

Home Cooking Episode 3: Cod Save America

- Samin: I am Samin Nosrat.
- Hrishi: And I'm Hrishikesh Hirway.
- Samin: And we're home cooking.
- Hrishi: This is episode three of our four-part quarantine mini-series where we help you figure out what to cook with what you've got in the house.
- Samin: Coming up, we'll be joined by Wesley Morris, my best friend in the entire universe.
- Hrishi: Hey!
- Samin: He's the host of one of my favorite podcasts, Still Processing. He's also a great culture writer at the New York times.
- Hrishi: Well, we are also going to be joined by my dad.
- Samin: We all know your dad likes me better than you. Okay?
- Hrishi: That's definitely true. My dad texts me about you all the time. But before we get to all that, Samin, what's the best thing you've made this week? And is my banana bread in the mail?
- Samin: I have not sent you anything in the mail because I am still perfecting. But I did the thing which I said I was gonna maybe do which is I made sourdough bread.
- Hrishi: Ohhh
- Samin: And it turned out so good. But then I made it two more times and it was terrible both times. But now I'm making it a fourth time hopefully it'll be good this time.
- Hrishi: Did you figure out what went wrong in the times it went wrong?
- Samin: Yes. My laziness. Well, I actually don't know what went wrong the last time, which is both loaves burned so hard and stuck to the Dutch oven so bad. A lot of things went wrong.
- Hrishi: If only there were a podcast you could call into to ask some advice.
- Samin: If only. You'll notice I didn't post Instagram pictures of those terrible failures, but here I am telling you all about them.
- Hrishi: Yeah, you're outing yourself now.

Samin: Yeah. I did call my own version of me for bread, which are all my baker friends who have watched me fail over the years. I got some good information. Basically, I just have to stick to the recipe, and I was being very liberal with my timing, let's say.

Hrishi: You can't be liberal with that kind of labor.

Samin: No, but there are two loaves proofing in the fridge right now. I'm going to bake them tomorrow, and they are looking very promising. Knock wood.

Hrishi: Okay, good luck!

Samin: Okay, enough about me. What's the most delicious thing you made this week?

Hrishi: Actually, I made something that reminded me of you. Because, do you remember the last time you came to visit? Before the quarantine, you came to visit and you went to the store and you brought back all these delicious vegetables.

Samin: Yeah.

Hrishi: And then you just chopped them up and we had them as a snack?

Samin: And pimento cheese.

Hrishi: Yes, and pimento cheese. Well, we got all these great vegetables in our CSA box, like there were these carrots that just were unbelievable. We just wanted eat them raw because they were so good. So, I made hummus.

Samin: Oh, awesome. Have you made hummus before?

Hrishi: I have, yeah. It's been a little while, but it's one of those things that I feel like I can do pretty easily. Anybody can do pretty easily.

Samin: How did you make your hummus?

Hrishi: Well, I have a Vitamix. So, I start with just a can of chickpeas in there. Part of the reason why I can neither follow nor create a recipe is because all my measurements are just in the quantity of some. I put in...

Samin: You put in some chickpeas.

Hrishi: Yup

Samin: You put in some tahini.

Hrishi: Exactly, yup. The only measurement I have is it was one can of chickpeas and then, yeah, some olive oil, some tahini. I think it was two spoonfuls of tahini, and some salt, and some black pepper, and maybe a clove of garlic, maybe it was two-

Samin: Lemon juice?

Hrishi: Yeah some lemon juice with a lemon from our tree and some basil

Samin: You were going crazy with the spices.

Hrishi: Yeah. And then blended it all up, and it was so good.

Samin: Oh, that's awesome. Can I tell you how I make mine?

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: I do some chickpeas, and I do no olive oil. Only tahini in it.

Hrishi: Really?

Samin: So, it's a lot of tahini, chickpeas, a lot of lemon juice. I push it on the garlic, I would say, and salt, but no pepper, nothing. Just those... So, what is that? Tahini, garlic, lemon juice, chickpeas, salt; five ingredients. And because I'm an insane person who makes my own chickpeas, and I do the whole baking soda in the pot thing, the skins are really, really, really soft. And so then, once you blend all of that... I just let the blender go. I do it in a food processor. I have a Vitamix too, but I hate using it because I hate cleaning it.

Hrishi: Even the food processor, I hate cleaning those.

Samin: I hate cleaning everything, honestly.

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: Yeah, and then I just blend it, but for a really long time until it's unbelievably smooth. But I used to put olive oil in my hummus as well, and I think I read enough Israeli and Palestinian cookbooks to realize that they put the olive oil generally on top, and tahini is just in.

Hrishi: I put the olive oil both in it and on top.

Samin: Oh, I love that. I love that.

Hrishi: Yeah. Oh, and I put a little za'atar on top too.

Samin: Ooh, delicious. I love a spice mix.

Hrishi: It's unbelievable, the vast difference in quality between homemade hummus and store-bought hummus.

Samin: Absolutely. Well, for one thing, you're using olive oil, you probably use more tahini. And also, you use fresh lemon juice, and a lot of those store-bought hummuses have citric acid in it instead or in addition to, which has just a different tang. I eat a lot of store-bought hummus too, it's not whatever. But when I make it at home, my mouth is just so much happier.

Hrishi: Yeah. I also made some nice cookies.

Samin: Oh, I saw pictures of them. Were they chocolate chip cookies? Is that what they were?

Hrishi: Yeah, they were chocolate chip cookies. That's why I always make chocolate chip cookies. That's pretty much... I just make variations on chocolate chip cookies.

Samin: So, we're all living one great Groundhog Day right now, but you're just living a real Groundhog Day because the only cookies you make...

Hrishi: Every one of them is a little different. These ones were different because I ran out of vanilla extract, so it gave me a chance to use vanilla bean paste instead.

Samin: Oooh! That's basically a vanilla bean just smushed up. I've never used that. So, you must use a lot less? You must.

Hrishi: Well, I've been influenced to go kind of heavy on the vanilla, in general, in my cookies.

Samin: Holy!

Hrishi: Yeah. So, if the recipe calls for a teaspoon, I usually do a tablespoon.

Samin: What? Oh, of extract?

Hrishi: Of extract. Yeah. So, here, I did a tablespoon of vanilla bean paste.

Samin: You used a tablespoon of vanilla bean paste in your cookie?

Hrishi: Yes.

Samin: Are you a monster?

Hrishi: It was so good.

Samin: Are you a millionaire? What is happening?

Hrishi: Well, I don't actually know... The vanilla bean paste was a present, so I actually don't know how much it costs.

Samin: It's very expensive.

Hrishi: Is it? Okay.

Samin: That was like putting gold in there.

Hrishi: Well, this vanilla bean paste is like super powered vanilla flavor, and it's really good.

Samin: That's because it's very concentrated and expensive.

Hrishi: Also, I ran out of light brown sugar, so I used dark brown sugar instead.

Samin: Ooh, my preferred brown of sugar is dark brown. Were your cookies better than ever?

Hrishi: According to Lindsey, she said this was her favorite batch so far.

Samin: Oh, really?

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: Please tell me you could tell there was a lot of vanilla in them when you ate them.

Hrishi: Oh, yeah.

Samin: Okay, good.

Hrishi: I also used a Stella Parks' trick of mixing different types of dark chocolate. Like different brands with different levels of cacao. So with all that, every single bite is a little bit different. There was sea salt on top. It was great.

Samin: Okay, well, now I'm annoyed that you didn't send me any. Okay, this can go both ways.

Hrishi: So actually for our first question there was one that we got that I actually thought that I might be able to answer, but I don't feel totally confident about it, so I was hoping that you would do it with me.

Samin: Okay. Okay. Well then, I'll sit on my hands and I'll let you answer it, and then I'll-

Hrishi: And let me make a fool of myself.

Samin: Yeah.

Hrishi: Okay, good.

Miranda: Hi, I'm Miranda from Costa Rica, and I would like to know why some recipes have granulated sugar and brown sugar as well. I was baking some cookies, oatmeal and cranberry cookies, and the recipe says to use brown sugar as well as granulated sugar. So, I would like to understand why they use two types of sugar.

Hrishi: Okay. I'm going to try and do this.

Samin: Yeah, give it a try.

Hrishi: Well, there are a couple of reasons why you would want to have two different kinds of sugar. Granulated sugar, which is white sugar, is basically just sweetness. It's just sucrose. Is that right?

Samin: Correct.

Hrishi: Brown sugar is that sucrose, but it also has molasses in it.

Samin: Correct.

Hrishi: And that gives it a flavor besides just the sweetness. So, part of the reason why I liked the dark brown sugar in the chocolate chip cookies that I made is because it has that molasses kind of... that flavor, which is maybe not everybody likes, but I like it, and it gives it a richness and complexity. But then also it's part of what gives the cookies their rise because the acidity of the molasses reacts with the baking soda in a chemical reaction that releases carbon dioxide, which gives your cookies the texture inside.

Samin: Correct. That's really, really good. And, one more thing.

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: You know how when you open a bag or a box of brown sugar, it feels different?

Hrishi: Yeah

Samin: It feels like wet sand kind of, whereas regular granulated sugar just feels dry and you can pour it through your fingers. Well, molasses is wet, so brown sugar is actually more moist. So, what it does is it also will make your final baked good more chewy and moist, chocolate chip cookies, or Miranda, like your cranberry oatmeal cookies, those are very typically American style cookies that really want that chewiness. That chewiness very much comes from the molasses in the brown sugar.

Hrishi: Well, thanks, Miranda. Thanks for the question and for giving me a chance to make it look like I know something.

Samin: Miranda, the check is in the mail. Hrishi's mom is sending you 50 bucks.

Hrishi: She's sending it to you in the form of vanilla bean paste, which is apparently very expensive. Samin, you had mentioned, after my dad accidentally called us when we were recording episode one, that you'd like to have my dad on the podcast again.

Samin: I would give anything to talk to your dad again.

Hrishi: Well, we got a few questions sent into us about food safety and I thought this might be a good time to talk to him because he is actually a retired food scientist. So what do you think? Should we give him a call?

Samin: Okay. Yeah, I can't wait.

Hrishi: Dad, is it recording? I don't think it's recording.

Sumesh: Okay, Hrishi Call New Recording Downloading

Hrishi: No-Okay Dad, you don't need to download anything. There's a red button at the bottom, do you see the big red button?

Sumesh: Okay, okay, okay

Hrishi: So hit the big red button-

Sumesh: Yeah

Hrishi: So it's recording?

Sumesh: Yes

Hrishi: Alright, now we can go. Hi Dad

Sumesh: Hi

Samin: Hi Sumesh Uncle

Sumesh: Hi Samin, it's good to talk to you, it's my pleasure

Samin: It's nice to talk to you

Hrishi: Okay Dad, we're going to play you a question that we got from our friend, Anna Sayle.

Sumesh: Okay.

Anna: Hi, you two, this is Anna, and I have a question about sharing food that I make from home with my neighbors right now. I found myself stuck between this impulse to be neighborly and helpful and share things that we make at home, and then I realized with horror, like oh gosh, I don't want to be spreading germs from my household to my elderly neighbor next door. So can you give me some guidelines and tips regarding food safety right now? Like what is a good safe thing to make more of and share with people around you who aren't socially isolating with you? And what is something to avoid? Thanks so much, I really love this show.

Hrishi: What do you think Dad?

Sumesh: The reference that I'm going to be quoting from, which has got a lot of information and has been updated today, is Food Safety and Coronavirus, A Comprehensive Guide, seriouseats.com by J. Kenji Lopez-Alt.

Samin: Oh, I love that you're referring to that, because that's the same exact thing that I refer to.

Sumesh: Yes. Now, coming to our friend, sharing the food, it's a very noble gesture. Because I live also in condominium, which I do that, I share with my neighbors when I make some food there. But we had to follow the general guidelines, important thing in the food safety is the heat. So when they get it they have to heat up the food.

Samin: I think in general it makes sense to give people food that will be reheated rather than food they are going to eat at either refrigerated or room temperature.

Sumesh: Yes

Samin: Because from what I looked at Kenji's article, I remember one thing he said was that the virus is actually quite fragile. So for example I think soup probably will be good, or stews, or anything that you can give in a clean container that can get wiped down and then reheated. Is that right?

Sumesh: Yes. Now, I'm assuming, that the family receiving might not have a thermometer, if they have a thermometer it will be great but otherwise the one way to see, like you mentioned about the soup or something, heated up, it has to come come to the bubbling steam coming out.

Samin: Like a simmer

Sumesh: Simmer.

Samin: If you don't have a thermometer.

Sumesh: Right, right. Not only the temperature, also the time. So simmer and set your clock or something to about five minutes.

Hrishi: Dad, you said that you've been sharing stuff with your neighbors, what's something that you've made that you've shared with other people in the condo?

Sumesh: One thing I've been sharing with them is a mince meat, which we call keema and it's a turkey mince meat and then I use peas with it, a little bit of Indian curry and tomato sauce.

Samin: I love keema. I love keema in samosas, I love keema with rice, I love keema in roti. I love keema.

Sumesh: Right

Hrishi: So Dad, when you're making keema, what are the safety guidelines that you're following when you're making it?

Sumesh: So first precaution you have to take now when you're cooking, use a mask.

Hrishi: If you're cooking for other people?

Sumesh: Yes. Second, wash your hands. Keep your utensils and that area clean. Use sanitizer that will kill the virus.

Samin: Do you think it would be safe to bake cookies or cake and share that with your neighbors?

Sumesh: You can share, but he put the oven on for 400 degrees and then you put your bread for a while so the surface and all these things, it gets heated up little bit.

Samin: Okay

Hrishi: So this is when you're receiving it, if you're giving your neighbors something baked, they should heat it up after they've gotten it from you?

Sumesh: Right, right.

Hrishi: Dad the other part of Anna's question was if there are foods that one should avoid when trying to make something for your neighbors?

Sumesh: I would avoid uh, sushi because you aren't very able to heat it up.

Samin: Maybe don't give your neighbors sushi these days. That's probably a good idea. I probably wouldn't accept sushi from a neighbor to begin with.

Hrishi: Samin, you have any other questions for my Dad?

Samin: No, I feel like I learned a lot about you my friend, Hrishi. I feel like when you see someone's parents you learn a lot about your friend, yeah.

Hrishi: All right, thanks Dad.

Sumesh: Thank you.

Samin: Thank you so much.

Sumesh: Yeah. Looking forward to the episodes and podcasts coming up.

Hrishi: Thanks dad. Thanks also to Anna Sayle for the question and also for lending Samin a microphone so that we could record our first episode. You can find her podcast at Death, Sex, and Money. You cannot follow my dad ... Wait, no. Actually, my dad does have an Instagram now, though he has never posted, but if you want to follow him on Instagram he's @sumeshhirway. S-U-M-E-S-H H-I-R-W-A-Y. Let's see if anybody-

Samin: How many followers he gets. I'm going to be stoked when his follower numbers jump.

Hrishi: Well, he only has 27 right now so-

Samin: Okay, good, good. We have our starting number.

Hrishi: Yeah. Okay. So, Samin, we got a few questions on a topic that we have not yet discussed - fish.

Samin: Okay!

Hrishi: Specifically, we got a couple of questions about sardines, which I guess makes sense. They're preserved fish....What?

Samin: Which I guess makes sense, they're preserved fish.

Hrishi: What? Makes sense that people would have questions about preserved fish.

Samin: Yeah, no, no, I get it because you buy it. That was just very charming, the way you said it.

Hrishi: Is that the reaction that you have when somebody says something charming? You mock them?

Samin: Maybe charming is not the way I really took it.

Hrishi: Yeah, I think the way you took was-I had a flashback to seventh grade and people doing nerd-voice at me, like I'd say something and they'd be like, "Technically."

Hrishi: Okay. Here's a question from Charlene.

Charlene: Hi, Sabine. My name is Charlene, and I have a question about what to do with a lot of canned sardines. I came from the grocery store, put my canned sardines in my pantry and realized I already had a lot of canned sardines. I thought had a lot of canned anchovies at home already, so now I have a ton of canned sardines. I don't know what to do. Thanks.

Samin: First, did she call me Sabine?

Hrishi: She did call you Sabine, What I really like about that is that it's dear Sabine from Charlene about sardines.

Samin: Of course, you would love that. No, but I also loved her, the tone of her voice was just so resigned to the sardine reality. Oh my God.

Hrishi: What's the difference between a sardine and an anchovy?

Samin: Well, they're both a small oily fish. But usually what happens in the canning, in my experience, and this is definitely not like an expert. I'm not a small fish expert, I'm just a cook. But in my experience, anchovies are salted in their preservation, and sardines are not necessarily salted. Since there's so much, let's say, less meat on an anchovy, it really becomes a much more concentrated taste of fishiness and saltiness, which I think of more as an accent flavor. Whereas sardines have kind of a significantly greater amount of meat on the bone. They're not as concentrated in fishiness in umami or in salt, and hence make a better ingredient, like a main ingredient, and less of a seasoning, let's say.

Hrishi: That's why anchovies are often chopped and dispersed in a thing, but a sardine you can just have on a cracker?

Samin: Exactly. I do think the answer for you, you're going to have a long future in sardine toasts I think.

Hrishi: Actually before you go further then, hold on I'm interrupting you with a question from Michael, to complicate things.

Samin: Okay.

Michael: Hi, this is Mike from Fairfax, Virginia. I would like your ideas on how to serve sardines other than straight up on crackers. Thank you.

Samin: Okay.

Hrishi: There's the wrinkle.

Samin: Okay. Well obviously there's the classic sardine on a Triscuit, sardine on a cracker. But, what I think I would like to do if the cracker and or toast has been taken away from me, is to replace those with some other starches. There's a classic Italian, it's like usually tuna and white bean salad. You could make a delicious sardine version of that, of canned sardines crumbled up, not in too small of pieces. Tossed with olive oil and vinegar, and maybe onions that have been pickled lightly, and some red wine vinegar. Some fresh herbs like parsley, and a little beautiful pile of white beans with olive oil. That would be really delicious.

Hrishi: That sounds really good. I don't even like sardines, that sounds really good.

Samin: No, it's super good. Then the other thing I would do is I would have used the sardines as a base for a pasta. There's a classic, it's delicious. Sardinian so Sardinia is an island, one of the islands of Italy named after sardines. There's a classic pasta there called-

Hrishi: Wait, they're named after sardines it's not the other way around?

Samin: Maybe it's the other way around. Okay. I don't know.

Hrishi: I'm gonna guess it's the other way around.

Samin: Well, anyways, sardines and Sardinians go hand in hand. Okay, I don't know which direction. But there's a pasta there called pasta con le sarde. You could make like a fishy tomatoey pasta. I won't talk about that, because I think you could probably figure that out yourself with garlic and chili flakes. This one's a little bit different and I really like it. You could use tin sardines. Traditionally it's made with pine nuts and currents. I would start with an onion that I maybe dice. If you have any saffron, put a little saffron in that onion, get it sizzly and golden and delicious and tender in some olive oil. Then if you have the patience to toast some pine nuts, do that. Otherwise, throw the pine nuts into the pan so they can cook along with the onions. Crumble some sardines in there. If your currents or your raisins are already moist and delicious, just throw them in. Otherwise, maybe rehydrate them in some warm water. Squeeze out that water, add that in. If you have some fennel seeds and chili flakes, you could grind those up and put those in, and toss that with any freshly cooked delicious dry pasta. I would maybe put in a little squeeze of lemon juice or white wine right at the end to add some acid, and shower it with parsley, and even if you wanted to some secret parmesan cheese. Because traditionally, cheese and fish are not found in the same pasta. But I think you could sneak some in and it would be so good. That's a really classic pasta that I love. If you don't want to make it with pasta, you can actually roast slices of cauliflower, and make that same sardiney,

currently, pine nutty chili thing, and spoon it over the cauliflower. That would be a delicious combination, and somewhat traditional too.

Hrishi: Wow.

Samin: It's really yummy, and I have to say I haven't even thought about it until just this moment, and now I kinda want to eat it.

Hrishi: I'm not totally sure that I can picture what a sardine tastes like, because I've had such limited experience with them, or an anchovy.

Samin: I think they get a bad rap. I mean my first experience of sardines through my entire childhood was in cartoons.

Hrishi: Right, exactly.

Samin: I feel like it's a thing like cartoon cats eat.

Hrishi: Yes, yes.

Samin: So I didn't really taste them until I tasted fresh sardines as a cook. I only got to taste them because I had to clean one million of them. Fresh ones are a lot milder than the canned ones. But the canned ones I really like the taste of. I recently had some, in December a friend showed up at my house on a road trip, and she was like, "I have these sardines. Let's eat them." It was her car food. She pulled out sardines and we ate them and I was like, "Oh gosh, these are good." They are not so different from mackerel, which is a slightly bigger. A mackerel is to a sardine as a sardine is to an anchovy. It's a slightly bigger, oily fish. All three of them I think you could use somewhat interchangeably.

Hrishi: By the way, when you Google Sardinia sardines, as if it were written directly to you, the first thing that comes up, it says, "Sardines are named after Sardinia, not the other way around."

Samin: Wait, what did I say?

Hrishi: You said that Sardinia was named after sardines.

Samin: Sorry. I already am confused and forgot. Thanks for really laying it on me though. Teaching me what's what.

Hrishi: Technically.

Samin: Technically.

Hrishi: Samin, technically sardines are named after Sardinia, not the other way around.

Samin: We are like two eight year olds.

Hrishi: Well, let me roll into another question about fish that we got. This one comes from Isabelle, from Canada.

Isabelle: Hi you two. Just before all the craziness started, I was actually diagnosed with an autoimmune disease. One of the recommendations is that I should eat more fish to help me fight this, and to be better in my body. So when everything hit, I bought a lot of frozen fish, not knowing when I could get my hands on fresh. So now I've got two bags of frozen fish sitting in my freezer. What should I do with them to make them taste good? Thanks. Bye.

Samin: Depending on what kind of fish that you have, because she didn't specify, did she?

Hrishi: In the email she specified that it contains cod, salmon, sole and pollock.

Samin: Okay. Well cod, sole and pollock are all similar, in that they're white flaky fishes. Salmon is not white, and it's quite oily. You probably want to treat salmon separately and differently than the other three, but the white fish, what I would want to do, is make a pot of fish stew, which I really love making. It's absolutely fishermen, peasant food. It's taking some things that you have that's valuable and stretching it with other ingredients. So in this case the fish is stretched with vegetables and tomatoes, and all that kind of stuff. The first step to making a delicious fish stew, is having a delicious broth. Since you can't start with fish bones it sounds like you're going to want to make that broth out of maybe if there are any broken little pieces or little end pieces. Again, avoid the salmon, but any of those white fish, you throw those in there, you throw some canned crushed tomatoes or tomato paste, any sort of tomatoey product. You could start with some white wine.

Hrishi: You're talking about the little dregs of frozen bits that might be in the bag of fish.

Samin: Yeah, just from the bag. Then you want to make like a little vegetabley base. I would saute some onion. I don't love carrot in my fish stew, but celery if you have it, or leek, or if you have any fennel tops, those are really good. All of those things throw them in a pot, and you just want to make a stock. The nice thing about fish stock or whatever veggie stock that you're going to make for this, is that it doesn't take all day. It takes 40 minutes. You basically bring it to a boil, simmer it for 30 minutes and then strain it. That's going to be your flavor base.

Hrishi: What do you do with the stuff that you strain out?

Samin: That's adios, that's compost. One weird thought that I'm having, which is a little like molecular gastronomy and not very classically Samin. But I kind of think it would help make a really delicious texture in your fish stew, is if you have any powdered gelatin, or even sheets of gelatin, after you strain your stock, I would dissolve that gelatin, just like a spoonful or one packet full, or one piece of one

sheet into the stock. Because you're not having fish bones and gelatin is going to make that texture of that stew. It's going to coat the inside of your mouth in a much more pleasant way. It's going to feel richer, and be a lot more delicious. That's really what fish bones add to stock anyway. You can take a shortcut by doing that. So, once you have this delicious, fragrant aromatic stock... Did I say white wine? There should be some white wine in there, maybe a lemon zest or an orange zest. Then that's the base of your soup. Now you can do whatever vegetables you like. You could take a canned tomato and chop that up. You could do onions, you could do garlic, you could do celery pieces and fennel. If you're hearing, I'm repeating a lot of the same stuff. What I would do is have some nicely chopped stuff that I set aside for the actual soup. Then all the ends and the bits and the skins and stuff like that go into the stock. That's how you can make use of every little bit. Then you cook those down until they're tender, pour your stock over, and then you can at the very end, add your frozen fish filets, and let them cook until they fall apart. I think people often have this fear that they're going to over cook their fish, which is a good fear to have. But in a stew like this, you really want to cook until everything flakes apart and falls apart. Because you want those delicious fallen apart flakes in your mouth. You don't want it to be so tough that it's holding together. Especially with cod, I think people tend to under cook cod when they're not familiar with it, and then you get rubbery cod.

Hrishi:

Oh, Cod No.

Samin:

Oh, and then what I would do, I don't know which autoimmune disease you have, because I have one too. But if you can eat wheat and eggs, then you make a beautiful piece of toast, that you rub with a clove of garlic, and you spoon garlic mayonnaise over. Then you float that in your fish soup. You just imagine that you're on the coast of Southern France with your glass of rosé and your fish soup.

Hrishi:

Samin has that been making things scarier for you, having an autoimmune disease this whole time?

Samin:

My autoimmune disease is I'm hypothyroid, so it's not quite the same as being immune compromised, I don't think. I'm fine. I'm just taking my pills, living in denial, the usual.

Hrishi:

Living in denial is one of the most important ingredients to getting through the quarantine.

Samin:

It's true.

Hrishi:

Let me turn your attention to another question that we got that is also sickness related. This one comes from Sarah.

Sarah:

Hi Samin and Hrishi. This is Sarah in Brooklyn. Unfortunately I am home sick with COVID. I have a mild case. One of the weirdest things about it is that you lose

your sense of smell and taste. This has really forced me to begin eating in different ways. Totally into Triscuits now because of the texture, and pineapple is seeming really good to me. I wondered if you guys could tell those of us who are maybe sick and recovering and have lost the sense of smell and taste, some things we could do to cook for texture, or cook for things different than taste. And PS, I just want to say thank you so much for starting this podcast. I've been sleeping 13 or 14 hours a day. The other day I was in the middle of a fever dream. Samin I totally thought we were hanging out together. Then I woke up and realized that I had left the radio on, and you were talking on an NPR show. It was a wonderful little reverie and this podcast is the next best thing to hanging out. Thank you for keeping us entertained and inspired. Take good care.

Samin: Oh Sarah, I hope you're already better by the time you listen to this.

Hrishi: Yeah, me too.

Samin: Okay, so I have a lot to say about this. When a person loses the sense of smell, which I think the percentage of taste that is smell is something like 75 or 80%. Without smell, you really can't taste much. That's called anosmia. I have a couple of family members who are anosmic.

Hrishi: Like permanently?

Samin: Well, one had an illness, and so there's possibility where her sense will come back. My mom's uncle has been anosmic I think for decades. This is something I've definitely thought about over the years. It's a bummer absolutely. Even I think any of us can relate just from when we have a stuffy nose and you can't taste, and how not appetizing often it feels to eat. I can't imagine that going on indefinitely, and I have a lot of compassion for people. But some weird factoids that I happen to know.

Hrishi: You can be our sensei.

Samin: No. Why did you have to do that right then? I was being so earnest.

Hrishi: Okay please continue.

Samin: Okay. Some weird factoids that will help you. Spiciness, like as in pepper, hot pepper is not a flavor. It's not a taste. It's a feeling. Spiciness does something to your actual body, and that has nothing to do with smell or taste. It actually causes you pain. It's a mild pain that we get used to, and that we come to love.

Hrishi: Like this podcast for you.

Samin: Yeah, kind of like this podcast. Exactly. I would say one thing that you could just do, is start introducing different kinds of chili oils and jalapeños and spicy spices, to create some sort of sensation in your eating. Another really important part of our experience of eating that is kind of we often forget about, is temperature.

Things like ice cream, hot things, cold things, creamy things, creamy cold things. Boiling, swallowing hot things. Soups I think would be exciting to eat, because you're having a hot experience in your mouth, or porridge or anything like that. A hot experience in your mouth. I'm surprised you didn't really just take that one.

Hrishi: Look, sometimes it's better to just leave it alone.

Samin: This podcast is for children.

Hrishi: Exactly, I don't want to offend anybody except for you.

Samin: Okay, okay.

Hrishi: Is there like a hot and spicy or like a hot and sour egg drop soup kind of thing that you might?

Samin: You're just trying to combine all the experiences into one dish.

Hrishi: Exactly yeah, into one dish.

Samin: I'm trying to give her general tips for how to spread out these things, okay. Heat is one. Lack of heat is another one. Spice is one, and then that brings us to texture, which is really going to be your best friend I think. I'm so curious about the pineapple one. I wonder what happened with the pineapple that gave you a yumminess. One of the most important ways that we derive pleasure from eating, is from having contrasts in texture and also in temperature. You want that hot thing next to that cold thing. You want that crispy thing next to that soft thing.

Hrishi: Put some pineapple on your Triscuit.

Samin: You want that pineapple on your Triscuit. I think what I would do is have your own little arsenal of crispy things that you sprinkle on top of other foods. Those can be all of those like Hrishi's za'atar, or furikake. Or toasted breadcrumbs that you crumble up into little teeny tiny krispies that you sprinkle on top.

Hrishi: Sometimes I smash up some almonds in a Ziploc bag and then sprinkle those on top.

Samin: I really like the sliced almonds. They're thin and brittle and ready to break on top of stuff. Nuts are a great source of that crunch for sure. You can make all sorts of toasted little greens and toasted quinoas. You can make fried, crispy rices, and fried crispy farro. Anything where you get an experience in your mouth other than just soft and chewy, is I think going to bring you some pleasure and some joy.

Hrishi: I love this idea that you can cook in a way that still provides pleasure, while thinking about things other than the sense of taste.

Samin: Well that's a nice thing for you to say, because I do think that that's what professional cooks are really trying to do, is make food enjoyable on more than one sensory level. They want it to be something playful visually to look at, or give you nostalgia when you smell it, or remind you of a funny story that you read.

Hrishi: They want you to have that hot experience in your mouth.

Samin: Exactly. I hate you.

Hrishi: Thank you Sarah.

Samin: Thanks Sarah. I really do hope you're better by the time you hear this.

Hrishi: Okay, changing topics, we got a couple of questions from people who have a surplus of certain vegetables and they don't know what to do with them.

Valerie: Hey Samin and Hrishi. Valerie here from Riverdale, Maryland. I'm definitely more of a gardener than a home cook. And as usual, I've gone completely overboard with the greens. I've got dinosaur kale, I've got scarlet kale, lemon basil, purple basil, Swiss chard, and strawberry spinach, literally coming out of my ears. Please save me from turning these beautiful greens into a bunch of pathetic salads.

Samin: Literally?

Hrishi: She's got them literally coming out of her ears. She has problems that we cannot help with.

Samin: That part you've got to call your ear, nose, and throat doctor.

Hrishi: What do you think? The dinosaur kale, scarlet kale, lemon basil, purple basil, Swiss chard, and strawberry spinach.

Samin: I don't know what strawberry spinach is, but I got to try that. All right, two things come to mind for me. There is a recipe by an amazing cookbook author named Paula Wolfert for herb jam. She basically takes every random green thing that she's got, including and especially herbs, but also all of those other things you listed are fine, and cooks them down. And so for the tougher things like the kale, I might blanch them first or saute them first separately until they're tender. You cook everything, you chop it until it's super fine. You could absolutely do this in a food processor to save you your arm.

Hrishi: Wait, you chop it first, then you cook it down?

Samin: No, you have to cook it down and then chop it, for the tough stuff. And then for the delicate things like the basil, you could chop afterward. Although, I think everything benefits from a saute first then a chop and then a second saute. This dish gets cooked for a really long time. You can add any allium you have. I like it with finely chopped shallots or onions that are cooked down also.

Hrishi: I love it when you say things like allium.

Samin: Allium? Oh yeah, sorry. Using fancy words.

Hrishi: No, I love it. It makes it feel like our podcast is so high class.

Samin: It's not a high class. Lots of just lies and deception. It's an onion family. Onion or garlic family is an allium. Things like leaks would be really good in this, and you could even use the green parts of a leak. Green garlic is a garlic plant that's been pulled from the ground in the spring rather than the summer before the bulb has formed. So you could use all of that whole thing, the greens and the whites. And you just chop everything really finely and you just cook it. You cook it, you cook it. That's why it's called jam. And it turns into some other thing. It won't resemble greens at all anymore. It gets sweet and sort of jammy and it just has this incredible texture. A lot of times people will finish it with pieces of olive. Kind of make it like tapenadey thing. You could squeeze a whole lemon in there or you could put pieces of lemon zest in there.

Hrishi: And then how do you eat it? Is it the main dish?

Samin: You can't stop eating it. No, it's not a main dish usually. Usually, it's something that you spread on toast or crackers. It would also be good-

Hrishi: On a Triscuits.

Samin: Here I am again, on a Triscuit or with white beans. Jesus. It would be actually really delicious with some potatoes. It would be so good with a frittata. It is something where you're like, "How did this get made out of waste? I don't understand. It's so good." And a similar dish kind of with a different final result is a Persian dish called kuku sabzi, which kuku is our word for frittata and sabzi is our word for greens or green things. And so in Persian cooking, what we do typically is we cook the greens twice, just like I said. So you'll cook the kind of tougher things down first, chop them up and then you fry them until they start to turn almost really dark and sweet and fragrant, and then you crack the eggs over. And the thing about a kuku sabzi is that the proportion of egg to greens is about inverse of what you might think of a typical frittata. So it's really greens bound together by egg, rather than egg sort of with some greens in it. And it gets really brown and sweet on the outside. It's just like eating a piece of healthy greenness. It's like a quiche without a crust, kind of. And it's also not custardy like a quiche. I don't know how to describe it. It's just its own special thing. So I have a recipe for kuku sabzi in my book. I have one in the New York

Times. I'm sure there's plenty of them free on the internet. And also you can find Paula Wolfert herb jam on the internet too. We'll link to all this stuff.

Hrishi: Sounds great. Okay, here's a question from Naomi. She's also got a lot of veggies.

Naomi: Hi Samin and Hrishi, this is Naomi. Like a lot of people, we're getting a veggie delivery box to cut down on our runs to the grocery store. And like any farm share, we end up with some stuff that we might not choose and that we don't necessarily know how to use. So things like turnips, and big radishes, and beets. Things that keep well and I'm sure can be delicious, but I'm just not quite sure what to do with them. So any tips you have would be great. Thanks so much.

Hrishi: The last question specifically asked to avoid giving the advice of salads. You don't make friends with salad. But Naomi has not given us that restriction so-

Samin: Are you going to tell her to make a turnip, big radish and beet salad?

Hrishi: Doesn't it seem like a easy answer?

Samin: Is that what you want to eat?

Hrishi: I like...What is a turnip?

Samin: Oh my gatos.

Hrishi: I know what a turnip is, but I don't know how you would... How do you cook a turnip? When I think of a turnip, I want it to be roasted and given to me like a French fry.

Samin: Yeah. That's basically what I was going to say. All four of those things would benefit from roasting, maybe not together on the same tray. And they all need slightly different treatment. But I'm going to give you at least one thing to do with each of them. Turnips, I would either make mashed turnips, kind of like mashed potatoes. Make them super buttery and delicious. Maybe even with some brown butter. Do you know what brown butter is, Hrishi? Oh yeah, you do because of your cookies.

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: Yeah. So it's just butter that you cook until it starts to sputter and turn brown.

Hrishi: It's magic. It's unbelievable.

Samin: It is unbelievable. It's a whole other thing. You're like, "How did butter become this?" It's nutty and delicious. So I think that on some sort of steamed or boiled turnips that have been mashed would be really yummy. So if it's a sweeter sort of smaller turnip, I would probably just go straight into the roast. If it's a really

sweetened baby I would boil it and just drizzle some salt and olive oil in it and eat it like that. But I do think turnips really benefit from roasting with olive oil or coconut oil or any other oil that you have, and salt. That browning really brings out their sweetness and they're just really delicious. So that's kind of like a turnip French fry, like what you said.

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: With roasting vegetables like that, I really think you have to sort of obey a couple things. One is make sure all the pieces are approximately the same size. Two, really do that thing that you don't want to do and dirty an extra bowl by tossing all of the vegetables with oil and salt in this bowl to make sure they're covered on all sides. Then, spread them out on the baking sheet in a single layer. Make sure that they're not really touching because the more space that you leave between them, the more space there is for steam to escape and for browning to happen. When you cram stuff onto a single tray and there's just no room between, that's when you get a weird tray of steamed vegetables, not roasted brown crispy vegetables. So this is true for broccoli, cauliflower, anything else. Carrots, all that kind of stuff. Spread it out. And the ideal roasting temperature is probably 400 or 425. And also I baby my stuff that's in the oven. And I turn it, I flip it, I rotate the pan, I put the pan on a different rack as it's cooking to make sure it's cooking evenly. But you'll be rewarded with delicious crispiness and sweetness. Radishes, depending on what kind of radishes they are and what you're feeling, you can treat exactly the same as the turnips. If you're feeling like you just don't want to do separate preparations for all this stuff, you could actually combine the radishes and the turnips on the same tray. I'm breaking my own rule because they're very similar in constitution, and as long as you cut them into similar sized pieces.

Hrishi: Yeah

Samin: If you feel like making something different with the radishes, you could cut them into matchstick pieces or very thin slices and make a delicious pickle, a light pickle, by just covering them with if you have rice wine vinegar, rice wine is probably the yummiest for this particular thing. And maybe a mixture of rice wine vinegar and salt and sugar, and just letting them sit for anywhere from 15 minutes to 45 minutes. And then you'll have kind of like a little Japanese style pickle, which would be really a nice thing to put in a sandwich to eat with a hard-cooked egg. I don't know, just keep a jar of it in your fridge for when you want that little crunchy pickle. For the beets, my favorite way to make beets is roasting them. But it's kind of a combo of a roast and a steam. So I wash all the dirt off my beets, and then I put them in a roasting pan or a baking dish and maybe, like a quarter inch, a centimeter of water in there. Some salt. And then I always, because I'm a freak and I don't like foil to touch my food when possible, I put parchment directly over the beets and then foil directly over that, and make as tight of a seal as possible. And then you can throw that into that same 400 degree oven if you want, or hotter. You can go all the way to 500. And really what you're doing is you're steaming those beets until they're all the way soft.

And the thing about beets is they have to get cooked all the way through. You have to cook them until you can pierce them with a knife. And it's like, what's that saying? Hot knife, cold butter.

Hrishi: Like a hot knife through butter.

Samin: Like a hot knife through butter. And then when they come out you can use a paper towel to rub and peel them, chop them into whatever size pieces you like, whether that's wedges or slices. Drizzle with vinegar of any kind. Rice wine, red wine or white wine vinegar probably are the three I would choose. And salt and olive oil, and let that sit. And those become lightly pickled beets that are delicious to eat with a salad, with a hard-cooked egg. I had earlier said they would be really good in a lentil salad. So those are kind of things that you just keep in your fridge and you eat over the course of the week.

Hrishi: Can I tell you about a beet dish that I had recently that I was really excited about?

Samin: Oh, no. No, you can't.

Hrishi: No, it's not a joke. It's real.

Samin: Okay. I don't trust you.

Hrishi: Lindsey roasted some beets, and I was trying to figure out what to make with them. So I made a tuna fish sandwich to go with them. And by the way, the tuna fish sandwich was a real triumph for me because I realized that we didn't have any mayonnaise and I made mayonnaise.

Samin: You made mayonnaise?

Hrishi: Yeah.

Samin: How?

Hrishi: With an egg, and mustard, and a blender, and oil.

Samin: I'm so proud of you.

Hrishi: It took so long, but it worked.

Samin: I'm so proud. I'm floored.

Hrishi: I couldn't believe that it worked.

Samin: I couldn't believe you did it.

Hrishi: Yeah. We did not have the right ingredients for it. I didn't have a white wine or red wine vinegar, so I used apple cider vinegar. And I didn't have-

Samin: Oh, it doesn't matter.

Hrishi: I didn't have Dijon mustard

Samin: It doesn't matter. None of that matters.

Hrishi: So made the mayonnaise and then made the tuna fish sandwich with that then we ate the beets with that Magic Unicorn Salt.

Samin: No way.

Hrishi: That Magic Unicorn Sea Salt sprinkled on top and it was so good. Anyway, this was supposed to be a story about beets, but it ended up being about mayonnaise.

Samin: Thanks, Naomi. Thanks for calling in. I hope that we gave you some inspiration to get through that box.

Hrishi: I hope you have some good square meals with your roots. Some square roots.

Samin: No.

Hrishi: No. Okay thanks, Naomi.

Samin: We've lost our minds. The marbles are gone.

Hrishi: Yep.

Samin: Honestly, that's what is up this week. Marbles gone.

Hrishi: Let's go from the vegetables themselves to something that you might put on the vegetables. We got a question from Kim. Let me play it for you.

Kim: Hi Samin and Hrishi, This is Kim calling from Arizona. And my question is about vinegarettes. I love a good vinegarette, and Samin, you talk about them a lot and putting them on all kinds of different things, but I am just really not good at making them at home. I somehow get the ratios wrong, they taste too oily. And so I want your instructions and maybe a recipe or two on making a really good vinegarette. Thanks.

Hrishi: Oh, this is good. I want to know this as well.

Samin: Okay, I'm ready. I'm so ready because I have the best vinegarette recipe in the whole wide world.

Hrishi: Hit me.

Samin: It's not even mine. And the thing about it is I can speak so confidently about it because it's not mine, because it's the salad dressing from my very favorite salad in the whole wide world, which is the green salad at a restaurant called Via Carota in New York. And I was so obsessed and am so obsessed with this salad that I wrote an entire column about it. And I don't choose the headlines the New York Times uses. What was the headline that they used for this?

Hrishi: They said, "The best green salad in the world."

Samin: The best green salad in the world. And I was like, "I did not say that, but okay, cool." I was like, "I do agree, I do support this." It really is so, so, so delicious. And the secret is-

Hrishi: Oh, side question before you tell us the secret. Was there any kind of issue extracting the secret from the restaurant?

Samin: Honestly, no. I just called and asked. I've known the chefs for a while and I begged them to share it with me and they did. And what was so amazing was that I was in New York the week after the story ran, and when I went, they were like, "Oh, we have to get salad deliveries twice a day now. We you go through 200 cases of salad lettuce a week now."

Hrishi: Because of the article?

Samin: Because of the article.

Hrishi: Wow, that's awesome.

Samin: And it's a really popular restaurant. I really didn't think anything I would say it would make such a big deal. But it was so funny. I was like, "Ooh, sorry."

Hrishi: Okay. What's the secret?

Samin: So the secret to most people at home, I think it's twofold. One is maybe not something most people can do anything about right now, which is I do think the quality of your olive oil makes a big difference. So having good fresh olive oil that's not rancid. And by fresh I mean pressed in the last year, is really what I mean.

Hrishi: Can I interrupt you there, again?

Samin: Yeah.

Hrishi: Just on olive oil. As you know, I don't drink wine and so I know nothing about wine, but sometimes it is my job to go get a bottle of wine for a party or for my

wife or something like that. And I feel like I am just choosing blindly based on the-

Samin: The label and the price.

Hrishi: The label and the price. Exactly. And then I feel similarly with olive oil.

Samin: Totally.

Hrishi: I don't know what is a high-quality olive oil when they all say extra Virgin, other than the price.

Samin: Totally. The main thing that I can tell you that's going to make a difference in the store is to look for a date.

Hrishi: I'm married already.

Samin: Oh my God. I can't wait for this podcast to be over. Okay, I'm back.

Hrishi: All right. So you go to the store, you find someone cute, you ask them out.

Samin: Yeah. Well, I don't know how to do that.

Hrishi: Step one. What's step two?

Samin: Once you have your partner... No, really, to find a date of production on the label. Either it's the expiration date or it's the date of production. If your olive oil has one or both of those dates on it, it's already a good olive oil. Certainly you want it to say that it's extra virgin, but having a date and making sure that it's not expired. If it's a date of production, know that olive oil has about a year to 14 months in it. If that date of production is older than 2019 fall, ... Also, because olive oil is pretty much, unless it comes from the southern hemisphere, it's almost universally pressed in the fall. If it's later than fall or winter of 2019, then it's old oil, and it's probably bad. So, that's one really helpful way to know.

Hrishi: Okay.

Samin: Start with that when you are able to go back to a store and look at all the olive oils. But the other thing I think that's the main mistake that most people at home make, who are not trained cooks or really active home cooks, is they don't put enough acid in their vinaigrette. By acid I mean lemon juice and/or vinegar. For me, I like to layer my acids. I like to use more than one form, because I think it adds dimension. That puckeriness is certainly a big part of what makes salad really delightful to eat, especially if the salad is rich in any way, if there's cheese or anything in it, or if it's very starchy, like if it has a lot of croutons, or if it's a bread salad, or you're pouring your vinaigrette over potatoes or beans. You really want to make sure it's acidic, so that it sort of gives you a pucker. It should make your eyes kind of open up.

Hrishi: Is that maybe what Kimberly is lacking in terms of why it tastes too oily?

Samin: Yeah, definitely. Definitely. The nice thing about this recipe, which I'm going to link to, it really only has one form of vinegar. It just has Sherry vinegar in it, but it has two kinds of mustard in it. Actually, what's kind of really weird and delightful about this is that the chefs temper that acidity with a little bit of water. There's just ... I don't know why this recipe works. It kind of is the opposite of everything I've always believed and understood, which I don't know, maybe that's why it's so good. I really couldn't tell you. It is addictive, though. It's so good, this dressing. I pour it on everything. I pour it over just boiled asparagus. I pour it on grain salads. I use it on my green salad, but it makes me want to eat salad, which is why I think you will like it too. The nice thing about it too, is that you don't even have to do the step called maceration, which is letting the shallot or allium sit in vinegar or lemon juice for a long time, to sort of tame its fire. For whatever reason, this doesn't have that, and it still works. It's so good. You just take a shallot and you mince it, and then this has two tablespoons plus one teaspoon of aged Sherry vinegar. In these dark times, if you don't have Sherry vinegar, you might be able to get away with red wine vinegar. A tablespoon of warm water, one cup extra virgin olive oil, one and a half teaspoons each of Dijon and whole grain mustard. You could also, if you don't have both kinds, make do with one or the other. One and a half teaspoons of honey. She puts in two sprigs of thyme that are stripped. If you don't have fresh thyme right now, that's fine. One large clove of garlic, and salt, and freshly ground black pepper. The garlic is finely grated or pounded in a mortar and pestle, into a paste. If you just mix all that up and shake it, it should taste delicious. You might need to adjust it one tiny bit one way or another with either salt or vinegar or olive oil. The way I test any vinaigrette is I dip a piece of the lettuce that I'm going to eat it on, or a piece of whatever I'm going to eat it on, in it and I eat them together. Because there is no way that you're really going to be able to make that judgment without the thing that you're dressing.

Hrishi: Is this something that you could make a lot of and then keep in your fridge, or does it have to be used pretty quickly?

Samin: This recipe does make kind of a lot, actually, because it still has a whole cup of olive oil. This is definitely enough for two large salads for a family, two big dinner salads. I've kept it in the fridge for up to four days successfully. After that, you got to make it fresh.

Hrishi: That sounds so good.

Samin: It's like honestly, sitting here and looking at this recipe on this picture of the salad makes me want to go downstairs and make salad, and it's 9:48 P.M.

Hrishi: Thanks, Kim.

Samin: So now we're going to give our friend, Wesley Morris, a call. He is one of my favorite writers at the New York Times. He writes all about culture and movies and I've heard he's a really good cook.

Hrishi: All right. Let's give him a call.

Wesley: I have right now three cookbooks open on top of each other, and one of them is yours. And I don't have a great food imagination, but I have a real eagerness and a determination and an openness. So if you give me the manuals I can put the meal together. But I can't handle these large portions. These large amounts of food that some of these recipes leave you with. And it's not because I can't eat it, it's because I can.

Samin: Oh, same, same. Totally. What's the best thing that you've made so far, that you both love and hate?

Wesley: Well I had never baked a cake before, the last month. I have this beautiful stand mixer that I'd been using to make pie crusts-

Samin: I've heard about your pies.

Wesley: It's the only thing I could say, unequivocally, I'm pretty good at making a pie. It's gotten a lot better since you came into my life-

Samin: Awe

Hrishi: Oh, thank you

Samin: But you made cake, tell us about the cake.

Wesley: I made the Times', I don't know whose recipe it is, it's Melissa Clark. So it's her pantry crumb cake-

Samin: Oh yeah, that cake is so good.

Wesley: It's very good and it's very easy in the scheme of things. Hrishi, have you made this?

Hrishi: No, but I love crumb cake.

Wesley: It's a relatively very simple recipe. It's just all the things that you need to make a good cake, except she is into the ground spice portion, she gives you the option of having cinnamon, ginger, cardamom, nutmeg, or some combination of those things.

Samin: Do you use yogurt? Which thing did you use?

Wesley: Oh, great question. I used crème fraiche the first time I made it, and yogurt the second time.

Hrishi: So you've made this cake twice so far? When you were asking if I had ever made this, my problem is I'm going to make it and then I'm going to eat the entire thing in one sitting so it's really dangerous.

Samin: Oh, me too. Well that's the other part of it I just become like a bottomless pit. So I just have to give everything away. I will make it, eat one slice, and then give the thing away. I have actually been the person where - I feel like this is some classic moment from a television show, but I put the thing in the compost so that I would stop eating it, and then the next morning I was like, "It's just on top."

Wesley: Samin! Really!?

Samin: I fully have done that. So the only way to not eat it is I have to put it out of my house. I am the person that, when I'm in my bedroom, there's a little voice calling me from the refrigerator and like, "Samin, I'm that last piece of pizza. Samin, I'm the other peanut butter cup, come eat me, I'm lonely."

Wesley: Listen, I hear you.

Samin: I saw something about you, Hrishi, over the weekend. You made cookies and you made them extra large so that you could say you just ate two cookies or something.

Hrishi: Exactly. It was four.

Wesley: I don't know, nice nice try.

Hrishi: Okay wait so Wesley, you've made the crumb cake twice so far, do you think you're going to make it again?

Wesley: Oh my God, yeah. It's really good. And I will add more nuts to it, and it keeps really well. Like some things I just get nervous about eating after a week, but this is not very good out of the oven. It is delicious with one day behind it.

Samin: Ooh!

Hrishi: All right, I'm going to try it.

Wesley: You should definitely try it. You should definitely, definitely try it.

Samin: I'm gonna make it again.

Hrishi: Awesome, thanks so much Wesley.

Samin: Thank you! Take care, stay well.

Wesley: Oh my God, this was a pleasure. It was a real pleasure.

Hrishi: You can follow Wesley on Twitter @wesley_morris. And you can find Still Processing wherever you get your podcasts.

Samin: Okay, what else you got?

Hrishi: Here's a question that I love that we got from Tim. He wrote, "When boiling eggs, should you start with the water cold, or on a rolling boil like with poaching?"

Samin: Okay. There are as many answers as there are eggs in the world, to this question. There are as many ways to boil an egg, and in fact, Kenji Lopez-Alt wrote a whole thing about how the best way to boil an egg is to steam an egg. You can find any answer that you like out there. My guaranteed way for boiling eggs is to start with the water at a boil and to gently lower the eggs in with a slotted spoon one at a time. Because I just know how to ... That's the way I was taught how to do it. That's how I know how to set a timer. I know what one minute, two minutes, four minutes, six minutes, eight minutes all look like. It also will ... The timing will also depend on whether or not your eggs are at room temperature or refrigerator temperature when you start. I have a really fun drawing in my book that we'll post a picture of on the website.

Hrishi: Oh, I love that drawing.

Samin: Yeah, it's my favorite drawing from the whole book, that's sort of an egg boiling chart. I do start with boiling water and I go straight from the boiling water into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking. Under no circumstances do I ever boil eggs longer than 10 minutes. I've never in my professional cooking career ever done that. I think 10 minutes is your max, if you want a real glossy, perfect yolk that leaves a clean knife but cuts cleanly, I think eight minutes is really nice, and then less than that you get into the jammy state.

Hrishi: You know what's good when things get jammy? Beats.

Samin: Oh God.

Hrishi: Hot beats.

Samin: What did I do to deserve this?

Hrishi: Well that's it for this episode.

Samin: Thanks to Margaret Miller for editing, Zack McNeise for mixing the show, and Gary Lee and Casey Deal for their help too.

Hrishi: Thanks so much to dad, Dr. Sumesh Hirway, and New York Times critic at large, Wesley Morris.

Samin: Let us know if you have any cooking related questions. Call us at 201-241-COOK

Hrishi: Or send us a voice memo at alittlehomecooking@gmail.com. You can find instructions on how to record a voice memo on our website.

Samin: Which is homecooking.show. You can also find me on Twitter and Instagram @ciaosamin.

Hrishi: I'm @hrishihirway.

Samin: Stay healthy, eat well, and take care of each other.

Hrishi: We'll be back soon with another episode.

Samin: Until then, I'm Samin.

Hrishi: And I'm Hrishi.

Samin: And we'll be home cooking!