

# Jammy Tomato Cobbler (!! ) + Seven Questions

A recipe from + short Q&A with Emma Zimmerman from Hayden Flour Mills



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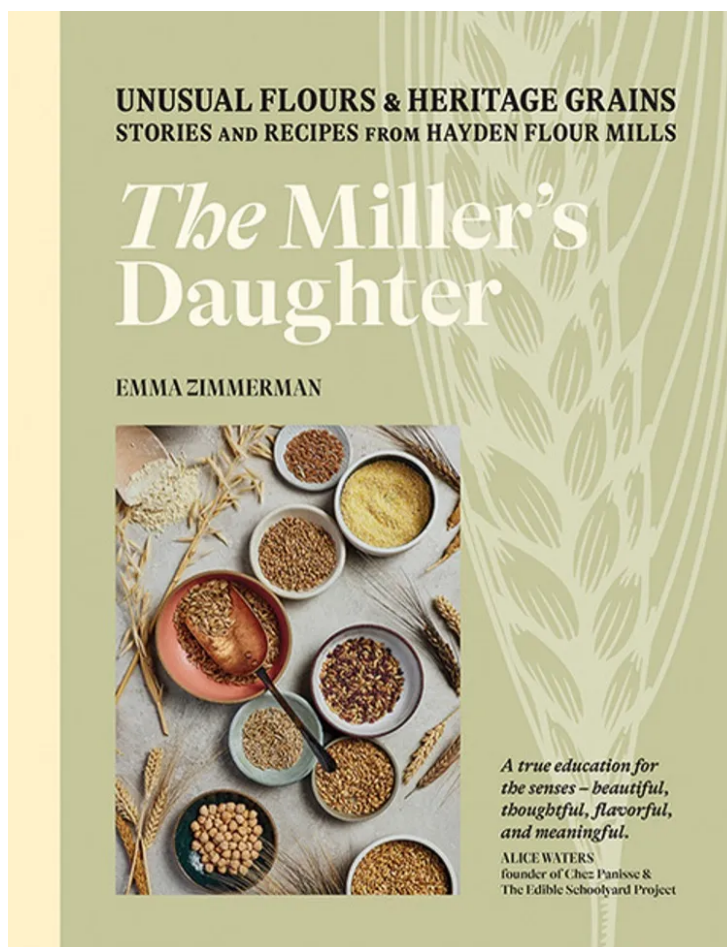


I come from a long line of people who relied on grains. My paternal great-grandparents ran a grain mill in rural Connecticut. My maternal great-grandfather was a flour miller. His son, my grandfather, became a baker and married my grandmother, whose family ran a bakery. Those grandparents fled Eastern Europe amidst pogroms and eventually ended up in Brooklyn, where they ran a Jewish bakery and raised my mom and my aunts.

So you can imagine how delighted I was a couple of months ago when I got a copy of Emma Zimmerman's new cookbook *The Miller's Daughter: Unusual Flours & Heritage Grains, Stories and Recipes from Hayden Flour Mills*.

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Emma works with her father, Jeff Zimmerman, at [Hayden Flour Mills](#) in Arizona where they revive and celebrate heritage grains. The book tells their story and also includes wonderful recipes that use all sorts of grains and flours made from them (rye, oats, farro, and more).



Emma was kind enough to answer my ‘Seven Questions’ (an every now-and-then Q&A I do with folks using the ‘Seven Meaningful Conversation Prompts’ from the back of *Simply Julia*) and offered her beautiful recipe for Jammy Tomato Cobbler— a wonderful recipe that’s so perfect for **TOMATO TIME!**

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## SEVEN QUESTIONS

**What was your favorite thing to eat growing up? Did you request something special for your birthday?**

My most requested meal growing up was Cheese Potato Soup with Dill with a slice of sourdough bread. That meal has stood the test of time. It was probably from the *Silver*

*Palate Cookbook* because that's where all the family favorites came from growing up.

I also remember when I turned 13, I requested a dinner party with my best friends. I should have known then that food and hospitality was in my future. The only thing I can remember from that menu was the "salty salad." The dressing was made in a large wooden salad bowl and the recipe went something like this: way too much garlic, sea salt and olive oil. I thought salad was the height of sophistication. Now I'm wondering if this salad was in vogue in the 90's. I definitely can't handle that level of mouth-burning garlic anymore.

**When was the last time someone surprised you with a random act of kindness? And/or when was the last time you surprised someone with one?**

I was recently struggling to push my kids in a double stroller up a hill in the middle of summer and this woman ran over and helped me push it the rest of the way. We were both out of breath by the time we got to the top of the hill. I think about her kindness all the time. Isn't it amazing how a small act of kindness can be so inspiring? When I'm in public I try to look out for moms that could use an extra hand.

**What's the most meaningful gift you've ever received? And/or the most meaningful one you've given?**

To commemorate five years of Hayden Flour Mills being in business my dad commissioned a painting as a surprise gift. My dad is terrible at keeping secrets so every day for a month he'd hint at this gift he was working on and try to get me to guess what it was.

It was done by a beloved local artist, Leo Bianco. It's a 6x7 inch painting of me standing in the field of our first harvest. Leo presented me with the painting when it was finished and I was so moved and surprised by such a meaningful gift. I really thought I was getting a crock of sauerkraut or some other kitchen experiment of my dad's. (Which I would have been equally excited about.)

A few years ago my sister and I made my mom a book of all her menus from over the years alongside photos of those meals. My mom always makes a menu and prints it out for any celebration meal. A menu is a simple way to delight guests as they anticipate what's coming next. I've been carrying on this tradition of making menus and I hope someday it will be a beautiful snap shot into our life for my children.

**What do you see when you close your eyes and picture your "happy place"?**

A field of White Sonora Wheat in early May. The air at that time of year is like an oven and the field smells like bread. But if you go out early enough in the day it's bearable. The sound of the wheat rattling in the wind and the birds chirping is one of my favorite soundtracks.

**What's the most recent finish line you crossed?**

Finishing my cookbook *The Miller's Daughter*. I put every ounce of energy and creativity into the manuscript. What I didn't realize was that after you turn in your manuscript it returns to you a few weeks later with one million edits. A classic false summit! Completing those edits felt like I was climbing Mt. Everest without oxygen. Even so, I would definitely do it all again. The whole process pushed me in a good way. I got to take a deep dive into the histories of all the grains we grow and mill and I became a better baker as I tested and retested recipes.

**If you were in charge of a large sum of money for your community, how would you distribute it?**

I would spend it all on composting education, tools and programs for everyone! I love composting and I think as well as doing great things for the planet it's just so fun to watch your food waste turn into amazing soil. It's so easy to compost but it's intimidating to get started and not everyone has the space so it'd be the perfect project to fund. It's hard to explain why I love composting so much. I think it's because compost is the leading metaphor of my life: taking everything that happens to me good and bad and letting it all become part of who I am and with time using it to grow something beautiful.

**Who is someone you'd like to write a thank-you note to? What would you say?**

My mom. First of all, my mom's measure of raising a good kid was if they wrote their thank you notes. So she would be thrilled that I finally put aside my rebellious ways and wrote a thank you note.

Now that I'm a mom of 3 I have a very long list of things to thank my mom for. My mom went back to school when I was in high school and did a PhD in education which was incredibly inspiring. She always had a garden, she made a family meal every night and she told us she loved us unconditionally every day. So I would thank her for that wealth of wonderful memories to draw on and pass on to my children.

# A RECIPE



## Jammy Tomato Cobbler with Sour Cream Cornmeal Biscuits

From Emma Zimmerman's *The Miller's Daughter: Unusual Flours & Heritage Grains, Stories and Recipes from Hayden Flour Mills.*

*While this is not exactly a dessert cobbler, it falls somewhere in between sweet and savory. The fig jam brings out the natural sweetness of the tomatoes and the cornmeal biscuits have just the right amount of saltiness. Whatever you call it, it's completely delicious and a great way to use up a bumper crop of cherry tomatoes.*

Serves 6

## **JAMMY TOMATOES**

60 ml (2 fl oz/¼ cup) olive oil

½ red onion, finely sliced

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

2 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary

540 g (1 lb 3 oz/4 cups) cherry tomatoes

3 tablespoons apple-cider or red wine vinegar

2 tablespoons fig or apricot jam

½ teaspoon fine sea salt

## **BISCUITS**

120 g (4 ½ oz/1 cup) all-purpose (plain) flour (or use bread flour or whole wheat flour)

140 g (5 oz/1 cup) yellow cornmeal

3 tablespoons granulated sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda (bicarbonate of soda)

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

115 g (4 oz/½ cup) butter, melted

120 ml (4 fl oz/½ cup) whole (full-cream) milk, plus extra for brushing

115 g (4 oz/½ cup) sour cream, plus extra to serve

115 g (4 oz/1 cup) grated sharp cheddar or gruyere

1 teaspoon chopped rosemary

**For the jammy tomatoes**, heat the olive oil in a 23 cm (9 in) cast-iron skillet or frying pan over a medium heat, add the onion and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the garlic, rosemary and cherry tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes, or until the tomatoes start to soften and collapse. Stir in the vinegar, jam and salt, reduce the heat to low and cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. This will allow the juices to reduce and thicken, creating this cobbler's signature jammy texture.

Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F).

Combine the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a large mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, mix together the butter, milk and sour cream. Pour the milk mixture into the dry ingredients and combine with a wooden spoon. Remove the tomatoes from the heat. Using two tablespoons, scoop up a generous portion of dough and gently drop it on the tomatoes. Repeat with the remaining dough, creating an evenly spaced layer of biscuits on top. They will expand as they bake, covering the tomato filling.

Brush the biscuits with extra milk and sprinkle with the cheese and rosemary. Bake for 35 minutes, or until the biscuits are golden. Allow to cool for 10 minutes and serve warm with a dollop of extra sour cream.

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Thanks so much to Emma for answering these questions and sharing this wonderful recipe.

Hope you're all staying cool + hydrated.

xo, Julia

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