



The #FreeBassel Cookbook

First release: 15 March 2014

This book is dedicated to Bassel and Noura



The #FreeBassel Cookbook is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 License

Let's cook together and talk about Bassel Khartabil

Bassel is a distinguished computer engineer who, through his innovations in social media, digital education and open-source web software, is credited with opening up the Internet in Syria — a country with a notorious record of online censorship — and vastly extending online access and knowledge to the Syrian people. He was ranked by the American magazine Foreign Policy as the 19th most influential thinker in 2012 and awarded the Index on Censorship Digital Freedom Award in 2013. He was arrested by Assad's intelligence forces on March 15th 2012 and has since been detained without a formal charge or access to a lawyer. His voluntary work, always non-violent in nature, was greatly valued by Syrians of all backgrounds, and his arrest impedes the growth of online communities and stifles free expression in Syria.

Bassel has been instrumental in spreading the use of open web technologies and promoting advocacy for a free Internet and sharing culture worldwide. In addition to playing a crucial role in the translation and development of Creative Commons Arabic language licenses, he opened Aiki Lab, the first "hackerspace" in the Arab world, in Damascus in 2010. Aiki Lab provided a space and resources for people, especially youth, to develop their technological and creative skills through open source programming and cultural projects. Such work is imperative for the type of community building and empowerment that helps to build a strong, free, and modern country and acts as a counter to the often violent extremism that looms as a spectre for idle youth (and idle hands), by providing young people with access to tools that facilitate creative and critical thinking as well as civic and cultural engagement.

Bassel is sorely missed inside Syria as well as beyond it's borders. He must be freed. In order to secure his freedom, we must continue thinking "outside the box," and doing this thinking collectively. He once tweeted "Ideas hate conference rooms" -and in response, we propose that "Ideas thrive at the dinner table"

The #FreeBassel Cookbook is a collection of recipes from people who care about Bassel and would like to share a meal with him once he is free. It is also a tool that can be used to build community through the social event that is a shared meal. The recipes are a catalyst for conversation, action, and reflection. Thank you to all the contributors and supporters.

Please activate this book by making a recipe from this collection on this day (and beyond) in his honor and share it with people who you care about. Use the #FreeBassel hashtag to share ephemera from your meal, such as photos, videos, audio recordings, notes scribbled on napkins from the conversations you have, etc.

Repeat until Bassel is free.

With Love,

The Big Conversation Space
Niki Korth and Clémence de Montgolfier

THE #FREEBASSEL COOKBOOK IS SPONSORED
BY AERBOOK

AERBOOK IS A COMPLETE PUBLISHING PLATFORM THAT
LETS YOU SHARE AND SELL YOUR BOOKS ON THE SO-
CIAL WEB.

WE'RE DEDICATED TO BUILDING A DECENTRALIZED
ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING MARKETPLACE THAT RESPECTS
THE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHOR AND READ-
ER, AND TO MAKING SOPHISTICATED TOOLS AVAILABLE
TO EVERYONE.

THIS IS JUST ONE REASON THAT WE AT AERBOOK ARE
DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT BASSEL, AND SUPPORT-
ING THE EFFORTS TO FREE HIM. THOUGH WE'VE NEVER
MET PERSONALLY, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS WE'VE USED
THE THINGS HE'S BUILT AND GIVEN THE WORLD. IT'S UN-
THINKABLE THAT HE'S IN PRISON WHILE THE SPIRIT OF HIS
WORK FLOWS FREELY THROUGH SO MANY LIVES. WE
HOPE OTHERS WILL JOIN IN THE EFFORT TO SEE HIM RE-
LEASED INTO A WORLD HE'S SO ENRICHED.

Recipes

- 8 Oatmeal Pancakes
by Jon Phillips
- 10 Mash and Fish Fingers
by Gloria Chiang
- 12 "Raw" Kale "Chips"
by Mike Linksvayer
- 14 Mozzarella and Tomatoe Pie
by Clémence de Montgolfier
- 16 Roasted Eggplant
by Pete Ippel
- 18 Bombones de Quaker
by Guillermina
- 20 Croquants Corses
by Bagolina / Véronique Ginouvès
- 22 Bread Pudding
by Stephen

More Recipes

- 24 Pumpkin Pie
by Jon Phillips
- 26 Miyuk Gook (Korean Seaweed Soup)
by Laura
- 28 Quick Chocolate Fondant
by Melanie Dulong
- 30 Chickpea Curry from Dana
by Dana Trometer
- 32 Kinkade Smoothie
by Nathan Kinkade
- 34 Red Kubeh Soup
by Yael Zaken
- 38 Jambalaya with Chicken and Andouille
Sausage
by Marc Weidenbaum

Even More Recipes

- 40 Eggplant Moussaka
by Stephen
- 42 Shukshuka
by Niki Korth
- 44 Mushroom Polenta
by Elliot Harmon
- 46 Mom's Cannelloni
by Barry Threw
- 48 Tomato Egg Soup
by Rong Wang
- 50 Homemade Moon Sand
by Barry Threw
- 52 A Few of Bassel's Last Tweets Before He
Was Arrested - Dealing with the Subjects
of Food, Cooking, and Audio Books
by @basselsafadi

Oatmeal Pancakes

by Jon Phillips

This is one of my favorite foods, created by my grandma and passed down to my mom and then to me.

Bassel is my best friend.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 cups oatmeal (quick - uncooked)
- 1 cup flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Pour milk over oatmeal; let stand for short time.
2. Sift dry ingredients. Stir into milk-oat mixture.
3. Stir in oil and eggs.
4. Cook on hot, lightly greased griddle or fry pan until golden brown, turning only once.
5. Serve hot with syrup, jam, jelly, or preserves.

Makes 10-12 pancakes

Mash and Fish Fingers

by Gloria Chiang

I used to add loads of butter thinking that was how you made it nice and creamy, until Vincent showed me how to make it British style. Mash and fish fingers will always remind me of the kindness that Vincent had showed me during the cold, rainy days in London.

Bassel means a lot to Jon and Jon's my buddy.

INGREDIENTS

- Potatoes
- Butter
- Milk
- Garlic
- Fish fingers
- Salt
- Black pepper
- Parsley

DIRECTIONS

1. Chop garlic finely.
2. Boil potatoes.
3. Add a dollop of butter to mash and a few tablespoons of milk to desired consistency.
4. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Top off with some parsley flakes.
6. Serve with toasted fish fingers.

"Raw" Kale "Chips" by Mike Linksvayer

Junk food that might not reduce your DALYs.

Probably 50th cousin or nearer, as with all humans.

rel=""met""

1 hop (Jon Phillips and others) FoaF. Probably would be 0 hop by now had Basel remained free. Free him already!

"RAW" KALE "CHIPS"

INGREDIENTS

- Curly kale
- Nutritional yeast
- Olive oil
- Salt and other spices as you will

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut/tear kale into chip-sized pieces.
2. Put pieces in dehydrator.
3. Dehydrate until crispy as desired (duration depends on dehydrator; check occasionally first time).
4. Gently toss in large bowl with nutritional yeast, olive oil, spices.
5. Consume.

Alternate directions: buy single serving package from store for about US\$8.

Mozzarella and Tomato Pie

by Clémence de Montgolfier

A pie is very easy and fast to make during weeknights at home, and you can change the garnishing with whatever you like, fresh vegetables, different cheese more or less strong... A dish my mother would typically make and that I have now taken on. I want to contribute simple and good food that I usually share with my loved one in everyday life.

I have never met Bassel but have heard about his work through friends and artistic projects related to the Internet. I think he should be a #FreeBassel.

INGREDIENTS

- 300 grams of flour
- 150 grams of butter
- A spoon of salt
- Half a glass of water
- Two tomatoes
- 120 grams of mozzarella di buffala
- Fresh basil
- French mustard (Moutarde de Dijon)
- Three eggs
- Half a glass of milk or whipped cream
- Salt and Pepper.

DIRECTIONS

1. Start by preparing the crust: The butter should be put out of the fridge for about one hour, or put into the microwave for one minute. It should not be too liquid, but soft. Put the flour with the salt together in a bowl, and incorporate the butter by mixing it with your hands. You should obtain a sort of semolina within about three minutes.
2. Quickly add the water and continue to mix in order to obtain a dough. You can then spread it with a rolling pin onto baking paper. Once it is the size you want, put it into an appropriate cooking dish and into the oven at about 200 °C while you prepare the rest of the food.
3. Cut the tomatoes, basil and mozzarella into thin slices. In another bowl, break the three eggs and mix them. Add the milk or cream and salt and pepper and mix again.
4. Then you might have to wait for 5 to 10 minutes maximum to let the crust bake a little bit more (otherwise it will be too soft). After that, take the dish out of the oven, and with a knife, spread a thin layer of mustard of Dijon on the bottom of the crust. Then, display the tomatoes and mozzarella in circular rows alternating between one and the other. Add the basil on top all over the dish. After that, pour the mix of milk and eggs on top of the preparation, it should cover all the crust at this point.
5. Put into the oven for about thirty minutes (check on it every ten minutes, it may be more or less depending on how big your pie is). It is nice to eat with a salad and some tabasco if you like spices. Enjoy !

Roasted Eggplant

by Pete Ippel

Well, I too have little patience for cooking but when roasting, you just set the oven bake the food, then can go back to the computer and wait till the timer goes off. Easy, super affordable, and nutritious. I've had my friends who are actually more talented say that this is the best eggplant they've ever had.

#FREEBASSEL

I have been advocating for Bassel by helping make content for the #FREEBASSEL campaign since the beginning of his detainment. In addition I am affiliated with Fabricatorz and Openclipart and know Mr. Khartibil's work through the software back end of those sites that Bassel helped develop. I appreciate Bassel's capacity to make and share and want his freedom immediately.

INGREDIENTS

- Eggplant
- Salt
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Fresh thyme sprigs or other spices of your choice
- Lemon wedges or a vinaigrette for serving (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Tip: Salt first for less oily eggplant and reduce its ability to absorb oil by salting the cut flesh and letting it sit for 30 min. or more. Then drain, pat dry, and proceed with cooking.
2. Wipe the eggplant clean and slice them in half lengthwise. With the tip of a knife, score the flesh deeply in a diamond cross-hatch pattern by making two or three long cuts, cutting at a steep angle, and then rotating the eggplant to make another set of similar cuts. Press on the edges of the halves to open the cuts and sprinkle salt over the surface and into the cuts. Set aside, cut side up, for 30 min. Heat the oven to 400°F. Lightly oil a cookie sheet
3. Over the sink, gently squeeze the eggplant to extract the salty juice. Brush each half thoroughly with olive oil. Arrange each half, cut side down, on top of a sprig or two of thyme (or other spices) on the baking sheet.
4. Roast for 1 hour. The eggplant will collapse and the bottoms will be a deep brown caramel color. Let cool considerably before handling, at least 20 min. Gently turn the cut side up. If serving as a side dish, serve with a lemon wedge for squeezing or drizzle with vinaigrette.
5. Yum. Many thanks to Fine Cooking adapted from http://www.finecooking.com/recipes/oven_roasted_eggplant.aspx

Bombones de Quaker

by Guillermina

To be honest, I do not really eat these bonbons often. But I love them and thought that Bassel would like to try them since they are very very tasty and easy to make.

Plus, we are both from different worlds and this Argentine recipe seems to be a variation of another recipes from another countries, like Havregrynskugler or the Arak balls.

My relation to Bassel? Hmmmm...I guess it became a bit more personal after the hunger strike campaign. My first dream last year, on the first night, was that I was visiting Bassel and his wife Noura in Damascus. To my surprise, I was introduced to Jonathan. His chubby hands. Adorable.

I feel so many regrets every time I see his photo. I am glad that Bassel is alive because I personally believe that as long as a person is breathing, there is hope. People like him give me hope. Syrians like him give us hope. Which is, I imagine, precisely why he is still in jail.

I do not know if there is ever going to be a Jonathan, but I am certain we all are going to celebrate his release soon.

INGREDIENTS

- Butter 200g
- Rolled oats 250g
- Cocoa powder 200g
- Dulce de Leche 2 spoonfuls
- Vanilla extract a spoonful
- Disseccated coconut

DIRECTIONS

1. Melt the butter and then you just have to mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Make sure that there are no pockets of oat left.
2. Form into small balls by pressing the dough together and rolling in your hands. Roll each ball in the disseccated coconut. Put them covered in the fridge for two hours so that they become firmer.

Croquants Corses

by Bagolina / Véronique Ginouvès

Ces gâteaux sont mangés par les bergers corses dans la nature, au milieu des forêts, avec un regard sur la mer, comme une douceur dans un repas frugal. J'aimerais pouvoir en apporter à Bassel, j'ai goûté des délicieux gâteaux en Syrie avant que le pays bascule dans l'horreur, je sais que pour fêter sa sortie on en cuisinera de nouveaux !

Un frère, un ami, un collègue... il faut qu'il soit libéré de cette horreur.

INGREDIENTS

- 500g flour
- 350g brown sugar
- 350g whole almonds
- some gram of anise-corn
- If you like, some white wine
- If not use orange water
- 3 eggs
- Little glass of olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. First you have to beat the eggs (like an omelette).
2. Then add the sugar, beat, the flour and the orange water (or wine), the oil and at the end the almonds.
3. Do a sausage and put it all in the oven like 15 minutes (look at it).
4. Cut in slices when you get it out and eat it when it is cooled down.

Bread Pudding

My grandmother's simple bread pudding was the first food I
can remember craving.

Bassel is a friend of a friend.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups of bread, ripped up
- 1.5 cups milk
- 0.25 cup margarine or butter
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 0.5 cups sugar
- 0.25 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla

DIRECTIONS

1. Put the bread in a big bowl.
2. Melt the margarine and mix in milk.
3. Then the eggs, then everything else.
4. Pour it over the bread.
5. Put a pan of water on the lowest rack in a 350°F oven.
6. Put bread mixture in a dish and lightly cover with foil -- place on the middle rack, above water & bake for about 45 minutes - 1 hour

Pumpkin Pie

by Jon Phillips

This is one of my favorite foods on Earth - created by my grandma and passed down to my mom.

Bassel is my best friend.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 15 oz. can pumpkin
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 heaping teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 1/2 to 1 2/3 cans of milk (measured in pumpkin can)

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix ingredients on low speed.
2. Pour into two pastry shells.
3. Bake 15 minutes at 400 degrees F.
4. Then 45 minutes at 350 degrees F.
5. Pie is done when knife is inserted in middle of pie and comes out clean.

Makes 2 pies.

Miyuk Gook (Korean Seaweed Soup)

by Laura

Seaweed soup is known as the 'birthday soup' in Korea although it is good for any day. Every year, on my birthday, my mother would prepare this soup in celebration. Also, it is a nutritious soup that women who are recovering from childbirth have. I would like to share this recipe that is part of a yearly ritual and represents a bright new beginning.

My friend has introduced me to Bassel's story and I was inspired to contribute.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 batch of dried seaweed
- 1 table spoon of sesame oil
- 2 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 pieces of finely chopped garlic
- Salt, pepper
- Beef/dried anchovy/oyster - based on the broth of preference

DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse and rehydrate seaweed by placing in a large bowl with warm water (Note: 1 oz of dried seaweed looks very small, but it rehydrates to about 2 cups) for about 30 minutes or more
2. Heat up a pot and put beef or stock base of choice with sesame oil, garlic and cook until the outer part of the meat isn't red.
3. Pour 3 cups of water into the pot.
4. Drain seaweed, squeeze out excess water and put it in the pot.
5. Pour in soy sauce.
6. When soup begins to boil, turn down to simmer and cook for 20 minutes.
7. Taste and put in more soy sauce or salt.

Quick Chocolate Fondant

by Melanie Dulong

This chocolate cake is rather quick to make and much yummier than ready-made ones. Also, there are not a lot of dishes to wash, all the more as it is delicious to eat the leftover melted chocolate from the saucepan and the bowl with your fingers.

I know Basel through the Creative Commons community.

INGREDIENTS

- 200 grams of dark chocolate for dessert (the one designed to melt)
- 100 grams of butter
- 3 eggs
- 50 grams of flour
- 80 grams of sugar

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan, place the chocolate and the butter, broken into pieces.
2. Boil water in a larger saucepan.
3. Put the small saucepan inside the larger saucepan and continue to cook so that the chocolate and butter will melt slowly and won't stick.
4. Preheat the oven thermostat 7 (200°C)
5. Mix eggs, sugar and flour in a bowl.
6. Add the melted chocolate mixture and mix again.
7. Pour into greased and floured cakepan.
8. Cook in the oven for 15 minutes.
9. The outside should look cooked but the heart will be undercooked and melt.
10. Eat lukewarm.

If you want a sauce, mix strawberries, raspberries or mango to pour over the cake.'

Chickpea Curry from Dana by Dana Trometer

I love this dish, and once you are out I am going to cook it for
you.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- 1 fresh tomato, chopped
- 1 x 400g/14oz can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 5cm/2in piece root ginger, grated
- Pinch of garam masala
- Pitta breads or plain basmati rice, to serve

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat a deep saucepan or a medium sized wok and add the oil or butter followed by the onions and garlic.
2. Fry the mixture till the onions are caramelised.
3. Then add the salt, cumin, coriander, turmeric and red chilli powders.
4. Mix for a minute and tip in the tomato.
5. Cook the sauce until it begins to thicken.
6. Add 1 cup of water and stir.
7. Then tip in the chickpeas and spice mixture.
8. Mash a few of the chickpeas while cooking.
9. Cover and simmer for five minutes.
10. Then add the ginger and the garam masala.
11. Cook for another minute.

Serve with pitta breads or plain basmati rice.

Kinkade Smoothie

by Nathan Kinkade

Jon is a big fan of this smoothie and asked me to contribute it here. I'm not sure if it's unique enough to deserve a recipe, nor do I really have a recipe. :-) I just dump things I like into a blender.

I used to be the sysadmin at Creative Commons. I met Bassel through Jon. I corresponded with Bassel on various occasions (mostly with regard to Aiki Framework), but the only time I ever met him in person was in Warsaw during the CC Global Summit of 2011.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small banana
- 1 small apple (or half a large one)
- 0.5 cups blueberries (frozen or fresh)
- 0.5 cups strawberries (frozen or fresh)
- 2 tbsp peanut butter
- 1 tbsp flax oil
- 1 tbsp coconut oil (optional)
- Enough water to gain desired consistency - If I'm adding the ingredients directly to the blender, then I fill with water to just below the level of the ingredients. You can optionally use any sort of "milk" if you like a heavier, richer flavor (e.g. cow milk, soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, coconut milk, etc.)

DIRECTIONS

1. Add everything to a blender.
2. Blend until mixed and at desired consistency.

Red Kubeh Soup

by Yael Zaken

The story I'd like to share is embedded in my discussion of the ingredients and the cooking procedure.

Bassel is a friend of a friend and I want him to be free.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium onions, diced
- 5 – 6 beets, chopped into large dice
- 1 bunch green (Swiss) chard, chiffonaded
- Other vegetables of your choice, such as sweet potato, carrot, celery, pumpkin, squash or zucchini.
- Chicken stock
- 1 small can tomato paste
- 1 – 2 tbsp sweet paprika
- 2 – 5 tbsp sugar
- 1 – 2 tbsp lemon salt (citric acid)
- Salt and freshly-ground pepper to taste
- Olive oil
- Kubbeh

A FEW NOTES ON THE INGREDIENTS

SPICES: You may have noticed my spice measurements are vague at best. I find that it's mostly useless to give exact measurements when it comes to soup. Water varies, stocks vary, paprika varies, vegetables vary heavily in flavor depending on season and origin; and it all conspires to render exactitude futile. Season as you go. When it's right, you'll know.

LEMON SALT: A somewhat less unnerving name for citric acid in its crystalline form. This stuff is highly concentrated sour; it's wildly popular in Mediterranean cooking, but for some reason uncommon in the West. Note that, name aside, this is citric acid (C₆H₈O₇), not salt (NaCl) with lemon flavoring. It is not that "sal con limon" you find sometimes, it is not Giada De Laurentiis, or Sicilian Sea Salt with Fresh Lemon Zest (yeesh), it is this right here. Buy online or head to a Mediterranean market or health food store.

Red Kubbeh Soup (continued)

by Yael Zaken

Use real chicken stock. Not from a can. Or use water. Don't be an Israeli and use Osem powdered parve non-chicken "consomme" to flavor everything. It's lazy and it makes what would be great food just that much worse.

DIRECTIONS

1. In a 12 quart stockpot (or, you know, whatever), heat up several tablespoons of olive oil. Saute the onions until translucent.
2. Add the beets. Stir mightily. Dig that neat color the beets turn the onions. Cook a couple minutes more.
3. Add the carrots and cook for another minute or two, then add tomato paste. Stir more. Cook another couple minutes, making sure not to let the paste burn.
4. Add enough chicken stock to fill the pot. If you don't have quite enough, you can top it off with water. Not the end of the world. Don't add any stock powder or bouillon cubes. Seriously. Don't.
5. Add all your seasonings, the chard, and long-cooking vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.) Save quicker-cooking root vegetables (like sweet potatoes) for a bit later. Simmer uncovered until the carrots are nearing doneness. Keep tasting and seasoning as you go. It should be sweet, sour and savory in about equal measures. Sort of like tomato soup but...you know...Jewish.
6. Once carrots are nearly cooked, add the quicker-cooking root vegetables. Continue simmering. Usually, I wind up simmering for a couple hours, give or take, from beginning to end. You want the liquid to reduce a bit to further concentrate the flavors.
7. Once all your vegetables are at their appropriate level of doneness, it's time to add the kubbeh you worked so hard to make. However many you want: They float. Cool, huh? Continue simmering with the kubbeh for another twenty minutes. Make sure the seasoning is how you want it.
8. After the twenty minutes of kubbeh-simmerin', remove the soup from heat and let it cool. Then refrigerate it overnight. The flavors develop and the kubbeh get a chance to become completely saturated through-and-through with the broth, making them ridiculously delicious. Texturally, and flavor-wise, they're more like massive meatballs than dumplings. Once the next day rolls around, reheat the soup and savage it like you want to.

Jambalaya with Chicken and Andouille Sausage by Marc Weidenbaum

We lived in New Orleans from August 1999 to August 2003. Jambalaya was a favorite dish of ours, though we probably ate as much Vietnamese food than we did Creole food in our time there. Anyhow, this recipe has been slowly revised since then, and it's pretty finalized in this version. It's really important that the chicken is thighs.

The Disquiet Junto music community, which I moderate, did a project in early 2014 where we composed music to accompany the CGI renditions of Bassel's Palmyra project. We imagined what the ancient soundscape was like, in the hopes of keeping his work alive and moving forward.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 12oz package andouille sausages, cut into disks or half disks
- 1 lb. boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1-2 tbsp oil (depending on how much is left from meat)
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 2 cups yellow onions, diced
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 can (14.5 oz.) chopped tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 cups white rice
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp salt (for later in process)
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper (for later in process)
- 1 cup green onions, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, sauté sausage and chicken until slightly browned. If needed, use a splash of vegetable oil to sauté. Remove meat from pan and use remaining oil in pan to sauté vegetables.
2. In same skillet, sauté the following until vegs are soft: the oil, bell pepper, celery, yellow onions, salt, and cayenne pepper
3. Add the following and sauté for 2 minutes: tomatoes, bay leaves, garlic powder.
4. Stir in the rice and sauté for 2 minutes.
5. Add the following (along with the sautéed sausage and chicken set aside earlier) and bring to a boil: chicken stock, thyme, salt, and cayenne pepper.
6. Then cover and reduce to a simmer. Cook, covered, for 30 minutes or until liquid is absorbed:
7. Stir in the green onions and serve.

Eggplant Moussaka

by Stephen

It takes a while to cook, which leaves plenty of time for great conversations! If you cook this in enough oil, it's basically delicious looking junk food.

I have never met Bassel, but we are both fans of Creative Commons and open source. I look forward to the day we can meet.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large zucchini, sliced
- 2 potatoes, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 1 can whole peeled tomatoes, chopped
- 1/2 can lentils, drained (save the juice)
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- Crumbled feta cheese
- Salt and pepper
- Sauce
- 2 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- Black pepper
- 2+ conversationalists, eager to discuss artificial intelligence

DIRECTIONS

1. Sprinkle eggplant slices with salt, and wait 30 minutes, then rinse and pat dry.
2. Preheat oven to 380 degrees (F).
3. Heat oil in pan over medium heat -- brown eggplant, zucchini, and potato slices on both sides.
4. Sauté onion and garlic until lightly browned, pour over vinegar and reduce.
5. Stir in tomatoes, lentils, 1/2 juice from lentils, oregano, parsley
6. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes
7. Layer eggplant, zucchini, potatoes, onion, and feta. Pour tomato mixture over the vegetables
8. Repeat step 7 ... until you finish with a layer of eggplant and zucchini
9. Cover and bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes
10. Meanwhile... combine butter, flour, and milk in a small saucepan; bring to a boil while whisking until thick;
11. Season with pepper and nutmeg, cool for 5 minutes, and stir in beaten egg
12. Pour sauce over vegetables, and sprinkle parmesan cheese.
13. Bake, uncovered, for another 25-30 minutes

Shukshuka

by Niki Korth (with Lisa & Yael)

After eating this Shukshuka, I feel as if I'm ready to take on anything: I could work all day building a house, plowing a field, hauling around heavy objects, analyzing complex data sets that hold answers to questions that haven't yet been asked...

This idea of a food that yields the-energy-it-takes-to-build-something-vast is an idea I associate with Bassel, so it seemed a fitting contribution to this collection. And it takes strength to build freedom, and I want him to be free.

I've never met Bassel, but in 2011 I communicated with him via email and Skype when he participated (remotely) in a panel at an art-technology event I co-organized in San Francisco. Since learning of his arrest, I've worked with the #FreeBassel campaign to produce media about him and collect letters from his friends and supporters to send to him and various other tasks related to keeping him in the public eye and calling for his release.

It's a strange way to "get to know someone," but through this process I've grown to consider both Bassel and his wife Noura to be my friends. I think of them both everyday, and I dream of the day that they will be able to share a meal together. Someday, I hope to make this Shukshuka for them.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium onion, peeled and diced
- 1 green or red bell pepper chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
- 5 Anaheim chiles or 3 jalapeños, stemmed, seeded, and finely diced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbs paprika, smoked or sweet
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds, crushed
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, crushed, or 3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- Fresh parsley
- 2 pounds (1kg) ripe tomatoes, cored and diced, or two 14-ounce cans of diced or crushed tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1 teaspoon red wine or cider vinegar
- 1 cup (20g) loosely packed greens, such as radish greens, watercress, kale, Swiss chard, or spinach, coarsely chopped
- 4 ounces (about 1 cup, 115g) feta cheese, cut in generous, bite-sized cubes
- 4 to 6 eggs

DIRECTIONS

1. In a wide skillet, heat the olive oil over medium high heat.
2. Add the onions and the garlic and cook for 5 minutes, until soft and wilted.
3. Add the chile pepper, the salt, pepper, and spices. Cook for a minute, stirring constantly, to release their fragrance.
4. Add the fresh or canned tomatoes, tomato paste, honey, and vinegar, reduce the heat to medium, and cook for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened somewhat but is still loose enough so that when you shake the pan it sloshes around. (Fresh tomatoes may take a little longer to cook than canned.)
5. Stir in the chopped greens.
6. Turn off the heat and press the cubes of feta into the tomato sauce.
7. With the back of a spoon, make 6 indentations in the sauce. Crack an egg into each indentation, then drag a spatula gently through the egg whites so it mingles a bit with the tomato sauce, being careful not to disturb the yolks.
8. Turn the heat back on so the sauce is at a gentle simmer, and cook for about 10 minutes, taking some of the tomato sauce and basting the egg whites from time-to-time. Cover, and cook 3 to 5 minutes, until the eggs are cooked to your liking.

Mushroom Polenta

by Elliot Harmon

I chose this recipe because it takes a long time to make, so it's kind of boring when you're alone. But it's extremely easy to make, meaning it's perfect if you're cooking for someone else and they can sit and talk with you while you're cooking. Some of my favorite conversations have been around a kitchen while someone is making dinner; it's where you have time to think things through.

I've never met Bassel, but as communications person for Creative Commons, I've learned a lot about him in the past two years and met a lot of people who are close to him. To me, his story is a reminder that our work in the open movement isn't an intellectual exercise: there are places in the world where a free and open Internet is a matter of life and death.

A few nights before he was put in prison, Bassel wrote a funny string of tweets sarcastically suggesting that people should eat more junk food because cooking takes too long and audiobooks are all boring. It was a silly joke, but when he wrote it, he knew that he and many of his friends were in serious danger. He understood - more than most of us do - that how you choose to spend your time matters.

There are lots of recipes like this one on the internet. The one I first discovered that this one is most closely based on is from eatingcleveland.com.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups coarsely ground cornmeal (this seems to be labeled as different things in different places - look for grits, corn grits, or just polenta)
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 or 3 cups of mushrooms (whatever kind are in season; I like it with shitakes)
- 1 cups veggie broth (I always just use the cubes)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. Cut the mushrooms into little pea-sized pieces.
3. Boil 6 cups of water in a saucepan. Mix in the salt. Bring down to a simmer.
4. Heat up the veggie broth.
5. Pour in about a third of the cornmeal. Stir until it gets a nice pasty texture.
6. Over the next ten minutes or so, continue to stir while gradually pouring in the rest of the cornmeal. Keep stirring so that it doesn't get lumpy.
7. Keep stirring. Total time is about another 15 minutes or so after you've finished pouring in the cornmeal. The way to tell when you're done is that it gets a lot thicker. If you draw a line through it with the spoon, it will stay separated.
8. While you're doing that, you can also cook the mushrooms in a separate pan. Pour a little of the broth on at a time.
9. When the polenta is done, turn off the heat and mix in the butter.
10. Coat a casserole dish with oil. (I just realized how many dishes this recipe uses. That's another way that it takes too long.) Dish in half of the polenta, then the mushrooms in the middle, then the other half of the polenta.
11. Sprinkle the cheese on top and put it in the oven.
12. Check on it in 20 minutes. It should be firm, but still juicy inside.
13. Sometimes I'll serve it with pasta sauce on top, depending what else I'm making.

If it's your main course, I'd say this recipe serves four. If it's a side dish, you could cut it into 6-8 nice little pieces.

Mom's Cannelloni

by Barry Threw

Bassel is my friend. I chose this recipe because I thought he would enjoy it.

INGREDIENTS/PROCESS

CREPES

- Crepes
- 1 Cup Milk
- 2 Cups Flour
- 1 Cup Water
- 1 tsp salt
- 4 eggs

FILLING

- Chicken, cooked and cooled
- 1 pound of ricotta cheese
- 1 Cup Mozzarella cheese
- 1 Cup Fontina or Monterey Jack cheese
- Roux – (3 TBS butter & 3 TBS flour)
- 2 Cups milk
- 1-1/2 tsp salt (I usually use less)
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1-1/4 Cups Parmesan Cheese
- 2 egg yolks

BASIL TOMATO SAUCE (I usually double this)

- 1 Cup butter
- 1 Cup onions (I like them diced fairly small)
- 3 8-ounce cans of tomato sauce
- 1 TBS Beau Monde Seasoning (this is hard to find but makes this dish what it is, can't make it without it)
- 3 TBS Parsley – finely chopped
- 1 tsp Sweet Basil

SAUCE DIRECTIONS:

Melt butter, sauté onions.
Add seasonings and tomato sauce,
simmer gently for 20 minutes.

FINAL ASSEMBLY:

Pour some sauce in bottom of glass baking dish, place cannelloni in the dish and pour some more sauce over the cannelloni. Sprinkle with grated Monterey cheese and bake at 325 F for 25-30 minutes. Watch that it bubbles but does not get brown.

CREPES DIRECTIONS:

Whir in blender and let stand in refrig for several hours.

These are very tricky to make. I use an omelet pan, brush with olive oil between crepes, medium to fairly hot in temp, and pour about 1/8 cup of batter in and rotate pan very quickly to spread batter evenly around pan then cook until edges turn slightly up, turn crepe over and cook very slightly until done. You want them cooked but only slightly brown to not brown at all. In early days I'd go through half the batter before I started to get them right and have to make a double batch, now I have it down to a science.

FILLING DIRECTIONS:

I usually poach the chicken in chicken broth but have used water too. Cook until done (not pink) but not tough. I shred/cut up so meat is fairly small.

1. Make a Roux – 3 TBS butter, 3 TBS flour – cook over low heat until well blended and flour is cooked but don't let it brown. Add 2 cups of milk slowly and whisk constantly while cooking over low to medium heat. Don't let it scorch or boil. Mixture will thicken. You will know it's done when it's about the constancy of heavy cream or slightly thicker.
2. Mix in the Parmesan cheese and then let mixture cool.
3. Combine in a separate bowl – ricotta cheese and egg yolks. Blend well. Then stir in the mozzarella cheese and chicken.
4. Blend in the cooled milk mixture.

Roll the mixture into crepes. I store these covered in refrig or freeze if I don't plan to make and serve right away. Cover them well so they don't dry out. I also put them all together with sauce and freeze that way too.

Tomato Egg Soup

by Rong Wang

This is a traditional homemade Chinese soup. If Bassel was not in prison, I wish he could visit China and enjoy a nice warm meal with us. This is the least we can do to thank him for his contributions to free knowledge and to show our hospitality and warmth. I remember how much he liked traveling and experiencing different cultures!

However, what I really want to tell with this recipe is: What we want is as simple as how we make this soup. We want to #freebassel! Simple as that! Hope to see you soon, Bassel!

I know Bassel through mutual colleagues and friends.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 3 tomatos
- Some spring onion
- Water
- Lots of love!

DIRECTIONS

1. Use the pot to boil the water with a drop of vegatable oil
2. Chop tomatos into small pieces and add them into the pot; turn down the heat to medium
3. Crack and whip the eggs in a bowl; slowly pouring them into the pot and moving the bowl clockwise along the pot to make sure the eggs solve into the soup evenly
4. Add spring onion and salt

Homemade Moon Sand

by Barry Threw

Bassel is my friend and I thought he would enjoy this recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups of play sand (I got a 50lb bag from Lowes, it was \$4.99 plus tax)
- 3 cups of cornstarch (most Dollar Stores carry it for \$1 per box...you'll need around 24 boxes for the whole 50lbs!)
- 1 1/2 cups of cold water

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix the water and cornstarch together thoroughly, this will take a few minutes to get it nice and smooth.
2. Gradually mix in the sand, one cup at a time. You'll need to really work it in with your fingers.
3. Step three: Play with it!
4. When you're all done, pop it in an airtight container.
5. When you next play with it, you'll need to revive it with 2-3 tablespoons of water. Just sprinkle it over and work it.



Bassel Safadi @basselsafadi · 7 Mar 2012

Listening to audio books made me realize how much time I spend making food and washing dishes afterward. Long live junk food!

Collapse

[↩ Reply](#) [↻ Retweet](#) [★ Favorite](#) [⋮ More](#)

3:17 PM - 7 Mar 2012 · Details

Reply to @basselsafadi



Bassel Safadi @basselsafadi · 7 Mar 2012

I don't get what is wrong with eating bad junky food all the time! benefits include dying earlier and saving at least 2 hours a day

Collapse

[↩ Reply](#) [↻ Retweet](#) [★ Favorite](#) [⋮ More](#)

3:21 PM - 7 Mar 2012 · Details

Reply to @basselsafadi



Bassel Safadi @basselsafadi · 7 Mar 2012

not to mention listening to less full of crap audio books. I think any book that have an audio version is full of crap

Collapse

[↩ Reply](#) [↻ Retweet](#) [★ Favorite](#) [⋮ More](#)

3:23 PM - 7 Mar 2012 · Details

Reply to @basselsafadi



Bassel Safadi @basselsafadi · 7 Mar 2012

the best way to find if book is worth reading is by finding if it has an audio version. if it does then it's not worth the time

Collapse

[↩ Reply](#) [↻ Retweet](#) [★ Favorite](#) [⋮ More](#)

3:26 PM - 7 Mar 2012 · Details

Reply to @basselsafadi

IF Bassel is right and ideas do hate conference rooms, then let's move them to the dinner table, and discuss how to get him out.