



EMILY WIGHT

WELL FED, FLAT BROKE

RECIPES FOR
MODEST BUDGETS

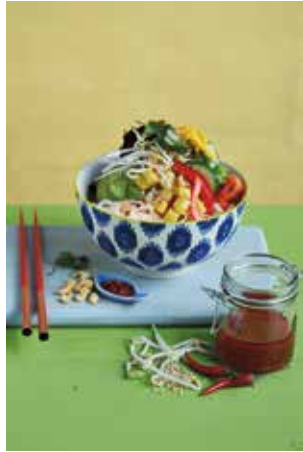
AND

MESSY KITCHENS

CAULIFLOWER ^{WITH}
ORCCHIETTE &
ALMONDS



RICE NOODLE
SALAD ^{WITH} ALL
THE VEGGIES



TUNA TARTARE



FRENCH BISTRO
PORK & BEANS



^{*}
SRIRACHA
BUFFALO WINGS



^{*}
BUTTERNUT
SQUASH SKILLET
STRATA



^{*}
FERGAZZA
BREAD ^{WITH} GARLIC
SCAPES



^{*}
BUTTERMILK
DUTCH BABY ^{WITH}
BACON-BAKED
APPLE

INTRODUCTION

I like to believe that the best cooks are the messiest cooks because they are so focused on the masterful preparation of a meal that things like spilled liquids and crumbs are secondary or irrelevant. However unfounded that idea might be, I've put my faith in it—I need to believe that what I am doing is worthwhile, even if it is only in the moment. I need Nick to believe that too, because I need him to wash the floor.

Nick and I live in an apartment in East Vancouver, and it is wonderful and terrible and expensive and perfect and dusty. We have a two-year-old, Hunter, and when people come over and step in something sticky, I blame him. Our couch smells like yogurt and peanut butter, and I pretend it's all his fault—a toddler is a scapegoat, which makes up for so many of the other things a toddler is. Nick and I have creative writing degrees—we met in poetry class—so we've never been wealthy. But we're better with money now than we have been, out of necessity—Vancouver can be a hard place to live, especially for low-income people and young families. Daycare for a single child can cost as much per month as rent.

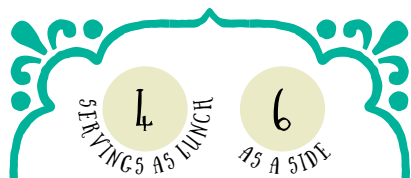
We are all doing our best, recognizing that “our best” is measured on a sliding scale. Some days, my best is a lovingly prepared meal with wine and pleasantries; other days, my best is an egg cracked into a bowl of instant ramen and a series of indecipherable grunts. Some days, I cook because I have to, and other days I cook because I love to. It's the love that makes the have-tos worthwhile.

The best advice I can give you about cooking is to just rethink what dinner—or a meal in general—means. Think of a balanced diet in weekly terms—you'll get everything you need in seven days, so don't spend every day trying to fit everything in—and let yourself be okay with taking short-cuts, here and there. Square meals, night after night, are for people who have time to do three things at once. I like dinner to be a single dish, whenever possible, though if time allows, a salad is nice too. I don't like washing dishes, and because I cook with cast iron (which can't go in the dishwasher), I like to get away with using one pan.

If there's joy to be found in cooking, even if you don't particularly enjoy cooking, it's in eating. That moment when Nick and I finally get to sit down together with dinner after a grueling day is the moment we drag ourselves toward all day long. The weight of our bodies is finally off our feet, the warmth in our bellies finally replaces the dull ache that's been there since three o'clock. When we don't have much else, we have food. Really good and pretty healthy food, most of the time. Even at our worst, we are well fed; this keeps us together and keeps us going. The days are short, and you can't do everything.

I hope that you can sometimes let the chores go undone and take a little longer over dinner instead. I hope that, in all the mess of life and living, you find yourself and your loved ones well fed too.

♥ EMILY



½ loaf whole wheat, day-old French bread, cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) cubes (about 6 cups [1.5 L])

½ English cucumber, quartered lengthwise and cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces (about 2 cups [500 mL])

4 tomatoes, diced to 1 inch (2.5 cm) (about 4 cups [1L])

6-oz (160-g) tin water-packed sardines, drained and torn into chunks, bones removed (if preferred)

1 cup (250 mL) whole basil leaves

1 shallot or small red onion, thinly sliced

1 tbsp capers, roughly chopped

¼ cup (60 mL) red wine vinegar

⅓ cup (80 mL) olive oil

1 tbsp fish sauce

2 garlic cloves, minced

½ tsp coarse salt

½ tsp ground black pepper

½ tsp dried oregano

½ tsp chili flakes

SARDINE PANZANELLA

This is the kind of thing that's nice to pack into containers and take to the beach on a sunny afternoon in late August when it doesn't matter how bad your breath is afterward. It's brightly flavored, fresh, and filling; make a meal of it by pairing it with Roasted Garlic and Tomato Soup and a glass or two of Vinho Verde.

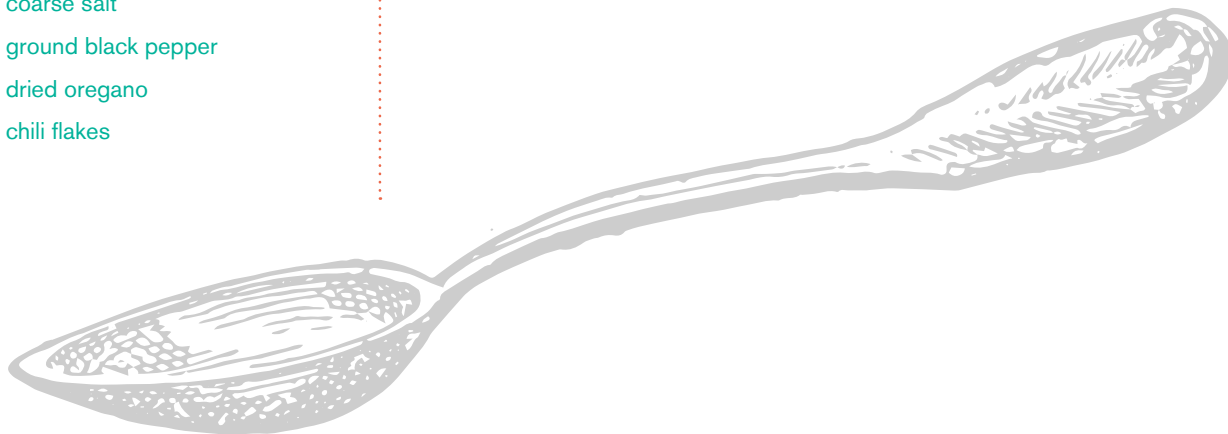
Set oven to broil.

Place bread cubes on a baking sheet and slide into oven. Toast for 2 to 3 minutes, checking frequently to make sure they haven't burned.

In a large bowl, combine cucumbers, tomatoes, sardines, basil, shallot, and capers. Add bread cubes. Toss gently, using your hands.

In a separate bowl, whisk together red wine vinegar, olive oil, fish sauce, garlic, salt, pepper, oregano, and chili flakes. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Pour half of dressing over salad, then toss with your hands, then stir in remainder of dressing.

Let panzanella rest for at least 15 minutes before serving. Toss again before serving.







ORANGE UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

Somewhere around the second week of December each year, I inevitably Google “too much vitamin C side effects?” and try to convince myself that eating a box of mandarin oranges every other day is a healthy thing to do. By February, I'm oranged-out, but they're still just about the only thing in season, fruit-wise. This recipe comes out of coping with that reality while still very much wanting dessert. It's best made in a 9-inch (23-cm) cast-iron pan, but will work fine in a pie plate.

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).

Using a knife, peel oranges. Cut slightly on the diagonal, running blade along flesh of orange, removing bitter white pith. Slice oranges horizontally to about ¼-inch (6-mm) thick. Test to be sure they fit into bottom of a 9-inch (23-cm) cast iron pan with a bit of overlapping. Set aside.

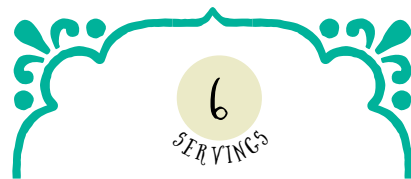
In a bowl, combine orange and lemon zests, cornmeal, flour, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together lemon juice, oil, honey, buttermilk, egg, and vanilla.

Place cast iron pan on medium-high heat and melt butter and sugar together until bubbling. Remove from heat, and carefully place orange slices evenly across bottom of pan. If you don't have a cast iron pan, grease a 9-inch (23-cm) pie plate, lay orange slices along bottom, and pour caramel on top.

Whisk wet ingredients into dry ingredients, and pour into pan on top of butter-sugar-orange mixture.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until top is golden, edges appear crisp, and caramel has bubbled through in places.

Let stand for 5 minutes, then carefully turn out onto a serving plate. Let cool for 15 minutes before serving.



TOPPING

4 tbsp butter, cubed

¾ cup (175 mL) brown sugar

pinch salt

3 to 4 small oranges, such as navel or blood oranges (or a combination)

CAKE

1 orange, zest

1 lemon, zest and juice

⅔ cup (160 mL) yellow cornmeal

⅔ cup (160 mL) all-purpose flour

½ tsp baking soda

½ tsp salt

2 tbsp canola oil

3 tbsp honey

1 cup (250 mL) buttermilk

1 egg

1 tsp vanilla extract

WELL FED, FLAT BROKE

Emily Wight

ISBN 978-1-55152-579-2

\$24.95 USA & Canada (other territories TBA)

256 pp; 8" x 9"; full-color throughout

Trade paperback

Genre: COOKING (Budget)

PUBLICATION MONTH:

April 2015

ARENAL PULP PRESS

arsenalpulp.com

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Distributed in the USA by Consortium

Distributed in Canada by University of Toronto Press

(sales by Ampersand, Inc.)

Distributed in the UK/Europe by Turnaround

Distributed in Australia/New Zealand by NewSouth

Books

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In this winsome cookbook, based on her popular blog of the same name, Emily Wight offers great recipes, ideas, and advice on how to prepare imaginative, nutritious, and delectable meals without having to break the bank. This personable guide is perfect for students, new adults, and others on a budget; Emily believes that while you may occasionally be flat broke, you can always be well fed.

Chapters are organized by ingredient so that readers can choose their main and build a meal around it. Recipes range from the simple (perfect scrambled eggs, rice and lentils) to the sublime (Orecchiette with White Beans and Sausage, Mustard-fried Chicken). There are also a number of ethnic-inspired recipes, such as Kimchi Pancakes, Salvadoran Roast Chicken, and Pantry Kedgerie, reflecting the new interest in global cuisine and the fact that ethnic ingredients are not only easy to find nowadays, but often inexpensive.

Also crucial is the avoidance of processed foods and refined sugar wherever possible; for those on a budget, nutrition is often overlooked when it comes to eating. At the same time, there's plenty of satisfying comfort foods to eat in moderation. As well, Emily offers readers strategic shopping tips and suggestions on how to build a well-stocked but inexpensive pantry.

With its down-to-earth charm and sage advice, *Well Fed, Flat Broke* will have you eating like a millionaire without having to spend like one.

EMILY WIGHT is a writer, blogger, and home cook. A graduate of the Creative Writing program at the University of British Columbia, she's spent the past six years blogging at *Well Fed, Flat Broke*, a site that chronicles her forays in the kitchen as she tries to balance a career and parenthood, which includes a picky-eating toddler and a neurotic cat. Everything in her life is sticky. She lives in Vancouver, Canada. emvandee.wordpress.com