

Fried halloumi is salty, satisfying

BY LEAH ESKIN
CHICAGO TRIBUNE (TNS)

Halloumi and I first met at a pub. The slab of salty cheese was battered, fried and served with mushy peas. Terribly British.

Later I learned halloumi comes from Cyprus. It's known for keeping its cool. Throw it on the grill or into the frying pan, and while the outside crisps, the inside barely melts. Not a skill shared by, say, brie.

Also: it squeaks. In a good way. There's something novel about squinching into a crispy, chewy, melty cheese cube. Especially when the crispy, chewy, melty cheese cube is tossed with juicy tomatoes and sharp mint. The hot and cool salad serves up fresh and refreshing. Unlike, say, mushy peas.

Tomato Halloumi Salad

Prep: 20 minutes

Cook: 5 minutes

Makes: 2 servings

- 12 ounces fresh ripe tomatoes — a mix of colors and sizes is appealing
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil
- Vinegar
- ½ cup thinly sliced fresh mint leaves
- ½ cup flour
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon dried mustard
- 1 egg
- ½ cup water
- 8 ounces halloumi cheese, cut into ¾-inch cubes
- Flatbread

Slice tomatoes for the salad. No need for uniformi-



MICHAEL TERCHA | CHICAGO TRIBUNE | TNS

Colorful tomatoes offer a fresh, cool contrast to cubes of fried halloumi.

ty. Big tomatoes are nice sliced into circles or semicircles. Little ones might be best halved on the diagonal. Medium ones, quarter. Heap in a serving bowl.

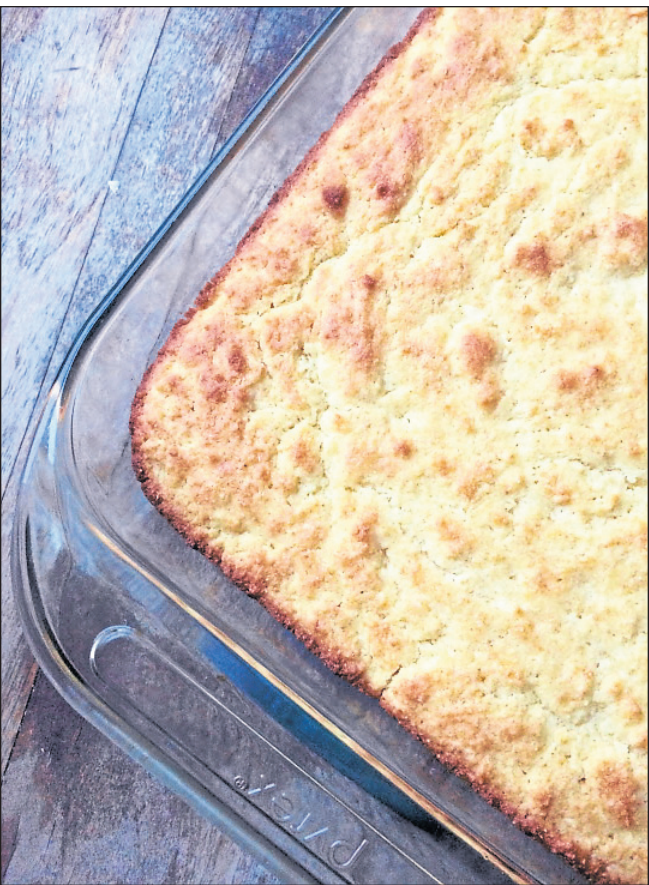
Sprinkle tomatoes very lightly with salt (halloumi tends to be salty) and generously with pepper. Drizzle on a little oil and vinegar. Toss. Sprinkle on mint, and toss again.

Whisk together flour, oregano, red pepper and mustard. Separately, whisk together egg and water, then

whisk into flour mixture. Drop in halloumi and toss to coat.

Slick a large skillet with olive oil, about ¼-inch deep. Heat over medium. When hot, pull cheese cubes out of the batter and sizzle in the hot skillet. Fry, turning once or twice, until soft inside and golden brown outside, about 5 minutes total. Drain on paper towels. Grind on some pepper.

Toss halloumi cubes into salad. Scoop onto plates, and enjoy with flatbread.



SARAH WALKER CARON | BDN

Buttery, Crumbly Cornbread is heavenly when it's served warm from the oven.

Seafood

Continued from Page C1

on avocado toast with radish sprouts.

"Scallops, hake, fish tacos, fish cakes, fancy things," Levin said. "It's going to be really fun."

A portion of proceeds directly support GMRI's sustainable seafood programs.

The event takes place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. April 7 at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, 350 Commercial St., Portland. Tickets are \$65 at the door.

For more information visit gmri.org/events.



GULF OF MAINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Chefs and fisherman alike gather every year for the annual Gulf of Maine Seafood Celebration in Portland. Chefs are seen plating food during a previous celebration.

Buttery, Crumbly Cornbread

Serves 6-8

- 1 large egg
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/4 cup cornmeal
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease an 8-inch-by-8-inch square baking pan (I prefer glass pans for this).

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the egg and milk. Drizzle the butter in, whisking constantly, until fully incorporated. Add the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and salt. Stir until just combined.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan, and tap gently to spread it out.

Bake for 20-25 minutes, until golden brown. A toothpick inserted into the center should come out cleanly. Let cool slightly before cutting into 16 squares and enjoying.

Course

Continued from Page C1

As with every trip to the market this winter, I forgot that I really needed to stock up for two weeks of eating, since it's a bi-weekly market.

The winter market is about to wrap up its season, with only one more biweekly market scheduled for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, April 17, inside the Sea Dog at 26 Front St., on the Bangor Waterfront. Then the Bangor Farmers' Market will head back outdoors in May, for the weekly summer market in the parking lot across the street from the library.

I can hardly wait. In the meantime, I used my haul to whip up a slow cooker beef stew Monday. And when my kids and I arrived home in the evening, I realized the one thing that stew needed was a little bread. Cornbread to be exact.

So I made some. And I'll let you in on a little secret: No matter

how busy life gets, there's something absolutely relaxing about stopping to just make something in my kitchen. Watching ingredients come together to create something tasty and just-right is magical — for me, at least.

This cornbread is buttery and sweet. It's delicate, and crumbly too. And it's easy. A simple mixing process brings together the ingredients for baking. About 20 minutes later, it's ready to cool, slice and enjoy.

No need to cool it completely, this bread is heavenly when it's served warm from the oven. And it's delightful with soups, stews and chilis.

Sarah Walker Caron is the senior features editor for the Bangor Daily News and author of "Grains as Mains: Modern Recipes Using Ancient Grains," available at bookstores everywhere including The Briar Patch and Bull Moose in Bangor. For more delicious recipes, check out Maine Course at mainecourse.bangordailynews.com.

Toast

Continued from Page C1

portion with a drink are about \$8.

"We're trying to keep prices low enough that people can afford to come

in," she said.

Scott said that the menu is continuing to evolve as the owners figure out what works and what doesn't. Originally, they only offered toast, but they've more recently added wraps and subs because their customers have said they

want those things, too.

According to Michaud, Toast Xpress is in Waterville for the long haul. The co-owners spent upwards of \$100,000 to fix up the former Glass Express building to their specifications. Big windows let in lots of natural light and

the space is immaculate and comfortable, but still takes a back seat to the food.

"This is a whole new adventure," Scott said of opening the restaurant. "We're still working at it and still learning. It gets a little bit better each week."

Taste

Continued from Page C1

had pork chops for a while, this recipe really appealed to me. It is very nearly one of those desperation recipes I mentioned, more an idea or set of instructions for what to do with pork chops that you can stick in a covered dish for a couple of hours while you attend to something else. We tried it, and it was good, simple and worth repeating. I served it with hot beets splashed with vinaigrette, and a big green salad.

The recipe as presented in Brownie's column would serve six if everyone ate one chop. We are only two, so I averaged down, using two chops, two lovely large Wolf River apples, and instead of measuring out the brown sugar and cinnamon, did a quick sprinkle of each, and melted a bit of butter to dribble over. You can probably skip the butter and never miss it. And the next time I make this, I

Nancy's Pork Chops and Apples

Serves 6

- 6 pork chops
- 4 unpared apples, cored and sliced crosswise
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (or more to taste)
- 2 tablespoons butter

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Brown the pork chops on each side.

Place the sliced apples in a buttered baking dish with a tight lid.

Sprinkle the apples with the sugar and cinnamon.

Dot with bits of butter or melt the butter and dribble over the apples.

Top with the pork chops.

Bake for about 1 ½ hours, and if much liquid has accumulated, take off the lid and let bake for a half-hour more.

am going to slice in an onion to mix with the apples. The apples make their own chunky sauce in the bottom of the baking dish, and the chops end up becoming quite tender in the apple liquid.

So enjoy your pork chops, dear readers, and raise a glass to Brownie before tucking into them. By the way, if anyone of you is "Nancy" or knows who Nancy is, let me know?

Send queries or answers to Sandy Oliver, 1061 Main Road, Islesboro 04848. Email sandyoliver47@gmail.com. For recipes, tell us where they came from, list ingredients, specify number of servings and do not abbreviate measurements. Include name, address and daytime phone number. And make sure to check out Sandy's blog at tastebuds.bangordailynews.com.



The Abbe Museum, in Bar Harbor, is a museum of Wabanaki art, history, and culture. On May 1, 2016, a new core exhibit, **People of the First Light**, will welcome you into the Wabanaki world, sharing the stories, culture, and history of the Abenaki, Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot people.

abbemuseum.org