

TOAD IN THE HOLE

By Mikayla Stock

As a young child, I had a general distaste for a very particular set of foods. There was no chance of my parents getting me to eat white fish, deli meat, or cheese on pizza; although, I somehow had it in me to praise mussels like they were candy and munch on raw veggies until I nearly became one. My relationship with food was one of randomness, the framing of which was solely based on whether what I was eating offended my tongue. At this young age of mine, my brother Adam was a new chef fresh out of culinary school with an endless appreciation for the things I had yet to understand. His relationship with food was full, complete, and built on the idea of it as some near religious experience. In the nature of most great chefs, you could say Adam is more so consumed by food than the other way around. Despite my refusal of certain bites from my parents, there was absolutely nothing he could make me that I wouldn't eat with a goofy smile and loads of pride.

Recently, I remembered a breakfast he would make for me in the early days of my discovery of culinary as an art form: the buttery, eggy, salty, rather simplistic creation of toad in the hole. It's not like this piece of toast-egg-holding-contraption thing was particularly exciting in my mouth. In all honesty, it tastes exactly like what it is—an egg in bread. But it's the other senses it would cater to that made this meal a guiding force in developing my relationship with food. The smell of toasty sourdough meant I was getting to hang out with my favorite person. The sound of a crackly, popping egg dancing in the pan was overpowered by laughter that only siblings could produce. The sight of the dim stove light and bright yellow yolk shining below evoked the utmost comfort and joy. The feeling of melted butter coating my fingertips with each bite was a reminder that nothing had to be perfect to be extraordinary. Through the consumption of this darling little treat, I grew to know food as the catalyst of love, memory, and connection. It is the ultimate driver of the human journey. I will never be able to thank Adam enough for leading me to that realization.



Toad in the Hole Recipe

Yield: 1 serving
Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:
1 tbsp. butter
1 slice of sourdough, cut ½" thick
1 egg
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. In a nonstick skillet on medium heat, melt the butter.
2. Cut a hole in the center of the bread. Toast in the pan for 2 minutes on each side. Crack an egg into the hole, and cook until the egg is cooked through and both sides of the bread are golden brown and crisp. Toast the cut-out portion of the bread too.
3. Season with salt and pepper and enjoy immediately.



PHOTOS: Yue Jin
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