

Saturday Meanderings



First peach blossom

How did another week go by so quickly? If anyone has the solution to slowing down time, please share. I am so happy you are joining me this Saturday to review the week's coming and goings on Saturday Meanderings.

What do you do when you are out of sorts? I either work out or don my apron and start baking/cooking/making. Since it's been a bit of an off week for me, I completed 5 workouts and accomplished quite of bit in the kitchen too.



Madeleines

Madeleines, French in origin, are very small sponge cakes with a distinctive shell-like shape acquired from being baked in pans with shell-shaped depressions. Three years ago I wrote a blog post about this recipe from Dessert University (see [here](#)). With a lemon glaze, these tasty morsels are worth making.

However, my existing Madeleine pan is a silicon pan which I DO NOT RECOMMEND. I literally threw this pan out after baking. New pans just arrived (see link [here](#)) and I will let you know if they pass the test. The problem with the silicone one is that it buckles in the oven, therefore the batter cannot lay evenly, resulting in brown edges and soggy centers.



Potatoes au Gratin before baking

This creamy-in-the-middle and crispy-on-top Hasselback Potatoes au Gratin recipe is a winner. I didn't realize that hasselback means stacking the thinly sliced potatoes accordion style. The recipe is doubled for a neighbor's birthday

celebration. If you are looking for a perfect au gratin recipe, this Serious Eats version is it. See recipe [here](#).



We are in the height of our citrus season here in Phoenix. What I love about our community is the sharing of fruit with each other. Steve, who lives a few streets over shares his Meyer lemons (soon to be marmalade) and my sweet neighbors, Dale and Dawn, let me take a big bag of lemons from their tree. Our regular lemon tree must be on sabbatical because not one lemon showed up this year.



Last year I discovered Preserved Lemons and cannot believe I have lived without them. We use them on fish, salads, pasta, you name it as I cannot get enough of this tangy, salty Moroccan ingredient. Preserved lemons take a few weeks to make so if you have access to fresh lemons, now is the time to do this. See my previous post for further details [here](#).



More to come next week about why I am making Valentine cookies now. This buttery Linzer cookie recipe from King Arthur Flour can be made with heart-shaped cookie cutters for a seasonal treat. Filled with raspberry jam, they are so yummy. See recipe [here](#).



In my neighborhood, there are water irrigation well containers scattered all over. Funny, but I never really noticed them until I went on a walk around the block. Nearly all of them are unsightly; some have covers, others not. We even found one buried under foliage in the front corner of our lot.



Well-Before

My creative neighbor and her husband (Tevia and Mitch) did a complete transformation to their inactive well. Using faux greens stapled to a wooden pallet, this once eyesore is now a decorative statement. Tevia will be using a Krylon UV Floral protectant spray to prevent discoloration from the sun during our hot summers (see product [here](#)).

Wouldn't this be a fun neighborhood project to clean up all the inactive wells?



Well-after

In a November Saturday Meanderings I did mention buying a Cashmere bag to protect the few cashmere items I own. With evidence of moth holes in one of my favorite sweaters, this bag is a worthwhile investment. See link [here](#). It comes in two sizes and I bought the larger one.



Cashmere Protective Pouch

Here is my feedback on this. First of all the size of the bag is deceiving. I can fit 3 sweaters, 2 large shawls and 1 scarf inside~and there is room for a few more things. The zipper goes around two sides for easy access. Will be ordering another one of these well-made bags for my husband's items.



Before I wish you a wonderful weekend, I need to share these last few photos with you. As my son is making a snowman in Washington, DC, we are having spectacular sunsets. Hard to believe we live in the same country!



Benjamin making a big snowball!



View from master bedroom porch



February in Phoenix

That's a wrap. Be well and enjoy a restful weekend!

Mary

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