

THINKING OF LUNCH

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A TOAST TO TOAST



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150 Slices: 5 Lessons

THINKING OF LUNCH

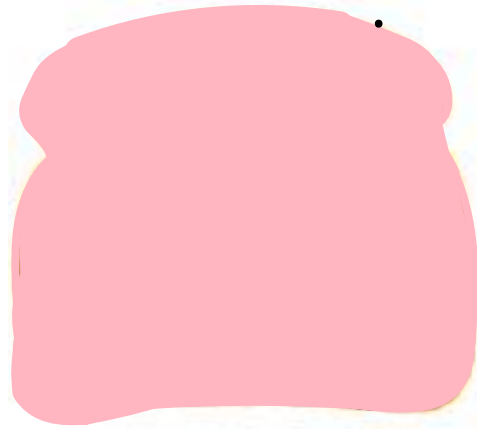


A TOAST TO TOAST



**THE QUARTERLY
JOURNAL FOR
HUNGRY PEOPLE**

*****much gluten ahead*****



WHY TOAST

“Lovely slices of hot buttered toast!”

This is what Spanish anarchist yelled to the fascist opposition to crumble their morale during the second world war. Anarchist leveraged the comfort of buttered toast, to sway their ideological opposites during war and famine. It worked. A shared notion of toast as comfort is something we can all relate to.

Toast preparation is such an essential part of our culture that it is the only food to have a kitchen appliance solely dedicated to it. 88% of American homes have a toaster. Have you ever lived anywhere without a toaster ?

Toast is simple. Toast is pleasure.

Toast has evolved past its classic combinations of butter, jam and peanut butter.

The new toast is open to an infinite number of toppings, and extends beyond its usual nostalgia. The “new toast” embodies the tension between the comfort of nostalgia and the discomfort of discovery and change; Strange and unknown flavour combinations on a familiar bed of starches, can surprise and delight us.

Say the words “avocado on toast” in a public setting and watch as some eyes glimmer with delight and others roll back into their sockets.

Like, it, love it, hate it, avocado on toast has become the glossy-eyed cheerleader poster child for toast culture.

Six years ago, when avocado on toast first started springing up on menus, it quickly became a cult item. The avocado was new and exotic. It had just stepped off Mexican menus and into the glutinous embrace of familiar bread. Now, avocado litters salads and sandwiches, becoming a commonplace ingredient, synonymous with comfort food.

You don’t need a cookbook for toast (which does not stop said cookbook from existing), but the toast recipes here are suggestions- combinations of ingredients that nudge our nostalgia, and makes us delight in eating.



This one is going first because it is the most “me” of all the recipes in here(I know, I’m being selfish). It has one ingredient inspired by everywhere I have been. Prosciutto from my childhood in Montreal, sourdough and avocado from the San Francisco sun and pistachio pesto from my garden in Toronto. It’s my definition of comfort food, because it has sustained me in various moments of discomfort across the continent.

HAMFACE

Ingredients

Thick crust sourdough
(**Prairie Boy’Rye Sourdough is a personal favourite**)
Prosciutto
Eggs
White Vinegar
Avocado

For the Pesto

(amounts are approximate and depend on taste)

1 large bunch Basil
3-5 cloves of garlic
1/2 cup Parmesan
2 tbsp Olive oil
2 hand fulls Pistachio nuts (shells off!)

3. Cut the bread into thick slices and place in the oven until they turn golden brown
Remove bread from heat, spread a generous layer of pesto.

4. Cut avocado in half, remove the peel and mash over the pesto with a fork. Place 1-2 slices of prosciutto atop. Add poached egg. Sprinkle with pepper to make it look cute.

1. For the pesto
In a blender, blend together all pesto ingredients until they become a spreadable puree consistency. You may have to pulse multiple times for the nuts to blend.

2. In a shallow pot, bring water with one tablespoon of white vinegar to boil. Crack eggs into a small bowl. Slowly submerge the bowl into the boiling water. Boil for 4 minutes. Remove eggs from water.



A CRUMMY PERSONAL ESSAY

I used to hate Toast.

I hated how strawberry jam looked like misplaced blood clots. I disliked the concept of peanut butter. I liked the concept of crunchy peanut butter even less.

I hated how all the little dark brown crumbs would stick to the butter knife and find and embed themselves in the crumb mausoleum of the Becel tub.

Buying margarine over butter is always a mistake. It was the early aughts and collectively, we were swayed by the desire for low cholesterol and the reccos of the Heart and Stroke Foundation.

Any sign of crumb afterlife in the Becel tub, drove my father into a tizzy. A clever man, he devised a specific buttering system to combat crumb-related casualties.

A fully buttered knife *is placed at the upper left corner of said toast and slid it down diagonally, in one swift motion seconds after the toast got out of the toaster. The margarine melts instantly, thus eliminating the possibility of any toasted bread to-butter knife frottage, and the potential birth of crumbies.

(notice how “margarine knife” is not a term worthy of utterance)

I devised my own methods to bear the necessary breakfast meal. Crusts were swiftly disposed of. Nutella was a necessary accoutrement.

I was a late bloomer to toast- enjoyment. It came one night, when my mother suggested we “eat light.” As she placed cheese slices, and thin tomato wedges on toast slices, toast was slowly being divorced from its morning dread, and re-invented before me.

Times have changed. Toast has divorced breakfast. Toast is free, and ready to do things it has never done before. This issue is a toast to the new toast.



A perennial English breakfast classic, gets an added zing with chili flakes. Full-fat cream adds a layer of morning decadence, offset with the sourness of crunchy fermented bread.

SHROOMER

1. Do your morning self a favour, and buy pre-sliced mushrooms.

2. Drizzle olive oil to cover bottom of the pan. Heat pan to med-high heat.

3. Add in the mushrooms and cook until they are soft.

4. Mince garlic. Sprinkle in salt and chili flakes and add to pan.

Ingredients

Mushrooms (sliced)

2 tbsps Olive oil

2 cloves Garlic

Salt

Chili flakes

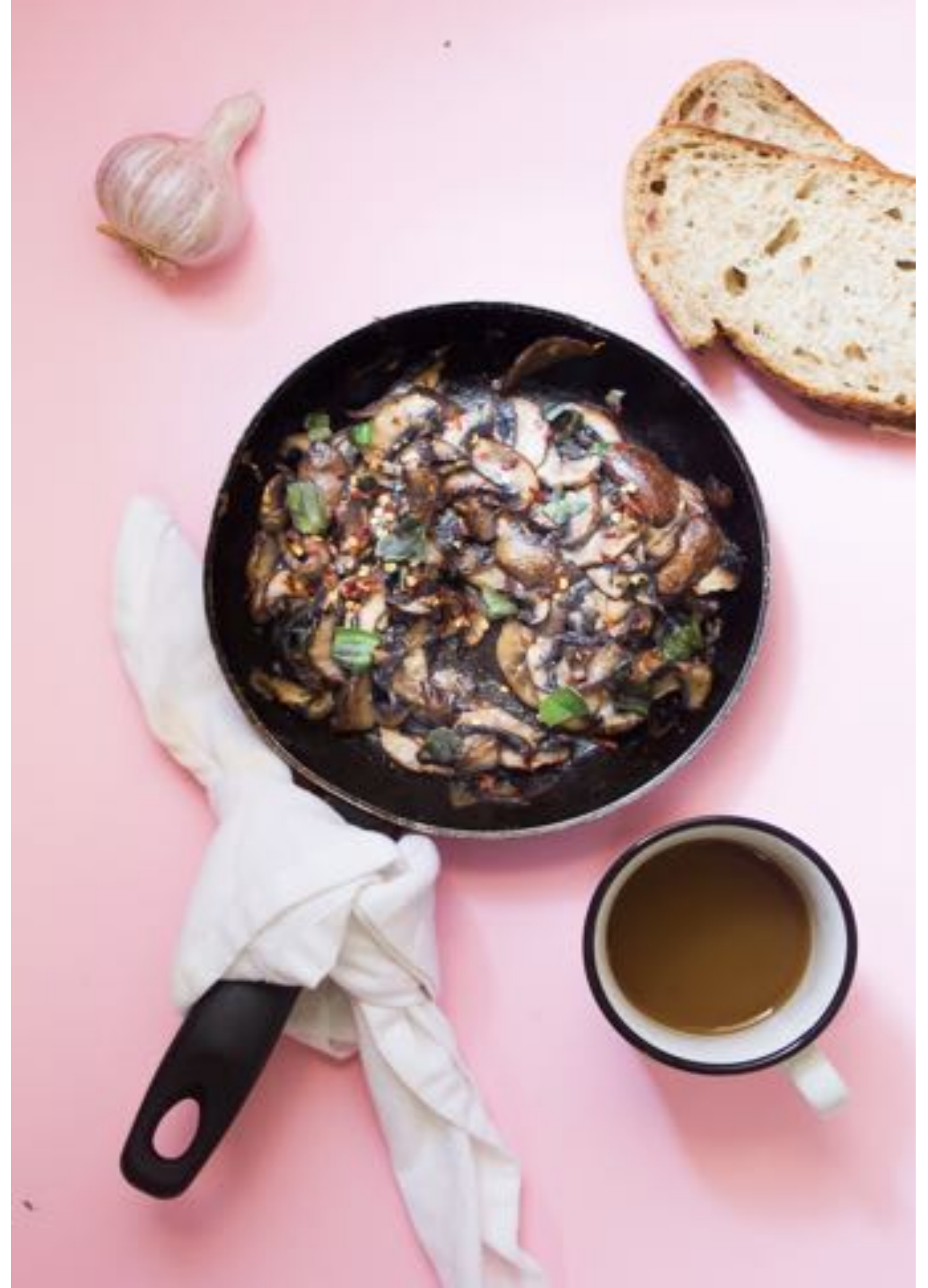
Parsley

10% Cream

6. Add in two teaspoons of cream until the mushrooms are coated in cream and the cream starts to bubble slightly.

7. Place cooked mushrooms on top of toast.

8. Adorn with chopped parsley.



TOASTING THE BOUNDARIES

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF MY RELATIONSHIP WITH TOAST

1993- 2003: I hate toast

I am working on developing taste buds at this point, but I am smart enough to think that toast was a sad replacement for real bread. Breakfast seemed like a wasted opportunity to eat something else like...breakfast pasta. Breakfast is a North American construct of a meal. For most italians, that means a Lavazza (Medaglia D'Oro and Cimo also adequate) espresso as black as Rick Santorum's heart and a cigarette, while rummaging around for leftover cookies in a tin container. However, we soon realised that your kindergarten-age child saying they aren't fed breakfast is not a good look. This was the only time that we turned to the breakfast-eating white people for food counsel. They suggested toast. We obliged.



2003- 2013 Still, hate toast, but for different reasons.

This is the Atkins era. Carbs become evil and bacon become the exalted cure to obesity. Bread makes you fat and bacon can make you skinny. Bush is president. Harper is Prime Minister, the world is an upside down place. Puberty hits. I no longer fit into kids clothes. My life-long battle with thinking I look fat commences. I ate toast today. Toast made me fat. For this reason, I hate toast. #issues

2014- THE TOAST REVOLUTION ARRIVES

The Pacific Standard reports on Trouble Coffee & Coconut Club, an establishment run by a woman with a rough and storied past, who now serves 4\$ thick sliced toast with avocado to techies in the Bay Area. This American Life rushes to profile the owner. The New Yorker confirms Toast's status as cultural trend, publishing "The Trend is Toast." .

The trend has hit the masses. Instagram is unleashed.

I move to California in peak avo-toast frenzy four months later. The trend is real, I can't escape. Slowly, with a new penchant for sourdough, I learn to love the toast. I do not visit Trouble Coffee & Coconut Club. I have many regrets.

2015 - I Begin to Eat a Lot of Toast

I move to Toronto, the first time I move somewhere indefinitely (Spoiler Alert: I am still here).

Most people think eating alone is sad and it sucks, but I think it's great because I can eat things like sour cream toast with sardines and not face any judgement.

I get over the low- carb bullshit as I look at pictures of Sophia Loren who



claims that “everything you see [she] owes to pasta” and decide to commit to carbs for the rest of my life.

2016- As Chia seed pudding begins to infringe on breakfast menus, toast is still holding out.

2017 I Reach Peak Toast Eating With this Issue

I went through 12 loaves. 120 slices. You get the idea Jessica Koslow's Sqirl continues to churn out her thick cut toast with ricotta and home-made compote. She goes by @prosciuttosnacks on instagram. She is either my future best friend, or worst enemy.

Luscious figs, drizzled in viscous honey, layered to rest on a fluffy cloud of ricotta. Complement them with some crispy toasted walnuts or pistachios. Sweet enough for dessert or a lazy morning breakfast

FIGGIN AROUND

Ingredients

Black Mission figs, or figs of your choice

One package of fresh ricotta

honey , to taste

Crushed nuts of your choice

Thick cut bread

- 1. Take two slices of bread and spread a thick layer of ricotta over them.**
- 2. Cut figs into thin slices vertically and place over the ricotta.**
- 3. Drizzle honey liberally over figs.**
- 4. Top with chopped nuts.**
- 5. Enjoy.**



THE AVOCADO QUESTION

Avocado on toast is the Kim Kardashian of toast culture. Some people worship it, some blame it for all the world's problems.

Here are my avocado on toast rules. In no way should you feel obliged to adhere to them. I have no avocado on toast credentials, other than having tasted dozens of them over the course of these photographs.

1.If you're going to eat avocado on toast (which you should, because it's delicious). Eat it at home. Do not forgo the carbs. Carbs are not the enemy. With our collective hate of carbs in North America, I am surprised that no carbless, "cucumber avocado on toast" or " avocado on avocado toast" option have gained popularity. The rise of "sweet potato toast" may be the exception to the rule.

2.Make sure you chose the right avocado. Whether you're at Metro, or the local market, look for dark green. Hass avocados are the most common, have the most mashable consistency. Make sure it's mildly squishy when you touch the skin. A great way to see if an avocado is ready to eat that day is to flick the stem off. If the stem comes off easily and is a yellowy-green colour underneath, it is ripe and ready to go.

3.Use a spoon to maximise the amount of avocado you get. Cut avocado in half. Scoop out pit with a spoon.

4.Choose the right bread: Thick cut, crusty, hearty bread, mildly heated is my favourite. Sourdoughs and fermented bread complement the richness of an avocado. Warm the bread up in the oven so it's crunchy on the outside and a soft pillow on the inside.

5.Mash your avocado with a fork until you see fork marks.

6.Amplify your avocado: Salt, pepper, chili flakes, sriracha, garlic, mint, a splash of olive oil.These are some of my favourites but are by no means, an exhaustive list. Add a fried egg and thank me later.

7.Make sure to eat it on a white plate, next to some natural lighting from a nearby window in the mid-afternoon. You know, just in case you need to take a photo



This one is inspired by the peas on toast at Saturday Dinette. Saturday Dinette remains one of the only reasons I will venture to the East End of Toronto. They have achieved the beloved balance of sweet, fresh and salty. With this the humble -home version, I try to re-create that moment of delight, when I discovered a new life of peas at Saturday Dinette. You can keep this in your fridge for up to two weeks. Spread it on your toast at work, and watch as your confused co-workers ask if you have purchased avocado spread.

PEA-PING TOM

Ingredients

One cup of fresh peas (or frozen peas that have been boiled for three minutes)

3 cloves of garlic

3 tbsp. Olive oil or melted butter

2 tbsp. lemon juice

Salt

Pepper

Your Favourite bread

Radish (for garnish)

1. In a blender, blend together peas, garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Blend until a puree consistency is reached.

2. Spread puree over slices of bread. Garnish with radish, if desired



120 SLICES: 5 LESSONS

We have consumed over 120 slices of toast for this issue. Over the course of chomping, here are some (sprouted) grains of truth we can share. We hope you carry them with you.

1

Toast builds intimacy. We eat toast in the morning, with family, with friends or lovers. Toast is a shared ceremony reserved for people who know the entirety of our flawed being. They glance at us, nibbling on a slice while in our underwear, unbothered by the crumbs sliding down your bra and lodging themselves in the underwire. I once had a roommate who fed his lover an un-buttered piece of toast on a paper towel. I gave her some butter and jam and a plate and took her aside to tell her that she deserved so much more.

2

Toast is a celebration of being alone. I eat a lot of meals alone; not in a sad way. I eat toast with sour cream, pickled onions and sardines over the kitchen sink. I'm in my underwear, the crumbs are getting stuck in my underwire. Its Saturday morning and I have nowhere to be. That moment is my ceremony. I'm happy there, all alone, in my most un-inhibited state. I'm celebrating me.



Carbe Diem



3

Toast is nostalgia. So many lonely, single people eat toast for the same reason urban outfitters makes millions selling re-purposed shit from our childhood: Nostalgia. We miss the time that soul-crushing 9-5 and the impending uncertainty of our future wasn't present at every crusted corner. We yearn for the time when we could look around for the adult, instead of being the adult. A simpler time, when discomfort was easily soothed by stirred ginger ale and diagonally cut slices of bread (with the crusts taken off). We get a second of that very pure pleasure when we sink our teeth into a slice of bread. Toast is comfort, and in a time where an orange puppet is president, we need comfort more than ever.

4

A good foundation is the key for anything good to stand on. Toast is a solid base for everything. Want to make something better? Add a slice of carbs at the bottom.

5

Toast shows us how change is possible if we want it. With a bit of magic, and some extra accoutrements, two slices of toast become a beautifully unified sandwich. If you think about it, toast, is a greater metaphor for how we can create good in the world. If we believe in creating something different and bigger together (like a sandwich), we can squash all the stuff that's supposed to come between us, by wrapping it in a warm breadly embrace. Every culture has a sandwich. Sandwiches are the key to world peace, making toast the building blocks to world peace. You see, toast is important. Think about it.

- The Humans Thinking of Lunch



**Questions? Comments? Collabs?
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