

# A SLICE OF JESS

By Mathew Powers | Headshot by Julia Fain | Photos by Jessica Bentley

"I'm a self-taught chef who's cooking and eating her way through the Queen City of Charlotte, North Carolina." That gastronomical mindset serves as the inspiration for sliceofjess.com (Slice of Jess), created by Jess Bentley, the former accounting manager for PIER 39 in San Francisco, California's second-largest tourist attraction.

"My main goal is to help people feel comfortable in their own kitchen," says Jess. "If it's whipping up dinner or crafting a cocktail, I hope that my website inspires readers to cook with local, fresh produce and eat a more colorful plate." Jess also guides people with product and restaurant reviews, as well as educates followers on matters such as the differences between cherries and varieties of tomatoes. "Most of my recipes are a hodgepodge of ingredients that I find in my pantry, along with fresh produce from that week's visit to the farmers market," Jess notes. "Cooking for your family shouldn't be complicated."



But what's a good dinner without a fun drink? "During my downtime, I will often dabble around with different cocktail recipes to accompany our dinner, and I usually gravitate toward drinks that are five ingredients or less," Jess says. Of course, you would expect a passionate foodie to embrace local flavors, which she surely does: "I'm a big fan of bourbon and barbecue, as the smoky flavor of the meat complements the woody flavors of the spirit perfectly. One of my favorite twists on this flavor combination would be braised pork belly paired with a Spiced Old Fashioned. The sweet caramelization from the pork marries nicely with the essence of the cloves and cinnamon you'll taste in the cocktail."

Slice of Jess is not about dazzling you; it's about encouraging you. With step-by-step instructions, Jess helps followers cook kimchi cheeseburger tacos, prepare delicious raw food dishes and develop kid-friendly meals to ensure there's a little something for everybody.

