and golden and the cream is mostly reduced, another 15 to 20 minutes (it will look slightly runny and creamy in the oven but will set and thicken once you take it out of the oven and let it cool a few minutes).

**8** If using the bread crumbs: Now is the time to put them to use. Combine the bread crumbs, sesame seeds, and olive oil in a medium bowl (alternatively, just use sesame seeds). Season with salt and pepper.

**9** Scatter the bread crumb mixture (alternatively, just scatter the sesame seeds) over the top and bake until those are deeply and thoroughly crispy and golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes.

**10** Remove from the oven and let cool slightly before serving.

**DO AHEAD** Gratin (sans bread crumbs) can be baked 2 days ahead, then kept covered and refrigerated. To reheat, place in a 400°F oven, uncovered (adding bread crumbs, if using), until returned to its bubbling, golden state, 10 to 15 minutes.



# One-Pot Chicken with Dates and Caramelized Lemon

serves 4 to 6

**3½- to 4-pound chicken, or  
3 pounds bone-in, skin-on  
chicken thighs or legs**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black  
pepper**  
**4 tablespoons olive oil, divided**  
**1 lemon, cut into thick slices  
crosswise, seeds removed**  
**2 shallots, halved lengthwise**  
**4–6 medjool dates (3 ounces), pitted**  
**4 sprigs fresh thyme or oregano,  
plus more for serving**  
**1 cup water**  
**2 teaspoons ground Urfa chile,  
or 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper  
flakes**  
**Flaky sea salt**

## EAT WITH

Perfect Herby Salad (page 86)  
+  
Frizzled Chickpeas and Onions with  
Feta and Oregano (page 168)

This one-pot oven-cooked chicken is a true treasure. It's sweet and tangy and a little spicy, and just downright special. It's got the kind of bold flavors you wouldn't expect from such few ingredients, which I guess is part of what makes it remarkable. But it's also a rather flexible dish, able to be made with a whole chicken or chicken parts (bone-in, skin-on thighs, if you please) for a more weeknight-friendly vibe. But what makes it *really* special is how it's cooked: first seared, breast side up, letting the legs and thighs brown and render, then lemons and shallots are fried in that fat, then water is added to provide adequate sauciness, cooking the chicken quickly yet gently. The lid is then removed so the top can finish browning. And then there you have, all at once, a chicken that is both nearly fall-apart tender and deeply golden brown on all sides. A chicken revelation!

**1** Preheat the oven to 425°F.

**2** Season the chicken all over with salt and pepper. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large (at least 8-quart) Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Place the chicken in the pot breast side up, and using tongs or your hands (be careful!), press lightly to make sure the skin comes into even contact with the pot bottom. This is your chance to brown the legs and render that excess fat! It's rarely offered in whole-chicken recipes, so take advantage. (If using parts, just sear the chicken skin side down.)

**3** Cook, without moving, until the chicken is nice and browned, 5 to 8 minutes. Seriously, no peeking! Nothing exciting will happen before 5 minutes, I promise you.

**4** Add the lemon slices and shallot, maneuvering the chicken however you need so that the slices come into contact with the bottom of the pot. Let everything sizzle in the chicken fat until lightly caramelized, about 2 minutes.

**5** Add the dates, thyme, and water. Sprinkle the top of the chicken with the Urfa chile and place the lid on. Put the Dutch oven in the oven and roast until the dates are plump, the lemon is jammy, and the chicken is almost but not totally cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes (it will look mostly cooked through and a little anemic from getting covered with the lid).

**6** Remove the lid and drizzle the chicken with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil and continue to cook until the liquid has reduced by half and the top of the chicken is an illustrious, glistening golden-brown, another 20 to 30 minutes (depending on if you're using parts or whole bird).

**7** Let the chicken rest in the Dutch oven for 10 minutes, then transfer to a cutting board and carve. Serve along with the shallot, lemons, and dates, with some more thyme and flaky sea salt sprinkled over.

**DO AHEAD** This chicken can be made a few hours ahead, then kept in the Dutch oven at room temperature. If you wish to reheat it before serving, pop it back into the oven without a lid for 10 to 15 minutes or so.

**4** Remove from the heat and whisk in the brown sugar and butter, whisking, whisking, whisking until the brown sugar has dissolved and the butter has melted.

**5** Transfer the pudding to a baking dish (you can use a bowl if you don't have one, but basically this pudding should cool as quickly as possible so you want to use something wider than it is deep). Place plastic wrap directly on top of the pudding (to prevent that inevitable weird pudding skin) and place in the refrigerator to cool completely, at least 1 hour (depending on your fridge).

**6 Assemble the dessert.** Using an electric mixer or a whisk and good ol' fashioned elbow grease, whip the cream, confectioners' sugar, and salt in a medium bowl until medium-stiff peaks form. Gently whisk in the yogurt.

**7** Toss the bananas and lime juice together in a medium bowl. This will make them taste very good and prevent browning.

**8** Take out whatever fun vessel you'll be using for this assembly and spoon a bit of the coconut pudding on the bottom, followed by a layer of wafers, followed by a layer of bananas, followed by a layer of whipped cream mixture. Repeat this until you've filled the whole vessel, ending with the whipped cream. Do not worry about getting the layers totally even, that is not the point; just eyeball it to make sure you won't run out of anything while building the layers (but if you did, not the end of the world).

**9** Chill the assembled pudding at least 2 hours, until everything is set and kind of settled into each other. When you're ready to serve, top with whatever you feel like—say, a maraschino cherry, toasted coconut flakes, or even some shaved chocolate. Serve with a large serving spoon and a few bowls, or just set out multiple spoons and eat directly out of the vessel. We're all friends here!

**DO AHEAD** The filling can be made up to 3 days ahead, wrapped, and refrigerated. The banana pudding can be assembled a day ahead—any more than that and the wafers will become almost "too soft," if there is such a thing.

## Sour Cherry and Sesame Galette

serves 6 to 8

All-purpose flour, for dusting  
1 recipe (2 discs) The Only Pie Crust  
(page 311)  
3 pounds fresh sour cherries, pitted  
¾ cup plus 3 tablespoons sugar  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon or lime  
zest, plus 2 tablespoons fresh  
lime or lemon juice  
⅓ cup tahini  
1 large egg, lightly beaten with  
1 teaspoon water  
3 tablespoons white sesame seeds  
Flaky sea salt

**NOTE** An excellent task to outsource, pitting cherries is quite literally the pits. Note that most fruit will work here, just cut into cherry-sized pieces before proceeding.

I typically do not condone the double-crust galette (because, then, isn't it just a pie?), but the idea for this recipe came about after attempting to eat a galette with juicy cherries and having the cherries fall all over me, staining my clothes. "What if instead of a galette, it was a giant pop tart?" I thought. So I present to you something that is galette in spirit, pop tart in theory, and pepperoni pizza in appearance (which was an accident, but now that I've said it, you can't un-see it).

Because it is still galette in spirit, it should have enough holes cut from the top so that the filling can bubble up and breathe, and the whole thing can maintain what makes a galette great, which is the correct ratio of filling to crust. If you don't own tiny cookie cutters for cutting out small holes, things like a water bottle cap work surprisingly well. Alternatively, use a knife to make dramatically thick slits.

**1** Preheat the oven to 400°F.

**2** Lightly flour a large work surface. Working with 1 disc of dough at a time, roll out 2 circles about 16 inches each in diameter, give or take an inch or two. Place one crust on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet and have the other alongside on the work surface.

**3** Working with the crust on the work surface, use a tiny circle/square/rectangle/triangle/heart/star cutter (about 1 inch) or the cap of a plastic water bottle, or whatever sharp-edged circle is close to 1 inch in diameter, to cut out many small shapes, taking care to leave about a 3-inch border of uncut dough. You can save these scraps and make snacks later or eat the raw dough, which is something I do (and which I can't technically advise doing, but just letting you know it is delicious).

(recipe continues)

**4** Toss the cherries,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of the sugar, and the lemon zest and juice in a large bowl.

**5** Spread the tahini on the crust that's on the baking sheet, leaving a 3-inch border all around (like you're saucing a pizza!). Place the cherries on top of the tahini, making sure they stay within that 3-inch border.

**6** Brush the edges of the crust with the egg wash, then place the other crust with the holes on top of the fruit, pressing to make sure the plain edges stick together. Fold the edges up all around onto each other, pressing with each fold to create a seal (like if you were making a regular galette). Brush the entire top with the egg wash, then sprinkle with the sesame seeds, the remaining 3 tablespoons sugar, and a bit of flaky salt.

**7** Bake the galette, rotating if your oven has hot spots, until the top crust is beginning to turn a nice golden brown and the filling starts to bubble up slightly, 20 to 25 minutes. Reduce the temperature of the oven to 375°F and continue to bake until the crust is baked through and is the color of a deeply golden brown, well-baked croissant, another 20 to 25 minutes.

**8** Let the galette cool slightly before slicing into wedges, which will look like pepperoni pizza slices. Do not apologize for this!

**DO AHEAD** Galette can be baked up to 2 days ahead, wrapped tightly, and stored at room temperature.



Dr. Cassidy

# Tiny, Salty, Chocolatey Cookies

makes 24 cookies

- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter
- 2½ cups confectioners' sugar
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (see Note)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 large egg whites
- 1 large egg
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate (at least 67% cacao), chopped
- ½ cup finely chopped hazelnuts, almonds, pistachios, pecans, or walnuts (optional)
- Flaky sea salt, such as Maldon or Jacobsen

**NOTE** This is the time to invest in some high-quality unsweetened cocoa powder, since that's mostly what you'll be tasting here (that, and browned butter).

I am not a chocolate person, but there are some occasions when I want a lightly sweet, definitely salty, chocolatey little something. In those moments, there is nothing better than this something, which I can best describe as the edges of a chewy brownie but in cookie form.

No special equipment, fancy techniques, or chilling time are needed, which means that even if you only bake cookies once a year, you can still make these. Perfect for the end of a meal, when you, too, have decided you've just got to have a chocolatey little something.

**1** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment.

**2** Melt the butter in a small pot over medium heat, swirling, until starting to foam and brown, 3 to 4 minutes (whisk the butter from time to time so that the solids don't stick to the bottom of the pot). Let cool.

**3** Whisk the confectioners' sugar, cocoa powder, and salt in a medium bowl, ridding it of as many lumps as possible (if you really want to, feel free to sift everything).

**4** Using a spatula, mix in the egg whites, whole egg, and browned butter, stirring until you've got a good, smoothish mixture (any small lumps will take care of themselves), followed by the chocolate and any nuts you may want to add.

**5** Using a spoon, drop quarter-sized blobs of dough (the texture is really somewhere between a dough and a batter), spacing about 2 inches apart on the baking sheet (they spread a lot). Sprinkle with flaky salt and bake until the cookies have flattened considerably and look baked through and a little wrinkled, 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool before eating so they can firm up.

**DO AHEAD** Cookies can be baked up to 2 days ahead, wrapped tightly, and stored at room temperature.





## Lemony Turmeric Tea Cake

makes 1 loaf

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¾ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest, plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from about 1 lemon)
- ¾ cup sour cream or full-fat Greek yogurt, plus more for serving (optional)
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- ½ lemon, thinly sliced, seeds removed
- Whipped cream (optional)

**NOTE** For some reason, finding a standard-size loaf pan is nearly impossible, so get as close to these dimensions as you can. While you could use either a metal or a glass pan, I prefer metal because it conducts heat more evenly.

I don't want to oversell this cake, but I just want to say that it's one of the more delicious things I've made in my lifetime. I refer to it as "house cake," which is of course, cake to keep in your house at all times. I am not what I would call an earnest person, but in all earnestness just slicing into it makes a bad day better, the baked equivalent of burning sage or palo santo to clear the energy. It travels well, and can truly be brought anywhere for any occasion, but most of the time it never makes it out of my apartment.

**1** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 9 by 4-inch loaf pan (see Note) with nonstick cooking spray or butter, and line it with parchment, leaving some overhang on both of the longer sides so you're able to easily lift the cake out after baking.

**2** Whisk the flour, baking powder, salt, and turmeric in a medium bowl.

**3** In a large bowl, combine 1 cup of the sugar with the lemon zest and rub together with your fingertips until the sugar is tinted yellow and smells like you just rubbed a lemon in there. Whisk in the sour cream, eggs, and the lemon juice until well blended.

**4** Using a spatula, add the wet mixture to the flour mixture, stirring just to blend. Fold in the melted butter. Scrape the batter into the prepared pan, smoothing the top. Scatter the top with the lemon slices and remaining 2 tablespoons sugar.

**5** Bake until the top of the cake is golden brown, the edges pull away from the sides of the pan, and a tester inserted in the center comes out clean, 50 to 60 minutes. (I love deeply caramelized lemon, but if they're getting too dark, lay a piece of foil on top to prevent burning.) Let cool before slicing.

**DO AHEAD** Cake can be baked up to 5 days ahead, wrapped tightly, and stored at room temperature.