

the slow press



A TOAST TRIBE PUBLICATION / VOL 1. APR 2020

SLOW DOWN. SLOW PRESS.

Hello you curious soul.

You've stumbled upon this gem, something small but also a place where I seek comfort in. This is my ranting corner, my coping mechanism, my motivation to wake up and start yet another day at home and my flesh and blood.

My love for creation, especially food, extends beyond my humble, dimly-lit kitchen. It's a pleasure to have an audience to communicate this love to, and share the joy of this commonality with.

Too often we think ahead of ourselves and we let life pass us by and time slip us by. This serves as a gentle reminder to stop and wind time slower than you would. Not like one of those high speed blenders you make great smoothies with, but a slow press juicer, which churns out equally great juice by taking it slow. Press, because it's also a form of media passed from me to you.

In these monthly zines, or newsletters, whatever, I hope to be your friend alongside the madness of the outside world. To open your eyes a little to the endless possibilities that food may bring. And to cherish your attention, to feel this connection between us.

Welcome, and please feel at home.

- CHRIS TY
EDITOR/TOAST QUEEN



EXHIBIT 1: FROM THE CHOPPING BOARD.

THE FRESHEST JUICE

In this section, we do a monthly roundup of major happenings in the F&B scene in case you missed out on any of these.

START APRIL

THE LAST OF DINE-IN, FOR A WHILE

F&B outlets still opened their doors for dine-in, with precautionary measures taken. Some of them included alternatively spaced seats, recording of temperatures, filling up of contact tracing forms and standing 1 metre-apart in lines.

7 APRIL

TAKEAWAY AND DELIVERY ARE STILL OK!

Since Circuit Breaker measures were officially implemented, F&B outlets stacked up their tables and chairs for the first time other than spring cleaning. Only take-away and delivery options are permitted, which forced businesses to improvise and play new cards if they still wished to remain open. Businesses that could only offer dine-in experiences - Mookata, BBQ and Hotpot joints - struggled. However, big players such as Hai Di Lao was innovative to bring the hotpot experience to households by offering hotpot rental and delivery boxes for their customers. Fine dining restaurants like Cheek, Burnt Ends, Salted & Hung and Candelnut are also offering top-notch food to doorsteps.

Grabfood started its islandwide delivery option, joining forces with popular chains from all over Singapore to bring a greater variety of meals to the neighbourhoods. However, delivery fees that these islandwide joints pose prove to be daylight robbery. Would you pay more than it costs just to satisfy your cravings?

NOT FORGETTING ABOUT THE FRONTLINES

The team behind 1-Michelin-starred restaurant, Alma by Juan Amador, contributed in their own ways, by providing weekly takeaway boxes filled with high-quality grub to the National University Hospital. They teamed up with Woodlands Sourdough, an independent bakery, to bring their sourdough and bakes as part of the lunchbox.

Three independent bakeries - Folk and Stories, Glacier Confectionary and My Muffin Musings, have collaborated with Thye Hua Kwan to thank Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Singapore General Hospital staff by delivering sweet treats.

Sure enough, restaurants are bearing the brunt when they hop on the delivery platform bandwagon. A petition was launched by Loh Lik Peng, who also started the movement, #savefnbsg. This was spurred by restaurant owner Colin Chen's post about the rise in delivery platform commissions.

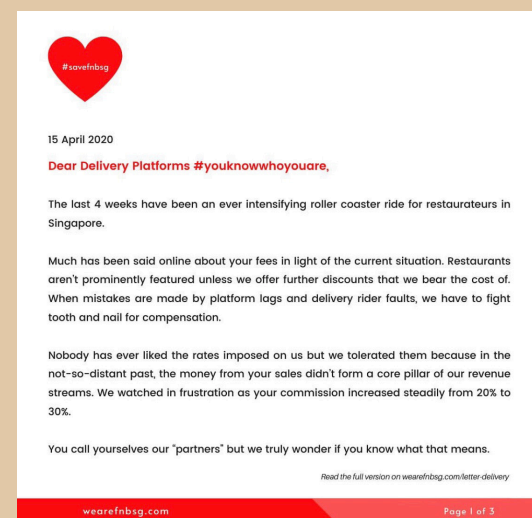


PHOTO: Savefnbsg



FOOD LISTS YOU CAN COUNT ON:

As a result, individuals passionate about supporting the F&B scene in Singapore during this tough period have curated directories of restaurants offering their own delivery services, channeling the profits to their staff instead of external delivery platforms.

Restaurants: wheregotfood.sg

Hawkers: Kopi-19

Restaurants and hawkers: misstamchiak.com/savefnbsg/

Carousell has also starting listing local small businesses on the platform.

In a bid to revive the neighbourhood F&B clusters, Colin Chen also launched foodhood.sg, a platform where customers can order various vendors in the same neighbourhood. Currently, the Jalan Besar one is up and there are more to come.

19 APRIL

MACS: THE LAST CB BREAKFAST

After a series of Covid-19 cases linked to the fast food giant, McDonalds, they had shut their doors until 4 May, when Circuit Breaker will supposedly end. Here's an original "ad" made by Wee Xuan Yi, see the rest [here](#) on his IG @allfundanddone. Now with the extended Circuit Breaker, this too shall wait.



PHOTO: Wee Xuan Yi

22 APRIL

A TRUE TEST OF ADDICTION

Circuit Breaker is due to extend until the 1st of June, with the closure of more F&B stand-alone outlets, as the definition of "essential" is narrowed once again. Bubble Tea addicts are definitely the ones who will be hit the hardest emotionally, but this one-month extension also translates to unemployment for many working in dessert shops, speciality shops and the countless number of bubble tea shops islandwide.

Will Singaporeans be able to resist their cravings as each day of circuit breaker drags on? This would be a real challenge for most of us. But maybe after this, we will realise that bubble tea was a privilege in the first place.

WHAT'S BREWING THIS MONTH

1. WE ARE STILL OPEN

CAFES THAT ARE DOING DELIVERY

- Brawn and Brains
Free delivery with min. \$50 spend
Within 8km radius, \$8 delivery fee
8km radius and more, \$12 delivery fee
 - Gather
Delivery within 10km radius:
min. \$30 spend
Free delivery above \$60, \$8 delivery fee if below \$60
10km radius and more: whatsapp for quote
 - Glyph Supply Co.
Delivery to different areas, see schedule on IG.
min. \$20 spend, \$2 delivery fee
\$30 and above free delivery
 - Habitat Coffee
Islandwide delivery with min. \$30 spend
 - Lucid
Free delivery min. \$30 spend
Delivery within 10km radius, \$5 delivery fee.
10km radius and more \$10 delivery fee
 - One Man Coffee
Islandwide delivery with min. \$30 spend
20% off for self pick-up in store
Also retailing beans from Nylon and Double Up Coffee
 - Old Hen Coffee Bar/Kitchen
Islandwide delivery, free delivery with min. \$55 spend
Below \$55, delivery fees range from \$5-15
10-15% off for self pick-up in store
 - Strangers Reunion/Curious Palette/Wakey Wakey
Islandwide delivery, free delivery with min. \$50 spend
min. \$30 spend: \$5 delivery fee
below \$30: spend: \$10 delivery fee
 - Punch
Delivery within 10km radius:
min. \$60 spend
Free delivery above \$60, \$8 delivery fee if below \$60
10km radius and more: whatsapp for quote
 - Prodigal Cafe
Islandwide delivery for \$5 delivery fee
Free delivery with min. \$80 spend
 - The Glasshouse
Delivery Min. \$20 spend.
Within 10km radius, \$5 delivery fee
10km radius and more, \$10 delivery fee
 - Two Men Bagel House
Islandwide Delivery from Holland Village & Tanjong Pagar outlets, details on twomenbagels.com or on Deliveroo (Novena)
- * list collated out of my own interest in supporting local cafes, not sponsored, I'm not cool enough :-)
I did not include places that are fully supported by external platforms.

More deets on their IG!



2. BREW YOUR OWN COFFEE AT HOME!

GET BREWING EQUIPMENT

Common Man Coffee Roasters
For Kalita Wave, Aeropress and their filter papers.
Brewing kettle and espresso machine gear also available.

Kurasu
For V60, Kalita Wave, Torch Mountain and Origami drippers and their various filter papers.
Available listings are on their IG.

Homeground Coffee Roasters
For V60, Origami Dripper, Clever Dripper, Aeropress Go, Kalita Wave and their various filters papers. Brewing kettle and servers also available.

Nylon Coffee Roasters
For Clever Dripper, Porlex Ceramic Grinder and Kalita Wave filter papers and Abaca filter papers.

You can get beans from them as well!

LEARN MORE ABOUT COFFEE

Barista Hustle is offering a 14-day free trial access to all courses for first-timers, so get ready for some 14 days of fun with a cuppa alongside.

3. SUPPORT A COMMUNITY GROUP IN NEED

My dearest friend Ze Qin compiled all community efforts into a website -
<https://linktr.ee/covidsupport>

Here you are able to find platforms where you can help migrant workers by signing a pledge or donating some spare cash, as well as supporting hawkers and f&b businesses.

If you have a project you need help with, you can list it in one of the links here too!

4. LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Harvard Online Courses
<https://online-learning.harvard.edu/> has free courses ranging from Math, Science, Computing, Business to Arts and Humanities for some after-noon enrichment.

Duolingo
Learn a new language on Duolingo for free. It's really comprehensive and interactive too.

Recognize! Studios
A series of [free dance tutorials](#) can be found on their website by instructors of different genres. While they started having paid courses, these videos are great for you to try out a new genre before committing to anything.

Converge Studios
@converge.tv streams IG live classes done by their instructors 2-3 times a week so follow them to stay updated!

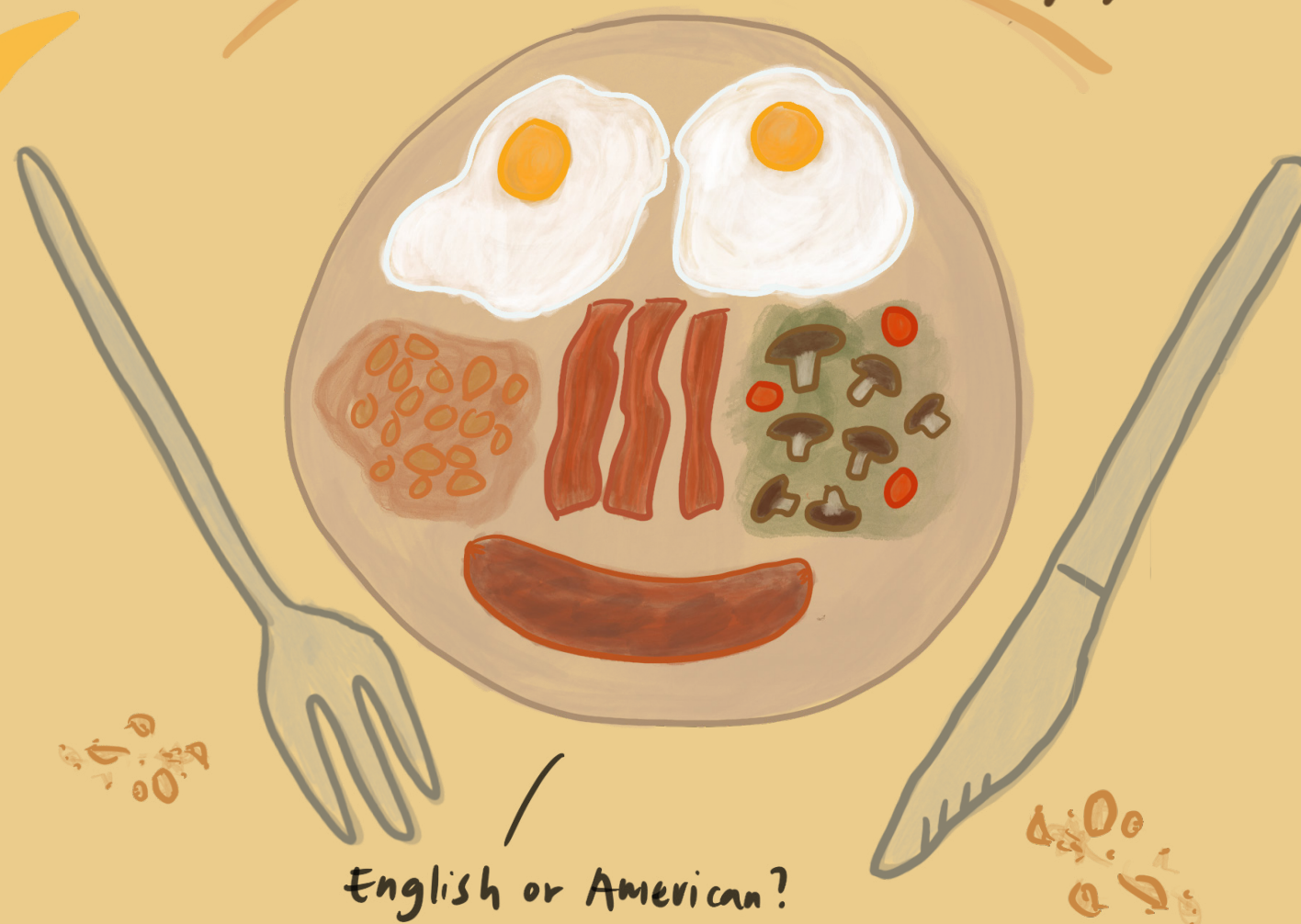
5. READ EBOOKS FOR FREE

You can borrow e-books for free with the Libby application on your mobile or tablet and sign-in with you NLB account to gain access to a library of great books and audiobooks.





BRUNCH



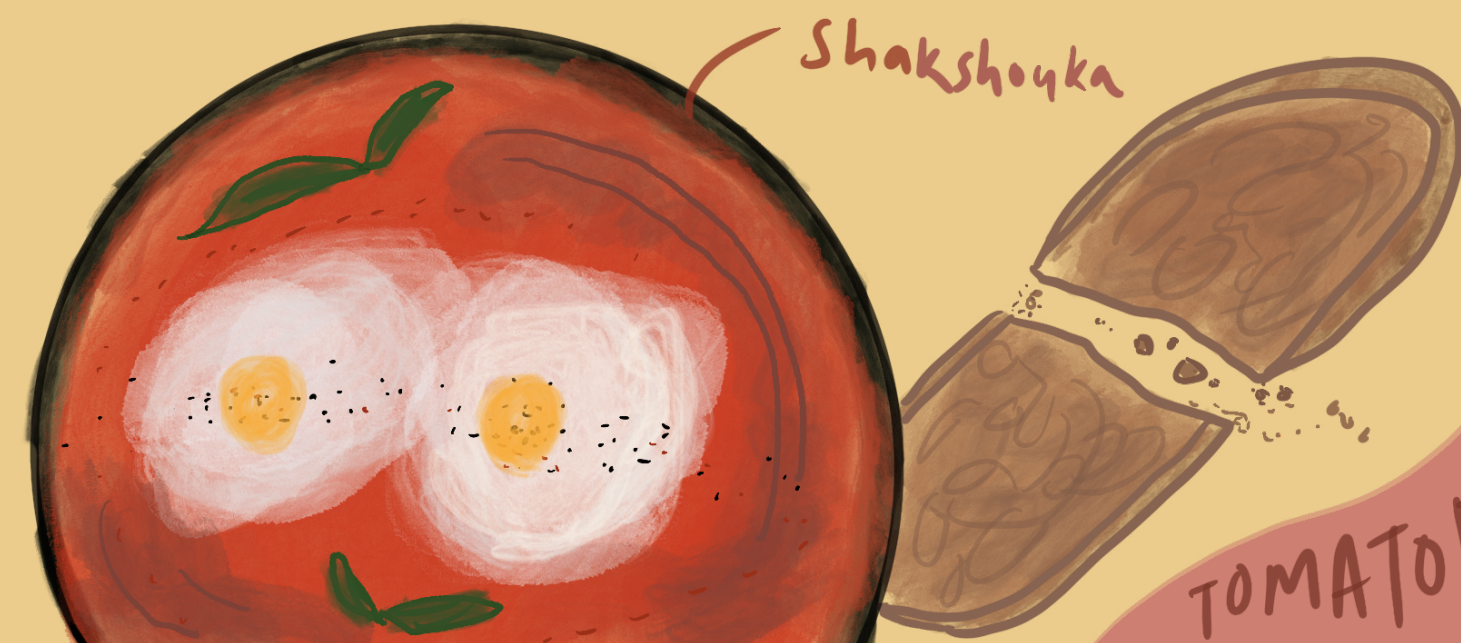
A meal that late risers would settle for between breakfast and lunch time. Over time, dishes have been associated with brunch, becoming identifiable as typical 'brunch foods'. / Also could mean a social gathering that happens in a cafe, for example, 'Let's go for Sunday brunch!', because you get to sleep in, dress up and have great food too. /

In Singapore, brunch has become a culture. I see it as an event that I would ask my friends to enjoy with me, and it's an occasional thing where I get to enjoy a space and the company. Brunch is usually seen as a luxury good, and of course, with its price range, a broke student like me struggles to keep up with a brunch routine.

I've been a cafe fanatic since the days Eggs Benedict was cool, but I never really liked it because it was so basic duh. (Which I am not, I think) Sometimes I dream about the perfect Avocado Toast with Poached Eggs atop, or the pancake stack of my dreams, but then I knock myself out of that because, what's the big deal about brunch?

Still, I'm a sucker for aesthetic flatlays of brunch food, cafes with homemade grub, and unique dishes that stand out from the common suspects. And coffee, that's for sure.

The easiest way to satisfy cravings without even leaving your home is to make brunch in your own kitchen. Here's a breakdown of what goes into your favourite brunch dishes and also what you should stock up in your fridge to make the brunch of your dreams when you awake.



RUNNY EGGS SAUSAGES SPINACH & MUSHROOMS TOMATO BROTH

EGGS 101



SOFT-BOIL



4"

HALF-BOIL



6"

HARD-BOIL



8"

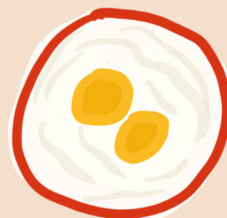
Bring water to a boil. I usually use fridge eggs because they will be fresher, and these timings work great for fridge eggs. But be careful, lower the eggs slowly into the boiling water if not they may crack because of the drastic temperature difference. After they are done, submerge them in cold tap water so that the yolks remain runny (except hard-boiled eggs)

POACHED



Bring water to a boil, stir clockwise to form a whirlpool, drop fridge cold egg in the center. It's done when the egg whites form around it in a structure.

KAYA TOAST EGGS



Put fridge egg in a metal cup/pot/bowl and pour boiling water over just enough to cover. Cover with lid and set timer for 12 minutes. Submerge egg in cold water for a few minutes then crack open. Serve with kaya and a slice of cold, salted butter on toast. Yum.



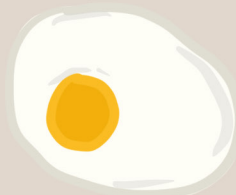
SCRAMBLED



Western Style:
Low-medium heat on pan, melt a chonk of butter
Mix 2 eggs together, but not too vigorously because you don't want to have bubbles. Pour eggs onto pan, fold layers inwards, take pan off the heat in quick intervals. Most of the cooking is done away from the flame, as the pan is really hot and you want to retain the runny texture.

Hong Kong Cha Chan Teng Style:
Medium heat, pour a little oil, let it heat up. Mix 2 eggs and a tablespoon of milk together. You can add more milk if you like more milky eggs. Pan action here is rapid and higher heat than the western style, so it's a real hit or miss. Eggs go into the pan, quickly fold thin layers towards the center and switch off the flame. Continue folding. The eggs should only be on heat for 5-10 seconds

SUNNY-SIDE UP



Medium heat, heat up oil in pan, crack egg. If you're not confident in egg cracking, do it in a bowl then pour it into pan. After the white is firm, tilt the pan side with the yolk towards the flame to make sure the yolk cooks without burning too much egg white.

OMELETTE



For an omelette with solid fillings: (mushrooms, spinach, ham, bacon etc.) saute the ingredients in pan, then pour egg mixture over ingredients so that the ingredients are well-seasoned and not raw.

For a plain omelette or omelette with cheese: Pour egg mixture, fold into half after the structure is firm enough to fold. Flip and make sure it is evenly cooked on both sides.



EXHIBIT 2. LIFE IS NOTHING WITHOUT BREAD.

Bread sure may be overshadowed by its more flavourful counterparts on a brunch plate, but trust me, good bread is everything. Good bread makes you want to savour it on its own, good bread is the star of the dish. Pictured here is Mother Dough's Whole Wheat Loaf. Chewy, open crumb and lightly soured but never overpowering.



WHAT'S ON CHRISTY'S BRUNCH PLATE

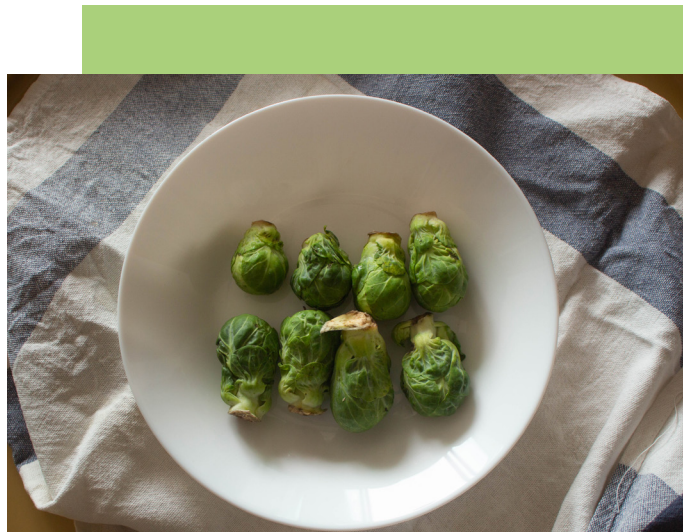


All mushrooms are not made the same, I swear. Portobello mushrooms are the juiciest mushrooms to make brunch and sandwiches with, though they may be large and scary to some. I got mine at a neighbourhood market for a third of the price that you would find at a supermarket, pro tip!

Heat some olive oil in your pan over medium heat, throw in some minced garlic to sauté for a short while. Throw in the mushrooms just before the garlic turns golden brown. Stir fry for 2 minutes with herbs (oregano, basil, black pepper) just for the flavour, then turn down the heat to low and slow-cook mushrooms, adding in a blob of butter after the mushrooms start shrinking. Finish off by sprinkling some garlic salt and cook the mushrooms until they are dry and absorbed all their juices.



EXHIBIT 3. SCRAMBLED EGGS, BRUSSEL SPROUTS, PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS, SOURDOUGH



What in the world are brussels sprouts, you may ask. They cooked this at a place that I used to work and I was fascinated by the complex flavours of this micro cabbage. You can do it either by pan or oven, but I like to do pan and oven to bring out the sweetest flavours with a char on the outside.

Heat some olive oil in your pan over medium heat, throw in some minced garlic to sauté for a short while. Throw in the brussels sprouts, sprinkle some salt and pepper and let them pan fry on each side for a short while, until they are a little brown. Preheat oven, 200 degrees, transfer to oven tray, then bake for 15-20 minutes.

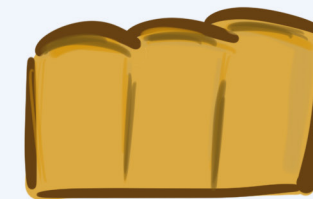
Until you start to make a breakfast variety plate you will realise...you do not possess 10 hands. Sometimes I forget, I get excited and toast the bread first, or cook the eggs first, then everything goes down from there. But we try and we learn. Even if our eggs are not runny, as long as they are edible, all's good right?

You may want to add some meats into your breakfast. I don't usually have ham or bacon at home, but I got some for the next recipe and made Ben a scrambled egg bacon sandwich with it. I do love some smoked salmon and avocado.



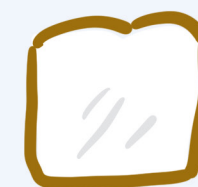
EXHIBIT 4. FRENCH TOAST TWO WAYS

FRENCH TOAST



Brioche (bree-yosh)

This is the bread that puts the French in French toast. It's made with lots of egg and butter, so you technically wouldn't need to coat it.

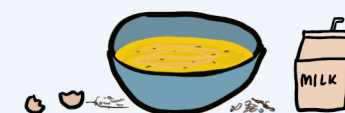


White Toast

Most of the time we won't have brioche and the good news is that we don't need it. Some good ol' white bread from the pantry would do and it won't taste any less french toast-y, trust me.

① MIX

1 egg, 1 tbsp milk (soy milk is alright too), sprinkle cinnamon, nutmeg and 1 tsp vanilla essence.



② COAT

This mixture should be able to soak 2 slices of toast on both sides.



③ PAN

Butter the pan and fry toast on both sides till brown and crispy.



SAVOURY



SWEET



④ MAPLE BACON

Medium heat, fry bacon on pan. You don't have to add oil because the bacon emits its own fats. Before it is done, pour some maple syrup over, fry till darkish red and crispy.

Set on kitchen towel for the oil to be absorbed.

Serve french toast with maple bacon, blueberries, almond butter and honey.

④ BERRY COMPOTE

Medium heat, berries and some granulated white sugar. Cook until juices are emitted and is jammy in texture.

⑤ CRUMBLE

Mix oats, flour, butter (enough to coat) and some sugar. Separate them into small clusters and bake for 15 minutes at 200degc.

Serve french toast with a drizzle of honey.

WAITING ON NORMALCY

by Christy Chua

Today when I heard my alarm ring, I struggled to get up, until I started sweating so damn much I had no other choice. I tried to recall if there was a day this week when I didn't stretch my arm to scour for the snooze button without opening my eyes. I tried, but failed. Every morning this routine repeats.

I go about my day, that has become a routine by now. After a battle between my annoyance to the alarm tune and the glaring sunlight (they take turns to win every other day), I wash up, pop my bread onto the toaster and brew my coffee. Sometimes it's close to noon. I don't know man. I watch some shows, make some lunch. Sometimes I bake when I feel like it. An afternoon passes, I do an evening exercise, cook dinner, call some people, prepare for bed.

What is so everyday and normal to us now - spending time at home - was something unfamiliar to me. If anyone called me a homebody, it would be slightly insulting even, because of the amount of time I spent out of my home my whole life. At night before I fall asleep every night, I wish this was all a dream. Tomorrow when I wake up, can this be all over?

It's funny how we used to think, to grow, we need to spread our wings and fly. To grow, is to step out of your comfort zone and experience new challenges. To live is to have the courage to do big things. But now as almost the whole world is living within the four walls of their homes, how can we grow, without growing apart?

Circuits may break but life doesn't stop for us. We are lucky to live our lives sheltered from the outside world and the ability to leave our fears outside our doorsteps. Our healthcare workers, migrant workers and other people who are working in this time of uncertainty wouldn't choose to do so if they didn't have anything to lose. While we sleep in on yet another day we lose track of, a frontline worker is putting themselves into a position of risk to care for others in our community. While some of us get to eat lunch from Grabfood in an air-conditioned room in our house, a construction worker at the road opposite us is taking a nap on the sidewalk under the sweltering midday sun. Hardly do these facts cross our mind when we are in a position of comfort.

We are privileged and we can do more than just binging away on Netflix and

baking yet another loaf of banana bread. I started thinking about the harsh realities, like a healthcare worker tending to a Covid-19 patient may never have the chance to fulfill her lifelong dream of skydiving, a Covid-19 patient might never have a meal with their loved ones ever again. I've seen so many instances of people acting like they will never contract the virus and disregarding rules that are set in place for reasons that are perfectly understandable.

It's funny how it took a pandemic for us to realise so many ill things about our society, our surroundings and even ourselves. We see people stockpiling like the world is going to end, people going out for their last breath of 'freedom', as if clubs will never open ever again and IKEA meatballs are definitely going to be extinct after the circuit breaker ends. People treating parks like Singapore's only tourist attractions and congregating there secretly with their friends.

It's demoralising to read the news every night to find out that things aren't getting better. But it also turns out that, being glad that you and your loved ones are healthy and well can be the biggest blessing at this uncertain juncture. As the world sinks into a deep prayer about our future, just remember to always, always put meaning into your days and care for others around you. It's a time to be more forgiving, to be more empathetic, while not forgetting to live in the moment and enjoy the simplest of things in life - safety and health - by just staying at home.

Even the darkest nights will end and the sun will rise. - Les Misérables.



Art by @agathesorlet

If you're feeling peckish and want to get some juices moving, The Slow Press is looking for team members and collaborations to feature in future issues. Come drop by @toast.tribe on IG for a chat or telegram me @chrsteasss :-)

