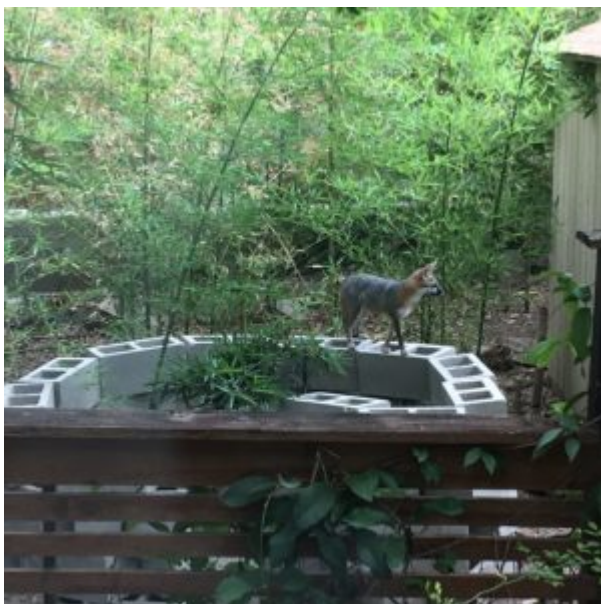


Family Lunch & A Fox Update

If you happened to read last week's blog post, you discovered that my latest book *Building Natural Immunity in Babies and Young Children* is now in the final edits and design stage. Now comes the fun part for sure as I watch my words come to life with illustrations and designs by the uber talented Christine Terrell.

Thank goodness the bulk of my writing was complete before I came to realize the gray fox family residing within perfect viewing from my office window. Seriously, who wouldn't be mesmerized by the free spirited play of four baby foxes under the close watch of their mama? I've read that when the gray fox feels safe and protected they will alter their nocturnal schedule, which this family has done much to my delight. The kits seem to be allowed out for a play in the late morning and again in the early evening. What a treat it is when I can catch them romping and wrestling just out my window! All is well until mama, sensing I have too much interest, leaps up on a brick planter to give me a few warning growls. Needless to say, they are slightly distracting and I am quite glad they didn't make themselves known a month ago!



Over the long weekend, however, I was able to pull myself away from my fox watching long enough to plan and prep a fabulous Memorial Day lunch with the whole family. Because we are a family of non-traditionalists, it should come as no surprise that while the rest of America was grilling away, I was in the kitchen dry roasting cumin, coriander, and coconut. Yes, I am still obsessed with Meera Sodha's, Fresh India. And, yes, I know this will be the third time I feature her cookbook in my blog, but the recipes are amazing and I do LOVE Indian food! So, if you would kindly allow me this one last gush, then I will let it rest and move on to something new. Honestly.

This time around, the girls and I shared the cooking which gave us an opportunity to have our own Indian feast. Meghan asked to make salad and tried out the **Hill Street Station Salad** of chopped fennel, red onion, sweet peppers, and cucumber. We replaced the Greek yogurt in the sweet and spicy lime dressing with a cashew cream and the whole thing was divine.



Kate took on the **Courgette Kofta in a Ginger Tomato Sauce** which could truly have been our meal in itself if I hadn't insisted on trying a few new recipes as well. Then I couldn't decide between the **Mangalorean Plantain Curry** and the **Weekend Dosas** filled with **Coconut Potatoes** so... What a feast we had!



Here's the plantain curry recipe to convince you to buy your own copy of Fresh India and discover your own family favorites.



Dry roast **2 tsp each of cumin and coriander Seeds** and **2 Tbl of fresh grated or desiccated coconut**. When toasted, remove from pan and grind with mortar and pestle or in a spice grinder as fine as possible.

Put **2 Tbl of coconut oil** in heavy pan to heat and add **250 grams of finely chopped shallots**. Once soft, add **4 cloves of finely chopped garlic**. On medium heat, cook until soft, careful not to burn.

Chop and add **4 large organic tomatoes** and cook until they collapse. Add the ground spices **1 tsp of chili powder, ¼ tsp of turmeric, 1.5 tsp of salt**, blending well,

Remove top and tail from **1.2 kilo of ripe plantains** (they will

have black spots on the skin and be slightly soft) and cut into quarters with peeling still intact. Halve each section then peel adding pieces directly to pan with tomatoes and spices. Stir well to coat.



Cover with **1 can of organic coconut milk** and **100ml of water**. Cook until plantains are tender. Transfer to serving bowl.

In small skillet, heat **1 Tbl coconut oil** and quickly fry **15 fresh curry leaves**. They will crackle and harden within a minute. Pour oil and leaves over top of curry and serve.

Lastly, because I am never quite sure when I will get my kids all together at the same time, I took this opportunity to get a photo for the back cover of my book. Trying to get them to be serious for any length of time is a challenge, but I think we captured one moment here.



This mom is pretty proud of her plant based crew!