

A close-up photograph of a roasted turkey, likely a Cornish game hen, served on a white plate with a gold rim. The turkey is golden-brown and crispy, garnished with fresh rosemary sprigs, bright yellow lemon wedges, and small red cranberries. The plate is set on a rustic wooden cutting board. In the background, more greenery and cranberries are visible, creating a festive holiday atmosphere.

*Eat it up Yum's*

# Guide to a Stress-Free Holiday Feast

ELISHA SEWELL

*Eat it up Yum's*

# **GUIDE TO A STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY FEAST**

**ELISHA SEWELL**

From Thanksgiving to Christmas and all the Friendsgivings in between, I love the holiday season! It is a time of giving thanks, reflecting on God's goodness, and celebrating with friends and loved ones.

Of course I love the food. Food is my love language. But, making a feast can also be quite stressful. Early on in our marriage, my husband and I threw a Christmas party each year and invited all of our friends. I looked forward to it each year and dreamed about all the wonderful things I would make and serve our friends. But, somehow, as I cooked and prepared everything for the party I would get super stressed out and stop enjoying the thing I had looked forward to for so long. What happened?

I think a few things happened. *First*, I would try to do too much. I didn't realize that I could keep it simple and still make it special. *Second*, I wasn't super organized. I kept all the plans in my head – which meant I forgot a lot of them, or, changed my mind. *Third*, I tried to do it all on my own. I wanted it to be perfect so, I didn't ask for help. (But, there is no such thing as perfect!) And *last of all*, I would lose sight of why I was doing it in the first place. I wanted to celebrate the season and all it means with my loved ones.

That is why I created this Guide to a Stress-Free Holiday Feast. It has all the recipes to create a special holiday feast. The recipes are simple and are *all* **gluten-free**, **grain-free**, and **dairy-free**. Simple enough to cook and not get stressed out, while still being delicious and impressive. (Although, you don't have to do it all your own. If someone offers to help, send them a recipe from this guide and ask them to bring that dish.) **Gluten-free**, **grain-free**, and **dairy-free** so that, everyone can be included at the table and enjoy.

There is a timeline so, you can accomplish everything without the stress and last minute freak-outs. The detailed plan helps you organize everything; starting four days in advance and going all the way to 10 minutes before you eat.

And lastly, there is a detailed shopping list. You can print out the list, take it to the store, and get everything you need.

I hope you enjoy the food, but more importantly I hope you enjoy the season. Take time to stop, reflect, give thanks, and just enjoy life.

Live vibrantly,  
Elisha











# THE WHY BEHIND THE MENU



*"Look, everything is on the table. . .Come to the feast!" -Mt. 22:4*

## **Starter:** Charcuterie Board

*You want to have something your guest can snack on as soon as they arrive. Having a charcuterie board is a great way to let everyone snack before you have your meal. You can make it super simple— olives, salami, and herb roasted nuts. Or, you can pull out all the stops. I have listed a bunch of different snacks that could go on a charcuterie board. Pick your favorite things and build your own unique charcuterie board.*

*When building a charcuterie board try to pick a balance of **flavors** (sweet vs. salty), a variety of **textures** (crunchy nuts, smooth chocolate, soft and crisp fruit), and an array of **colors** (bright pomegranates and raspberries, green pickles, deep dark chocolate, light and dark nuts).*

## **Soup:** Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

*Serving soup at the beginning of a meal is nice, but not necessary. If you don't have time, or, you want to simplify your menu go ahead and leave out the soup. But, if you want your feast to feel a little extra special here is a simple butternut squash soup that can be made 3-4 days in advance.*



**Main:** Cornish Hens

*We finally admitted we don't like turkey and made the switch to Cornish hens about 5 years ago. Whether it is Thanksgiving, Christmas, or something in between, Cornish hens are my family's favorite main dish to have at a holiday feast. They are not only delicious, flavorful, and moist, they are also sooooo much easier to cook than a turkey. Make Cornish hens instead of turkey – I'm giving you permission to break old traditions and start new ones.*





**Sides:** Maple Glazed Carrots  
Citrus Roasted Beets  
Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad  
Kale and Citrus Salad

*Here are four different sides that are great for a few reasons. The flavors all work very well together and make a very cohesive meal. They are simple to make and some can be prepared a day early.*

*You don't have to make all four sides. Two or three would be plenty, but I wanted to give you options. If choosing just two or three, chose ones that have a balance of flavor and color. For example: the Citrus Roasted Beets would pair well with the Kale and Citrus Salad. They both have a citrus theme and the colors look vibrant on a plate together.*

*The **Maple Glazed Carrots** are parboiled (which can be done in advance), then broiled for 10-13 minutes (which can be done while the Cornish hens are resting.)*

*The **Citrus Roasted Beets** can be cooked at the same time as the Cornish hens, which helps with oven space and serving everything together. Or, you can make them the day before and reheat them the day of your dinner.*

*The **Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad** is a favorite of mine. I have been making it for about 7 years for every holiday gathering. It can be made the day before and is easily customizable.*

*The base is roasted brussel sprouts, fresh apples, shallots, and a fresh lemon vinaigrette.*

*To that you add something salty, like prosciutto or bacon crumbles. (You can use turkey bacon to keep it Kosher or Halal. You can also leave out the meat to have a vegetarian option for people.)*

*Then something bright and tart with a bit of texture, like pomegranate seeds (you can sub the pomegranate seeds with something else like dried cranberries or dried tart cherries).*

*And finally, you add some kind of nut for texture and crunch. In this recipe I used pecans, but you could also use cashews or toasted hazelnuts. If you have friends or family members that are allergic to nuts, be sensitive to their needs. Either set aside some of the salad without nuts, or, leave the nuts out entirely.*

The **Kale and Citrus Salad** is bright in flavor and color. And it takes less than 10 minutes to make.



## **Sweet Endings:** Spiced Chocolate Cake Chocolate Pot de Creme (sugar-free option)

*When thinking about dessert, think about your guests. What will they enjoy? Do they have any dietary restrictions or preferences? Then choose one or two desserts to serve. I like to serve two desserts just to give people options, but one is enough.*

*The **Spiced Chocolate Cake** is grain-free, gluten-free, and dairy-free. Made in a bundt pan it is a show stopper. It is a cake that even my gluten-eating/loving friends request. It can be made the day before to make the day of the feast easy and stress-free.*

*You can also customize the flavor. Instead of orange and cinnamon, you could add peppermint for a delicious mint chocolate cake.*

*The **Chocolate Pot de Creme** are so decadent and silky-smooth. They are easy to make and can be made 1-2 days in advance. There is also a sugar-free option so, that everyone (even people that can't eat sugar) can enjoy dessert.*





# THE TIMELINE FOR THE FEAST



## **3-4 days before** your feast:

1. Decide on your menu. Will you make everything in this guide, or, just choose a few things?
2. Go shopping and gather all your ingredients.
3. If you are making homemade bone broth for the Butternut Squash Soup, go ahead and make it.

## **2-3 days before** your feast:

1. Make the Butternut Squash Soup. Store it in Mason jars in the refrigerator until you are ready to serve it.
2. If your Cornish hens are frozen, put them in the fridge to thaw. (Do this *two* days before cooking, not three.)

## **1-2 days before** your feast:

1. Go ahead and make the desserts.
2. Peel and chop any veggies that need to be peeled and chopped. Store them in an air tight container or ziplock bag in the refrigerator until you are ready to cook them.

## The **day before** your feast:

1. Make the Brussel Sprout Salad. Store it in an airtight container until you are ready to serve it.
2. Parboil your carrots and store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator until the day of the feast. Or, wrap them in a paper towel and put them in a gallon-size storage bag and refrigerate.

3. If you want to, you can go ahead and make the Citrus Roasted Beets and store them in airtight container in the refrigerator.
4. Go ahead and set the table. You can keep it simple and festive by decorating with eucalyptus, flowers, pine cones, pears and seasonal fruits.

## The day of the feast

hour by hour		
6 hours before	decorate and set the table	
4 hours before	make the <b>charcuterie board</b>	set the <b>charcuterie board</b> on the table for people to snack on as they arrive
3 hours before	take the <b>Brussel Sprout Salad</b> out of the refrigerator	
2 hours before	prep and cook the <b>Cornish hens</b>	
1 hours before	prep and cook the <b>Citrus Roasted Beets*</b>	
45 minutes before	Pour the <b>Butternut Squash Soup</b> into a 4 quart saucepan and heat it on low. Stir it every so often to keep it from scorching.	
30 minutes before	prep the <b>Maple Glazed Carrots</b> to be roasted	make the <b>Kale and Citrus Salad</b>
15 minutes before	rest the <b>Cornish hens</b>	roast the <b>Maple Glazed Carrots</b>
10 minutes before	* If you cooked the <b>Citrus Roasted Beets</b> the night before, reheat them for 7-10 minutes with the carrots.	



# THE SHOPPING LIST



*\*Some of these items (avocado oil, sea salt, pink pepper, onion powder, and garlic powder) are used in most of the recipes. One bottle, or, container of each should be enough for all the recipes.*

## **Cornish hens**

- Cornish hens (1/2- 1 per person)
- several sprigs of fresh rosemary (1/2 sprig per hen)
- several sprigs of fresh thyme (1 sprig per hen)
- lemons (1 for 4 hens)
- garlic cloves (1 clove per hen)
- shallots (1 for 4 hens)
- avocado oil\*
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*
- garlic powder\*
- onion powder\*

## **Maple Roasted Carrots**

- 1 pound organic carrots
- pure maple syrup
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*
- onion powder\*
- avocado oil\*

### **Citrus Roasted Beets**

- 4 large, organic red beets
- 3 small, organic navel oranges
- 1 bulb of fennel
- avocado oil\*
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*

### **Brussel Sprout Salad**

- 2, 10-12 oz. bags of shaved Brussel sprouts
- 1 shallot
- 2 apples (Pink Lady, or, Fuji)
- pecans (or some kind of nut)
- 1 pomegranate (or dried cranberries, or, dried tart cherries)
- 1 package prosciutto (or bacon)
- avocado oil\*
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*
- onion powder\*
- garlic powder\*
- olive oil
- 1 lemon

### **Citrus Kale Salad**

- 10 oz. baby kale
- 2 Ruby Red grapefruits
- 2 blood oranges
- olive oil
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*
- onion powder\*
- garlic powder\*

## Butternut Squash Soup

- 1 butternut squash
- 1 red onion
- sea salt\*
- pink pepper\*
- avocado oil\*
- onion powder\*
- garlic powder\*
- ground sage
- 4-6 cups chicken bone broth (homemade bone broth tastes the best)
- fresh sage leaves
- one small package of dry roasted hazelnuts
- coconut cream

**Charcuterie Board** (Here are some ideas. Choose your favorites.)

*Salty/Savory:*

- grain-free crackers (like Simple Mills)
- beet hummus
- pickles
- olives
- prosciutto
- salami
- Marcona almonds (Trader Joe's has Rosemary Marcona almonds and Truffle Marcona almonds that are so yummy!)
- cheese (dairy-free like Kite Hill, Miyokos, or, Treeline)
- radishes
- pistachios
- rosemary (this is really just for decoration)

*Sweet:*

- red grapes
- pomegranates
- pears
- apples
- kumquats



- persimmons
- clementines
- raspberries
- figs
- dates
- dried apricots
- honey comb
- dark chocolate
- dark chocolate covered almonds

### **Spiced Chocolate Cake**

- 1 pound finely ground, blanched almond flour (I like Bob's Red Mill, or, Trader Joe's)
- tapioca flour (I like Bob's Red Mill)
- cocoa powder
- baking soda
- fine grain sea salt
- 1 pound organic cane sugar (I like Trader Joe's, or, Whole Foods)
- ground cinnamon
- pasture raised eggs
- 1 package steamed beets (I like Love Beets organic cooked beets, or, Trader Joe's cooked beets)
- 2 cans coconut milk (I like Aroy-D coconut cream that comes in the white carton best. You can buy it on Amazon.)
- coconut oil
- coffee
- vanilla extract
- apple cider vinegar
- orange essential oils, or, orange extract
- 5 ounces dark chocolate (55%-72% I like Xocolatl's Peru or Nicaraguan bakers bars of chocolate, or, Enjoy Life Mini Chocolate Chips)

## **Chocolate Pot de Creme (sugar-free option)**

- 2 cans coconut cream (I like Aroy-D coconut cream that comes in the white carton best. You can buy it on Amazon.)
- tapioca flour (I like Bob's Red Mill)
- turbinado sugar\*
- cocoa powder
- 90 grams dark chocolate\*\* (I like Xocolatl's chocolate from Peru, or, Nicaragua)
- vanilla extract
- fine grain sea salt

\*use SweetLife stevia powder to make this sugar-free

\*\*use unsweetened chocolate, like Guittard unsweetened baking chocolate, to make a sugar-free version

## **Table decorations** (Here are some ideas. Choose your favorites.)

- eucalyptus
- flowers
- pears
- pomegranates
- pine cones



# THE MENU



**Starter:** *Charcuterie Board*

**Soup:** *Roasted Butternut Squash Soup*

**Main:** *Cornish Hens*

**Sides:** *Maple Glazed Carrots*

*Citrus Roasted Beets*

*Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad*

*Kale and Citrus Salad*

**Sweet Endings:** *Spiced Chocolate Cake*

*Chocolate Pot de Creme (sugar-free option)*







## **Charcuterie Board**

*When building a charcuterie board try to pick a balance of **flavors** (sweet vs. salty/savory), a variety of **textures** (crunchy vs. soft), and an array of **colors** (bright vs. dark). As a finishing touch, decorate with some sprigs of rosemary.*

Here is list of yummy things you could put on your charcuterie board. Pick your favorite things and build your own unique one.

### Salty/Savory:

- grain-free crackers (like Simple Mills)
- pickles
- olives
- prosciutto
- salami
- Marcona almonds
- cheese (dairy-free like Kite Hill, Miyoko's, or, Treeline)
- radishes
- pistachios

### Sweet:

- red grapes
- pomegranates
- pears
- apples
- kumquats
- persimmons
- clementines
- raspberries
- figs
- dates
- dried apricots
- honey comb
- dark chocolate, or, dark chocolate covered almonds

## ***Roasted Butternut Squash Soup***

*Serving soup at the beginning of meal is nice, but not necessary. If you don't have time, or, you want to simplify your menu go ahead and leave out the soup. But, if you want your feast to feel a little extra special here is a simple butternut squash soup that can be made 3-4 days in advance.*

- 1 butternut squash
  - 1 red onion
  - sea salt
  - pink pepper
  - avocado oil
  - 1/2 tsp onion powder
  - 1/4 tsp garlic powder
  - 1/2 tsp ground sage
  - 4-6 cups chicken bone broth (homemade bone broth tastes the best)
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- Toppings for the soup: dry roasted hazelnuts, chopped
  - crispy sage leaves (instructions below)
  - coconut cream

## **Directions for the Roasted Butternut Squash Soup:**

1. Preheat the oven to 400F.
2. Cut the butternut squash in half, lengthwise. Scoop out all the seeds and discard them.
3. Place each piece of butternut squash on either end of a baking sheet, flesh side up. Drizzle with avocado oil. Sprinkle with sea salt and pink pepper.
4. Chop the red onion into 1/2 inch pieces. Spread the onion evenly down the middle of the baking sheet. Drizzle with avocado oil. Sprinkle with sea salt and pink pepper.
5. Roast the vegetables for 35-40 minutes.
6. Allow to cool long enough to handle (about 10 minutes).
7. Scoop out all the flesh of the butternut squash and place it in a high powered blender.
8. Add 4 cups of bone broth, onion powder, garlic powder, ground sage and blend until completely smooth. (Add the remaining 2 cups of broth if you want the soup to be thinner. It will thicken some once you heat it.) Taste and add more sea salt and pink pepper according to your preference.
9. Pour the soup into a 3-4 quart saucepan and heat on low until it is completely warm.
10. Pour into bowls. Drizzle with a tablespoon of coconut cream (if desired), sprinkle with roasted hazelnuts, and add crispy sage leaves.
11. Serve warm.

## **Directions for crispy sage leaves:**

1. Heat 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil in a pan over medium heat.
2. Once the oil is hot, add several sage leaves. ( About 2 sage leaves for each bowl of soup. Don't overcrowd the pan.)
3. Fry the sage leaves until crispy, turning them over as needed. Sprinkle with a little sea salt.

## **Cornish Hens**

*We finally admitted we don't like turkey and made the switch to Cornish hens about 5 years ago. Whether it is Thanksgiving, Christmas, or something in between, Cornish hens are my family's favorite main dish to have at a holiday feast. They are not only delicious, flavorful, and moist, they are also soooooo much easier to cook than a turkey. Make Cornish hens instead of turkey – I'm giving you permission to break old traditions and start new ones.*

- Cornish hens (1/2- 1 per person)
- several sprigs of fresh rosemary (1/2 sprig per hen)
- several sprigs of fresh thyme (1 sprig per hen)
- lemons (1 for 4 hens)
- garlic cloves (1 clove per hen)
- shallots (1 for 4 hens)
- avocado oil
- sea salt
- pink pepper
- garlic powder
- onion powder



### **Directions for the Cornish Hens:**

1. Preheat the oven to 450F.
2. Rinse the Cornish hens and pat them dry. (Make sure to remove any giblets from the cavity while you are rinsing the hens.)
3. Place the Cornish hens on a foil lined baking sheet. Leave some space between the hens. (Overcrowding causes food to not cook or take much longer to cook.)
4. Cut each lemon into 4 wedges.
5. Smash each clove of garlic with the flat side of a Chef's knife and remove the skin.
6. Remove the skin of each shallot and cut each one into 4 pieces.
7. Cut each sprig of rosemary in half.
8. Stuff the cavity of each Cornish hen with a quarter of a lemon, a clove of garlic, a quarter of a shallot, half a sprig of rosemary, and 1 sprig of thyme.
9. Drizzle each Cornish hen with avocado oil. Liberally sprinkle each hen with sea salt, pink pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder.
10. Place in the oven and cook at 450F for 15 minutes.
11. Turn the oven down to 400F and continue to cook for 1 hour. (The internal temperature of the hens should be at least 160F and the juices should run clear once they are completely cooked.)
12. Remove from the oven. Loosely cover with foil and let rest for 5-10 minutes. Serve and enjoy.



## **Maple Glazed Carrots**

*These maple glazed carrots are colorful, flavorful and easy to make. They are parboiled (which can be done in advance), then broiled for 10-13 minutes (which can be done right before serving them).*

- 1 pound of organic carrots
- avocado oil
- sea salt
- pink pepper
- onion powder
- 1 Tbsp pure maple syrup (optional)



## **Directions for the Maple Glazed Carrots:**

1. Wash and scrub all the carrots. (No need to peel them if they are organic and thoroughly washed. The skin actually provides a lot of nutrients.)
2. Cut the ends off of the carrots. Cut the carrots in half lengthwise. (Cut them into quarters lengthwise if they are thick carrots.)
3. Place the carrots in a 10-12 inch saucepan (I use my 3-quart Lodge Dutch Oven). Add water until it comes halfway up the carrots.
4. Bring the water to a boil. Cover the carrots with a lid, lower the heat to medium, and cook for 2 minutes.  
*(You are parboiling the carrots, partially boiling. Parboiling softens the carrots and removes some of the moisture so, they can crisp up and roast quickly.)*
5. Remove the carrots from the pan, place them on a paper towel lined plate, and allow them to drain and cool for a few minutes.
6. Preheat the oven to a high broil.
7. Place the carrots on a baking sheet. Spread out the carrots so that, they brown well. (Overcrowding the baking sheet will cause the carrots to steam instead of roast.)
8. Drizzle the carrots with avocado oil. Liberally sprinkle the sea salt and pink pepper all over the carrots. Lightly sprinkle the onion powder over the carrots. Evenly drizzle the maple syrup over the carrots.
9. Broil the carrots for 10-13 minutes. (Watch the carrots. Each broiler is different and some work much faster than others. If your broiler tends to brown/burn things quickly, you may only need to cook the carrots for 7-8 minutes.)
10. Plate the carrots and serve warm.

## ***Citrus Roasted Beets***

*I love beets. They are so colorful. And the earthy, sweet flavor goes perfectly with oranges and fennel.*

- 4 large beets
- 3 small, organic navel oranges
- 1 bulb of fennel
- avocado oil
- sea salt
- pink pepper

### **Directions for the Citrus Roasted Beets:**

1. Preheat the oven to 400F.
2. Wash the beets, oranges, and fennel.
3. Peel the beets.
4. Trim the tops off the beets. Cut each beet into quarters. Cut the quarters into 1/2 inch slices.
5. Cut 1/2 inch off the ends of two oranges. Cut each orange into quarters. Thinly slice the quarters into 1/4 inch slices.
6. Trim the top and end off of the fennel. Cut it into quarters. Thinly slice each quarter into 1/4 inch strips.
7. Evenly spread the beets across a baking sheet.
8. Sprinkle the fennel around and over the beets.
9. Sprinkle the orange slices around and over the beets. (It is fine for the fennel and oranges to cover the beets a little.)
10. Cut the last orange in half and squeeze the juice from the orange all over the beets, oranges, and fennel.
11. Evenly drizzle avocado oil all over the beets, oranges, and fennel. Liberally sprinkle with sea salt and pink pepper.
12. Roast at 400F for 40-45 minutes.
13. Serve warm or at room temperature.



## ***Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad***

*Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad is a favorite of mine. I have been making it for every holiday gathering for about 7 years. It can be made the day before and is easily customizable.*

*The base is roasted brussel sprouts, fresh apples, shallots, and a fresh lemon vinaigrette.*

*To that you add something salty, like prosciutto or bacon crumbles. (You can use turkey bacon to keep it Kosher or Halal. You can also leave out the meat to have a vegetarian option for people).*

*Then something bright and tart with a bit of texture, like pomegranate seeds (you could sub the pomegranate seeds with something else like dried cranberries, or, dried tart cherries).*

*And finally, you add some kind of nut for texture and crunch. In this recipe I used pecans, but you could also use cashews or toasted hazelnuts. If you have friends or family members that are allergic to nuts, be sensitive to their needs. Either set aside some of the salad without nuts, or, leave the nuts out entirely.*

- 2, 10-12 oz packages of shaved brussel sprouts
- avocado oil
- sea salt
- pink pepper
- onion powder
- garlic powder
- 1 large shallot
- 2 small Fuji, or, Pink Lady apple
- 1/2 cup pecans
- seeds from 1/2 a pomegranate
- 2 slices of prosciutto



**Lemon Dressing:**

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp pink pepper
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp onion powder
- juice of half a lemon
- 1/2 tsp apple cider vinegar

**Directions for the Roasted Brussel Sprout Salad:**

1. Preheat the oven to 400F.
2. Spread the brussel sprouts on a baking sheet. Drizzle with avocado oil. Liberally sprinkle with sea salt and pink pepper. Lightly sprinkle with onion powder and garlic powder.
3. Roast for 40-45 minutes until crispy, but not burned.
4. Prepare the other ingredients while you allow the brussel sprouts to cool.
5. Cut the prosciutto into 1/2 inch ribbons.
6. Wash the apples and slice them into 1/4 inch slices.
7. Remove the skin of the shallot, cut off the bottom and slice it in half, lengthwise. Thinly slice the shallot into 1/8 inch slices.
8. Place the brussel sprouts, apple slices, shallot slices, prosciutto, pecans, and pomegranate seeds in a large bowl.
9. To make the Lemon Dressing: place all of the ingredients in a small mason jar. Screw on a lid and shake it until everything is completely mixed.
10. Pour the Lemon Dressing all over the brussel sprout salad and toss to coat the salad.
11. Place the brussel sprout salad in a serving bowl/dish. Serve at room temperature.



## ***Kale and Citrus Salad***

*This Salad is bright in flavor and color. And it takes less than 10 minutes to make.*

- 10 oz. baby kale
- 1 1/2 Ruby Red grapefruits
- 2 blood oranges
- olive oil (about 2 Tbsp)
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp pink pepper
- 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

### **Directions for the Kale and Citrus Salad:**

1. Place the kale in a large mixing bowl.
2. Drizzle with olive oil. Squeeze the juice of 1/2 a grapefruit all over the kale. Sprinkle the sea salt, pink pepper, onion powder, and garlic powder over the kale. Toss to combine.
3. Cut 1/2-1 inch off the ends of one grapefruit. (Cut enough off so that you see the fruit.)
4. Place one of the cut sides down on a chopping board and cut off all the peel. (Put your knife at the top of the peel and slice down and around, removing the peel but keeping as much fruit as possible. Almost like you are writing a backwards "C". Continue doing this all around the grapefruit until all the peel is removed.)
5. Cut the grapefruit into 1/2 inch pieces.
6. Cut 1/2-1 inch of the ends of both blood oranges. (Cut enough off so that you see the fruit.)
7. Place one of the cut sides down on a chopping board and cut off all the peel. (Put your knife at the top of the peel and slice down and around, removing the peel but keeping as much fruit as possible. Almost like you are writing a

8. backwards "C". Continue doing this all around the blood orange until all the peel is removed.)
9. Cut the blood oranges into 1/2 inch pieces.
10. Add the grapefruit and blood orange pieces to the kale. Toss to combine. Taste and add more seasonings as you like.
11. Place in a serving bowl and serve at room temperature.



## **Chocolate Spice Cake**

*I love a meal that ends with cake. This Spiced Chocolate Cake is **grain-free, gluten-free, and dairy-free**. Made in a bundt pan, it is a show stopper. It is a cake that even my gluten-eating/loving friends request. It can be made the day before, to make the day of the feast easy and stress-free.*

*You can also customize the flavor. Instead of orange and cinnamon, you can add peppermint for a delicious mint-chocolate cake. Just leave out the ground cinnamon. Sub the orange essential oil with peppermint essential oils, or, peppermint extract. Use the same amount of peppermint essential oils in both the cake and chocolate ganache.*

Dry ingredients:

- 3 cups almond flour
- 3/4 cup tapioca flour
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 tsp fine grain sea salt
- 1 1/2 cups cane sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

Wet ingredients:

- 3 eggs (room temperature)\*
- 1/2 cup pureed beets (steamed beets that have been pureed)\*\*
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 cup coconut oil, melted
- 1/3 brewed coffee (warm, but not hot)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 3/4 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 5 drops orange essential oils, or, 1/4 tsp orange extract



### **Directions for the cake:**

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Spray a bundt pan with avocado oil. (Make sure to get the oil in all the creases so that the cake comes out.)
2. In a large bowl, combine all the dry ingredients together. Whisk until well blended.
3. In a medium bowl, combine all the wet ingredients. Whisk until well blended.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and beat for 1-2 minutes (until completely mixed).
5. Pour the cake batter into the bundt pan and even it out. Bake for 45-50 minutes. (Insert a toothpick to check the doneness of the cake. The toothpick will have a few crumbs, but should not have any wet batter when the cake is ready.)
6. Remove the cake from the oven and allow it to cool in the pan for at least 10 minutes.
7. Flip the cake onto a large plate, or, cake stand. Allow to cool completely.
8. Once the cake is completely cool, pour the Chocolate Ganache (recipe following) all over it. Allow the ganache to set before serving.
9. Serve and celebrate!

\*The eggs and milk need to be at room temperature otherwise the coconut oil will solidify and mess up the texture of the cake. If you forget to take the eggs out early enough, place them in a bowl of hot water (from the tap hot, not boiling hot). Leave them in the water for at least 5 minutes and they will come to room temperature.

\*\*I use **Love Beets organic cooked beets**. You can also get steamed beets from Trader Joe's.

## ***Spiced Chocolate Ganache***

- 1 cup coconut cream
- 3/4 cup dark chocolate, chopped
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 4 drops orange essential oils, or 1/4 tsp orange extract
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon

### **Directions for the Spiced Chocolate Ganache:**

1. Heat the coconut cream until steaming (about 60-90 seconds in the microwave).
2. Place the chopped chocolate in a medium bowl. Pour the steaming coconut cream over the chocolate. Let it sit for 3-5 minutes.
3. Whisk the chocolate until it is completely smooth.
4. Add the vanilla, orange essential oil, and ground cinnamon. whisk until well incorporated.
5. Drizzle the ganache all over the cake.



## **Chocolate Pot de Creme**

**(with a sugar-free option)**

*Pot de Creme simply means “pots of cream”. These are so decadent and silky-smooth. They are easy to make and can be made 1-2 days in advance. There is also a sugar-free option so, that everyone (even people that can't eat sugar) can enjoy dessert.*

*This recipe makes 3 big servings (if served in 8 oz glasses or jars), or, 6-9 small servings (if served in 4 oz Ball jars).*

- 3 cups coconut cream
- 1 Tbsp tapioca flour
- 1/3 cup turbinado sugar\*
- 20 grams (1/4 cup) cocoa powder
- 90 grams (1/2 cup) dark chocolate, finely chopped\*\* (I like Xocolatl's 70% Peru Chocolate)
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1/4 tsp sea salt

*\*use 2 1/4 tsp of SweetLeaf stevia powder to make a sugar-free version*

*\*\*use unsweetened chocolate, like Guittard unsweetened baking chocolate, to make a sugar-free version*

**Directions for the Chocolate Pot de Creme:**

1. Mix tapioca flour with 1/4 cup of coconut cream. Set aside.
2. Mix remaining coconut cream, salt, and sugar (or stevia) in a 4-quart saucepan.
3. Heat on medium heat until boiling. Continue boiling for 3 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent scorching.
4. Whisk in the cocoa powder and continue to boil for 1 minute.
5. Remove from the heat and mix in the tapioca slurry, stirring constantly.
6. Return to the heat and cook until the mixture thickens like pudding (one minute).
7. Remove from heat and wait one minute. Add the chopped chocolate and vanilla. Let sit for 2-3 minutes.
8. Whisk until the chocolate is completely melted and mixture is smooth.
9. Pour into glasses or small mason jars. Cool to room temperature.
10. Cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.
11. To serve, top with whipped coconut cream and chocolate shavings.

*These are best eaten in 2-3 days. Keep them covered, or, the coconut cream can begin to dry out and harden.*

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Elisha Sewell is the creator of Eat it up Yum! Despite having Hashimoto's hypothyroidism, she lives a yummy and vibrant life without gluten, grains, or dairy. She lives in Atlanta with her beautiful family. They enjoy good food, lots of kombucha, riding bikes, being outdoors, and going on adventures together.