

STAFF FAVORITES

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The Avocado Of Desire

My friend Stacy and I met just after college when we were both newcomers to the East with much that we missed about the West.

Though we had a lot of other things in common — underpaid internships, cramped apartments and an unquenchable thirst for wine — a love of cooking was not one of them. Though she didn't care to cook, Stacy almost always kept an avocado ripening on her kitchen counter so she could make, on a whim, her beloved avocado sandwich.

The open-faced convergence of lightly toasted bread and smashed avocado was actually less a sandwich than it was a smashwich. The avocado was gently smeared across the surface of a carefully cooled slice of toast, then drizzled with an indecent amount of cheap but fruity olive oil. It was ridiculously easy, yet she would assemble it as attentively as if she were putting the finishing touches on her wedding cake.

I think that the sandwich was, to her, a type of temporary West Coast fix. It was that to me as well. But it was also an unforgettable lesson in culinary simplicity.

My friendship with Stacy long ago fell by the wayside. But my fondness for her avocado smashwich has not.

Avocado Smashwich

Lightly toast a slice of bread — whole-grain, baguette, sourdough, it matters little — and set it aside to cool slightly. Then use a spoon to scoop out half of a very ripe avocado, place it in the center of the toast and, using the back of the spoon, gently smash the avocado ever so slightly, spreading it across the toast but not quite all the way to the crust. The avocado won't spread evenly, but that's okay. Drizzle the avocado lightly with a mild olive oil and, if desired, sprinkle with salt and a pinch of pepper.