

Food is an integral part of my story telling. To me, food is comfort, warmth, joy, and all good things.

Here are the recipes that Diego and Jess either make or talk about during the book *Metalsome Hearts*. Enjoy and ROCK ON.

KatieB

** For more of my favorite recipes visit my website: <https://authorkatiebaldwin.com/category/recipes/>

Soup is good food.

When Jess is recovering, Diego makes an Ecuadorian potato soup that she loves. This recipe is one of my favorite comfort foods. As a child, I lived in Quito Ecuador, and nothing warmed the soul like this soup.



Locro De Papas (Ecuadorian potato soup)

Serves 4 people if this is the main dish

- 2 teaspoons [annatto \(achiote\) seeds](#)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 1/2 lb russet potatoes
- 1 cup chopped white or yellow onion
- 1 rounded teaspoon of ground cumin
- 2 1/4 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 7 cups water
- 1 cup whole milk
- 5 1/2 oz queso fresco (Mexican fresh cheese) (broken into 1/2 inch cubes)
- 2 (6- to 7-oz) firm-ripe avocados

Step 1

Heat annatto seeds and oil in a very small saucepan over low heat, until oil is bright red-orange and starts to simmer, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand 10 minutes. Don't take your eyes off of the pan for long or you will have a mess. The seeds pop when they're too hot.

Step 2

Peel potatoes and cut into 3/4-inch pieces. Chop the onions.

Step 3

Pour annatto oil through a fine-mesh sieve into a wide 7- to an 8-quart heavy Dutch oven pot, discarding solids. Cook the onions and about half of the potatoes (reserve remaining potatoes in a bowl of cold water) in annatto oil over moderately high heat, stirring, until onion is softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add cumin, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Add water (7 cups) and bring to a boil, scraping up any brown bits. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, until potatoes are very tender, 25 to 30 minutes, then mash into the broth. Or if you have an immersion blender that's even better!

Step 4

Meanwhile, quarter avocados lengthwise, then pit, peel, and cut into 1/2-inch cubes. THEN...

Go to the remaining potatoes in the bowl of cold water. Drain them, and add to stew, then simmer, partially covered, until tender, about 20 minutes. Stir in milk and cheese and increase heat to high, then bring to a simmer, stirring. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper.

Step 5

Serve stew in large soup bowls, topped with avocado.

Mama Belle's Scones

Diego's adopted mother, Belle, visits with Jess and brings her some scones. This is the recipe that she made and my personal favorite. It is largely based on America's Test Kitchen's Cream Scones.



Ingredients:

- 2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 cup of sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 5 tablespoons chilled unsalted butter, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup currants
- 1 cup heavy cream

****Food processor is helpful but not needed****

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 425 degrees.

Place flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt in large bowl or work bowl of food processor fitted with steel blade. Whisk together or pulse six times. (Or use your fingertips and quickly cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal.)

If using a food processor, remove the cover and distribute butter evenly over dry ingredients. Cover and pulse 12 times, each pulse lasting 1 second. Stir in currants. Transfer dough to large bowl.

Stir in heavy cream with rubber spatula or fork until dough begins to form, about 30 seconds.

Transfer dough and all dry, floury bits to countertop and knead the dough by hand just until it comes together into a rough, slightly sticky ball, 5 to 10 seconds. Cut scones into 8 wedges. Place wedges on ungreased baking sheet. I use a mini scone pan – I love it! If using the mini scone pan bake for 12 minutes. Remove from pan and reduce heat to 375 and bake for another 5 to 10 minutes.

If you molded the scones yourself, bake until scone tops are light brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Cool on wire rack for at least 10 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature

Taking care of her “men”

Later in the book, when the boys from the band are cranky because they have to perform during their break, Jess makes her family’s Spaghetti and Meatballs recipe. The guys go crazy over the homemade meal. In my mind, she is making my family’s recipe and here it is for you.

Spaghetti and Meatballs (with my Grandma Jo’s Garlic bread!)



Marinara sauce

- 1/2 cup good olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, diced
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 (32-ounce) cans crushed tomatoes
- 4 to 6 basil leaves
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter

In a large casserole pot, heat oil and 3 tablespoons of butter over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until soft and translucent, about 2 minutes. Add celery and carrots and season with salt and pepper. Sauté until all the vegetables are soft, about 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, basil, and bay leaves and simmer covered on low heat for 1 hour or until thick. Remove bay leaves and check for seasoning. Add final three tablespoons of butter.

Take out immersion blender and blend. Let cool. The trick to the perfect sauce is in the magical chemistry involved in reheating tomato sauce. That's when the sauce tastes the best! As you reheat the sauce drop in the meatballs.

Meatball recipe

- 2 slices white sandwich bread (crusts discarded), torn into small cubes (you can use about ¾ cup of breadcrumbs if you don't have the bread.)
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 3 parts ground chuck to one part ground pork. (or ¾ pound ground beef chuck ¼ pound ground pork)
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley leaves
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 small clove garlic, minced (or 1 teaspoon of precut garlic from jar)
- ¾ teaspoon table salt
- Ground black pepper

Step 1

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spray with cooking spray. Set aside.

Step 2

Combine bread and buttermilk in small bowl, mashing occasionally with fork, until smooth paste forms, about 10 minutes.

Step 3

Mix all meatball ingredients, including bread mixture and pepper in medium bowl. Lightly form 3 tablespoons of mixture into 1 1/2-inch round meatballs; repeat with remaining mixture to form approximately 14 meatballs.

Step 4

Bake until no longer pink inside, about 18-20 minutes. Turn on the broiler. Place the pan of meatballs 6-8 inches from the heat source and broil until brown and crisp, 4-5 minutes. Flip and brown the other side also. Remove from oven and pop into the tomato sauce!

Grandma Jo's Garlic Bread



Buy a nice fresh French bread from local store. If you can get it sliced – that's awesome.

- Salted butter (this is a guessing game as to how much to use. I start with 3 to 4 tablespoons and go from there.)
- 1 tsp Garlic powder
- Toasted sesame seeds
- Paprika
- Parmesan cheese or mix of parmesan, Romano and asiago will make the bread fantastic

Mix butter and garlic powder and slather on lightly toasted bread. (LIGHTLY – because it's going back in the oven.)

Toast sesame seeds and remove from pan immediately or they will burn. (Trust me)

Sprinkle the cheese or cheeses on top, then sprinkle with paprika. Bake on 350 for 5 to 8 minutes but keep an eye on it the whole time. Don't start reading a book! (Trust me.) Once the bread comes out with the cheese all melty, sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and behold the greatest garlic bread on earth. (Thank you, Grandma!)