

Empty Nester Recipes

And this week...

Very exciting news, for me at least. My photograph of last week's [Tomato and Tofu Panzanella](#), inspired by a Washington Post recipe, was featured in one of their Instagram stories. You can find it in my [Instagram highlights](#) should you wish to check it out.

I have been in New York since Thursday, either dining out or cooking for several people at a time; a bit of a change, and a nice one. Several of my dinners here have inspired me with ideas for recipes for this blog and it has been lovely to see family and friends.

It has only been a few months since I left Manhattan, but -- though there are people and places that I miss when I am not here -- I am looking forward to getting back to the Cape tomorrow. The number of people present at all times when one is out and about, the trash and the mess, and the constant jarring smells and noises of the city make my every last nerve jangle. They did when I lived here too, but there wasn't much that I could do about it. Of course, there is noise on the Cape, including the background swoosh of traffic, but there is not the constant, stressful assault on one's senses-- especially that of sound -- that there is here.

At my Cape house, there is the occasional racket of a storm and the more regular gentle, soothing pitter-patters and splashes of rain. There is sound and fury when winds come up, but most often simply the whispers of breezes, just enough to make tree leaves rustle companionably. There is bird song at dawn and dusk, and that can admittedly be cacophonous, especially in the summer months when the concert starts at four thirty in the morning and one wakes thinking one has been dropped in the center of a

bustling aviary. On and off throughout the day there are chipmunk and squirrel squeaks punctuated by more bird conversations, usually from squabbling blue jays or cooing mourning doves, and the answering cranky chitters from the cats at the window. Sometimes, when wild turkeys wander through the yard, there is the odd series of deep gobble-gobbles. Right now -- as soon as it gets dark -- there is a relentless chorus of crickets until daybreak which somehow becomes as white noise after a few hours and, most nights, we hear raccoons and possums scrabbling in the underbrush, and the occasional coyote howl or owl hoot.

Does that sound just as noisy as the Big Apple to you? Perhaps. But, in the midst of all of that semi-rural noise, there is the opportunity to unfurl the hubbub into single strands of sound and to listen to those properly, as well as the space to breathe and think deeply, luxuries that Manhattan -- despite the myriad of options that it has on tap -- does not offer me, so sensorially overwhelmed am I by what just seems to be a never-ending clamor of discordant notes.

But none of this has anything to do with cooking, so here is the weekly post recap of recipes that I transcribed for you before leaving for Manhattan, a very Japanese flavor-oriented menu, I just realized:

[Corn Curry with Yellow Rice](#)

[Cheat's Omuraisu \(Japanese Fried Rice Omelet\)](#)

[Hokkaido Beef with Pea Shoots](#)

[Apéritif Toasts](#)

[Pearl Barley-Veggie Bowl, Spice Oil](#)