

Teen Writes

Homework, lack of sleep stress out students

By Cecilia Chang

There is no doubt that Lamorinda holds their students to a high level. From the value of academics, extracurriculars and volunteer work, it may seem almost inevitable that students feel stressed.

Of course, stress is not always a bad thing; it motivates students to stay focused. But as the number of student suicides have been steadily increasing, lowering this stress may be worthwhile to look into.

Using an online survey of roughly 75 students based in the Lamorinda high schools, I asked how stressed they were on a scale of 1-10; the average was around 8. Two of the main factors for this seemed to be homework and lack of sleep. The average amount of homework students are currently receiving totals out to 4.5 hours. The suggested amount of homework for students with seven periods is around 2.3 hours of homework at most.

But this is not the student's main issue with homework. As one student, Devon Ashburn, states, "Most of the homework we receive is busy work. In my opinion, it doesn't help me learn more or gain more insight in the class."

The majority of the students surveyed seem to agree. The prevailing attitude seemed to be while students don't enjoy having lots of homework, they can tolerate it if it inspires them to learn more. Their biggest issue is they feel that teachers are giving massive amounts of tedious work, which doesn't motivate students.

In many cases, the amount of homework doesn't immediately equate to stress: the students want the homework to be useful, and help them understand the concept in class.

The other deciding factor in student stress: sleep. Seventy-nine percent of students surveyed say that they are not getting enough

sleep. Additionally, of these students, eighty-nine percent said this directly correlated to poor performance in class.

An anonymous student expresses this concern: "I sleep more than most people I know yet I've dropped to C's on tests because I couldn't possibly keep my eyes open."

The Acalanes Union High School District has been taking measures to lower student stress. In the 2017-18 school year, block scheduling will be put into place, in which the day is spaced out into intervals of four classes, two of which contain a free "academy period" and a late start. The aim of this schedule is explained best by student Erica Wilson: Theoretically, students will have more time to do homework, and be able to sleep more so it should be good. Also, if "academy periods" are utilized wisely by students this could be very helpful.

A one-week test run was put in place, and many people seem to agree that although the block scheduling helps to an extent, it is extremely hard to concentrate in long periods of time, and teachers seem to be more inclined to give out more homework, which quickly builds up.

The students of Lamorinda are the future of Lamorinda. For the sake of our future, it is important to ensure the well-being of our students while they juggle their busy academic, athletic and social lives.

Cecilia Chang, a student attending Campolindo High School, is set to graduate on the year 2020. At Campo, her favorite subjects are the sciences, including Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. In her spare time, she plays multiple instruments, and enjoys a multitude of sports, although not competitively.

Thoughtful Food

A yummy 'mishmash' of Israeli heritage

By Susie Iventosch

In December, I accompanied my husband on a business trip to Israel. One day, while he attended business meetings in Tel Aviv, I ran off for a full day of market touring and cooking with Orly Ziv, who runs a great little cooking school, Cook in Israel. The feast we prepared was mouthwatering, bursting with flavors of fresh local veggies, salads, falafel and a wonderful savory dish called Shakshouka.

Our tiny band of nomadic cooks met Orly at the Carmel Market in Tel Aviv, just four blocks from the sparkling Mediterranean Sea. The vibrant colors, sights and sounds of this dynamic market featured exotic and unusual veggies, spices, rice varieties, legumes and a host of cosmopolitan characters. Colossal bunches of waist-high leeks were stationed like sentinels in front of several produce stands.

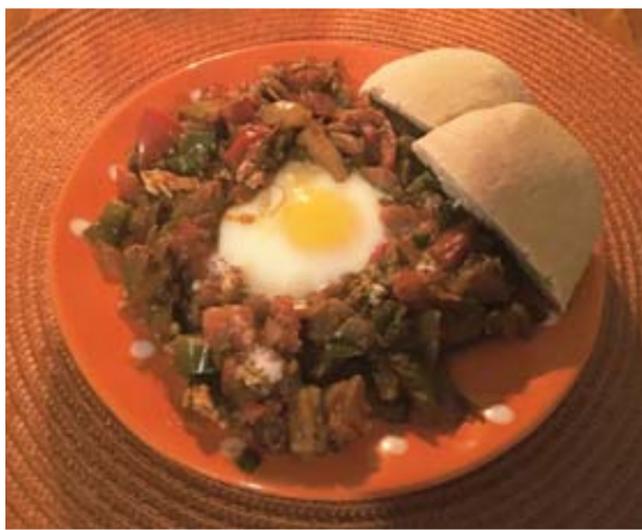
We learned about Moroccan paprika, which smells and tastes completely different than its Hungarian sibling due to the addition of olive oil, salt and, occasionally, hot peppers.

Also, Orly says there are about 200 types of garbanzo beans all over the world – some are much smaller than the garbanzo beans typically seen in the U.S., while others are similar in size. Orly uses a combination of the two for her hummus, but only the large ones for her falafel. "They must be dried and soaked for falafel, never cooked or from a can," she said. Glad to know, because the first time I attempted falafel using canned garbanzo beans, it was a disaster.

Venturing from the "shuk" (market) to the Yemenite quarter (Kerem HaTeimanim), we arrived at Scholom & Doron for breakfast. They served pita bread with hummus and fuul, a dip made of fava beans and very similar to hummus. Delicious! While in the Yemenite district we visited several of Orly's favorite haunts to sample a variety of breads including saluf, lahouch and pita, all very different, all delicacies. One stand served burika, a Libyan specialty made with mashed potatoes and eggs wrapped in pastry and deep-fried. There was a final stop at Orly's favorite juicer, Tikva, for a glass full of vitamins — fresh squeezed pomegranate juice with a splash of lime. This was a morning of true bliss for any bona fide foodie.

Just when we couldn't eat another bite, the party moved to Orly's home north of Tel Aviv for an afternoon of hands-on Israeli cooking. The menu boasted Malabi cream with rose water syrup for dessert, homemade pita bread, hot spicy tomato salad, falafel, tahini mixed with lemon juice and buttermilk, hummus and shakshouka (or shakshuka), a rich tomato and vegetable sauce with fresh eggs poached right in the sauce. My brother-in-law, Efi Lubliner, who was raised in Israel and now resides in Lafayette, said the word "shakshouka" simply means "a mix." He said that the closest direct translation might be "mishmash." And, what an appetizing mishmash it is! Shakshouka finds its origins in northern Africa, and can easily be served for any meal of the day.

Upon returning home, we made the entire feast for New Year's Day, and I am so pleased to be able to share Orly's recipes for both her pita bread and shakshouka. I added eggplant to the shakshouka, and really enjoyed that addition. You may find that you would like to add a different ingredient to your batch, too. After all, it is a mishmash.



Shakshouka

Photos Susie Iventosch

RECIPES

Shakshouka

INGREDIENTS

2-3 Tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, diced
1 red pepper, diced
1 Ortega chili, diced
1-2 Tbsp. tomato paste
2 serrano peppers, finely diced
1 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed
4 fresh ripe tomatoes, grated on a cheese grater, juices and pulp reserved
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. Moroccan paprika
1 tsp. cumin powder
1 tsp. ground caraway
4-6 eggs
Minced fresh parsley for garnish
Feta Cheese for garnish

DIRECTIONS

Peel and slice eggplant. Salt both sides and allow to sweat for about 30 minutes. Wipe off excess moisture and cut eggplant into small cubes. Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onion and paprika and sauté over medium heat for a few minutes until onion is translucent. Add garlic, cumin and caraway and continue to cook until fragrant, 3-4 minutes. Add eggplant, peppers and tomatoes (along with their juices) and sauté until vegetables are tender. Season with salt and reduce heat to simmer for about 8 minutes. Crack eggs into a small bowl, one at a time, and slide into the tomato mixture. Cover and cook for about 3-5 minutes or until egg whites are set and yolks are cooked as desired. Serve and sprinkle crumbled feta and parsley over each serving. Serve with fresh pita bread. (Recipe below.)
Note: The shakshouka will be chunkier or smoother, depending upon how finely you chop the vegetables.

Pita Bread

INGREDIENTS

½ kilogram all-purpose flour (500 grams)
15 grams fresh yeast or 8 grams dry yeast
1 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 ½ Tbsp. olive oil
350 grams water

DIRECTIONS

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Place flour and salt in the bowl of your mixer or KitchenAid. Sprinkle the yeast and brown sugar around the edges of the bowl. Add olive oil and half of the water and start mixing on low speed. Gradually add the rest of the water while mixing. The dough will look very sticky and wet. Continue to mix on medium-low speed for about 8 more minutes, or until the dough starts pulling away from the sides of the bowl. Cover the bowl and allow dough to rise in a warm spot in the kitchen for about one hour, until doubled in volume. Turn dough out of bowl onto a very lightly floured surface and form into a large loaf with your hands. (You will need to dust your hands with a little bit of flour, too.) Divide dough into 8-10 balls and allow to rise again for about 10 minutes. Using your fingertips, flatten and spread each ball into a flat shape, approximately 4-5 inches in diameter. Bake for 10 minutes. The pita is ready when you can see an air bubble in the middle of each round. These scones also freeze well. Thaw and reheat in a warm oven or toaster oven.



When I say "good," you say "neighbor."

Mike Rosa
Agent
925-376-2244
Insurance Lic. #: OF45583
346 Rheem Blvd., Suite 106
Moraga
P097314.1

Now that's teamwork.
CALL FOR A QUOTE 24/7

WE HAVE MOVED

State Farm
State Farm Home Office, Bloomington, IL

Theater View Veterinary Clinic



"Dr. Laurie" Langford

Theater View Veterinary Clinic, owned by Dr. Laurie Langford, is excited to announce a new addition. Dr. Amelia Ausman has joined our team. Come check us out.



Phone: (925) 317-3187
Fax: (925) 334-7017
Email: theatervieworinda@gmail.com
www.theaterviewvetclinic.com
1 Bates Blvd., Suite 200, Orinda

For more information on Cook in Israel, please visit www.cookinisreal.com.

Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

