



deliciously diabetic

28-DAY PROGRAM

bonus ecookbook + meal plans



For my family

xx

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welcome!

Welcome to the Deliciously Diabetic 28-Day Program. I'm so glad you've decided to join me.

This bonus eCookbook and 10 x weekly meal plans will give you a heads up with all the dinners in the program. If you'd like to get started changing your dinners, you can use this bonus to get going.

BUT please don't feel like you need to change everything yet.

In fact, I'd prefer if you took things slowly because you're more likely to succeed in getting the changes to stick for the long term.

That's what this program is about. Building a sustainable lifestyle that helps you meet your health goals and enjoying what you eat without ever feeling deprived or that you're missing out on your favourite foods.

The program is designed for you to change gradually, starting with breakfasts in week 1, lunches in week 2 and dinners the following week. If you can I encourage you to stick to the process.

But if you're itching to get going, you're welcome to use this bonus to make a start.

about your guide

I'm Jules Clancy, a former Food Scientist turned Food Writer and Type 2 Diabetic managing my blood sugar by eating (mostly) Low Carb.

I still remember one of the worst phone calls I ever received in my life...

It was from my doctor saying they had the results of a recent test and that I basically had Gestational Diabetes.

My mind was screaming...

"That can't be right... I eat so well. There must be a mistake."

But the results were there.

Anyway now I'm used to the idea, you'll be happy to know I don't feel like a 'failure' any more.

It actually started me on an incredible journey learning what I can about the whole diabetes, insulin, blood sugar and diet puzzle.

I believe you don't have to sacrifice the pleasure of food to be healthy. Even if you're diabetic, like me.

I'm super excited to have you in the Deliciously Diabetic 28-Day Program. I can wait to help you take the first steps to making real lasting changes to meet your health goals for the long term.

making the most of this eCookbook

1. Use Adobe Reader Apps. Make it easier to read PDFs and edit the shopping lists.

[Adobe Reader for your computer.](#)

[Adobe Reader for your mobile device.](#)

2. Save it in multiple locations. Have the recipes at your fingertips on your computers and mobile devices.

3. Use the search function. Got mushrooms in the fridge? A quick search and you'll have all the mushroom recipes ready to choose from.

4. Use hyperlinks and bookmarks. My favourite feature. Just click on the links and be taken instantly to your chosen page.

5. Make the most of the variations. Each recipe has at least 4 suggestions for alternatives to suit different dietary requirements.

6. Have fun in the kitchen! I hope these recipes and meal plans inspire you to enjoy your time in the kitchen as much as I do.

With love,
Jules x



11 mindset management strategies

**“Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t, you’re right either way.”
HENRY FORD**

Welcome!

This bonus training is designed to get your mindset ready for making some exciting AND lasting changes to your blood sugar and your health!

I wanted to start this training with the quote from Henry Ford because it’s one of my all time favourites.

It highlights the key message I wanted to convey... The biggest factor influencing whether you will get results is your mindset.

The actual lessons you’ll be learning around eating Low Carb are important but no matter how good the material is, if you don’t approach it with the right state of mind, you aren’t going to see real, lasting changes in your life.

Mindset 1. You Must Believe You Can Change

Here’s the thing. If you don’t believe you can make changes to your cooking and eating then it’s not going to happen.

But there is good news!

Everyone can get to a healthy place.

The key is to manage your thoughts and beliefs. Remember our Henry Ford quote... ‘If you think you can or can’t you’re right either way.’

If you have thoughts like “I’ll be miserable if I can’t eat bread”, you won’t stick to a Low Carb lifestyle.

So how do you overcome negative thoughts?

I have two techniques:

i. Turn the negative thought into a question. So instead of ‘I’ll be miserable if...’, ask ‘How can I make Low Carb work for me?’

ii. Connect with your compelling reasons for achieving your goals. Today’s activity is an exercise to walk you through this.

Mindset 2. You and Only You Can Find What’s Best for Your Life

You are a unique snowflake! Only you have your particular blend of taste preferences, genes and biochemistry.

These subtle differences are the reason why nutrition can be so confusing. It’s why there isn’t an easy one-size-fits-all solution.

The best part of this is only you can determine what is going to work best for you at this stage of your life.

It can be a little scary.

But it’s also empowering. You just need to keep ‘experimenting’ until you find the approach that works for you.

Mindset 3. Carbs Are NOT The Enemy

Blood sugar spikes every now and then aren't going to cause problems. It's long term exposure to high blood sugar that damages your health.

There's no need to swear off carbs for the rest of your life. And certainly no need to have a carb binge before we start the program.

What I am going to show you is how to make Low Carb a sustainable lifestyle choice. Not some strict diet that's impossible to stick to.

If you love bread, or pasta. Or if you're like my Irishman and can't live without potatoes, it's OK. In the program we're going to find the balance between enjoying your favourite foods AND achieving your health goals.

I know this may sound 'too good to be true', but trust me, I've found the balance for myself.

It IS possible!

Mindset 4. No Forbidden Foods!

Food moralizing, or labeling specific foods as 'good' or 'bad' is very destructive. And thinking of yourself as 'good' or 'bad' for eating these foods even more unhelpful.

Eating broccoli doesn't make you a 'good' person just as eating a brownie doesn't make you 'bad'.

With the Deliciously Diabetic program there are NO forbidden foods.

If you really want to eat honey straight off a spoon, we'll find a way for you to enjoy your indulgence AND still meet your health goals.

For me there aren't any foods I 'never' eat, except maybe tripe. There are plenty of things I save for 'special occasions' like mangoes and pasta and sourdough bread and salted caramel ice cream.

But nothing is ever completely 'off limits'.

Mindset 5. You and Only You Can Find What's Best for Your Life

The other part of not buying into food moralizing is refusing to feel guilt or shame around what you eat.

This has taken me a while to internalize. I find it's so much more helpful to be kind to myself. I explore what happened as a 'gentle detective', trying to find out what went wrong rather than using over-indulgence as an excuse to beat myself up.

Mindset 6. Quantity Counts

When researchers at the Australian research group CSIRO looked at dieters who had lost weight, they found the group who regained the weight had an 'all or nothing' diet mentality. SO they were either 100% compliant or they completely 'fell off the wagon'.

The group who kept the weight off for 12 months or longer saw healthy eating as a range of different options.

They didn't fall prey to the 'what the hell effect' which is when dieters binge after 'screwing up' their diet for the day.

The thing to remember is the amount you eat is just as important as what you eat. Having one slice of chocolate cake probably isn't going to do much damage, whereas eating the whole cake in one sitting isn't going to help.

Mindset 7. No Forbidden Foods!

Part of embracing a Low Carb lifestyle, focusing on eating real food, is that you're going to need to cook. Or at least 'assemble' some food at home.

If you're like me and love cooking, skip on to the next strategy.

If, on the other hand, you're not into cooking, we need to talk. If you're going to meet your health goals, home cooked meals makes it much much easier to get there.

So here's my challenge to you...

Could you 'reframe' how you think about cooking?

Rather than seeing it as another chore, could it mean something else? For me cooking is a chance to relax and unwind after a long day. It's an opportunity to indulge in some fun and creativity. Plus I get something tangible (and delicious!) to show for my efforts. So much better than an empty email inbox.

The more you cook, the easier and more fun it's going to be. You can do it!

Mindset 8. Real Healthy Food (especially vegetables) Taste Amazing if Prepared Properly

Healthy food has a bad reputation. Rice cakes and carrot sticks anyone?

Let me let you in on a secret... Much of the packaged crap that has been marketed as 'health food' isn't actually good for us. And it usually tastes terrible.

Want to know what IS good for you?

Real food. Especially veggies. And as I've discovered over the years, some of the most delicious food is fresh ingredients prepared simply.

I want you to start thinking about vegetables in a different light. If there's something you don't enjoy, there's no point in forcing yourself to eat it. Healthy eating is as much about pleasure as it is about nutrition.

If you haven't liked a particular veg in the past, it doesn't mean you won't ever like it. It just means you didn't like it prepared that way.

Keep an open mind.

When I was a child I HATED Brussels sprouts with a passion. But in the last few years I've grown to love them so much I'd have to include them in my top 10 favourite veg.

So what happened? First, I grew up.

As we grow our taste buds become less sensitive and more sophisticated so we appreciate different things. But the biggest game changer was trying a different cooking technique. My Mum (who was an amazing cook apart from her sprouts) used to boil her sprouts which retains a lot of the disgusting sulfur flavours.

But if you pan fry or roast them, you get rid of the icky sulfur flavours. Plus you get lovely crispy bits around the edges to enjoy.

It's like a completely different food!

Mindset 9. It's Never Too Late To Change

I love the Chinese proverb that the best time to plant a walnut tree was 40 years ago. And the second best time is now.

Don't beat yourself up for not getting on top of your food habits before. It was your past that led you to be right where you need to be... Joining this program!

Mindset 10. Your Health is a Journey Not a Destination.

One of the biggest problems with diets is that they focus your attention on getting to a particular weight or fitting into those jeans. So all your attention is focused on the outcome rather than the everyday changes that you need to make to get there.

But it's way more complex than that.

Your health is the accumulation of your food and other lifestyle choices over the weeks and months. Not one point in time.

The good news about this is that there's room for all the delicious and decadent foods you love in your (mostly) Low Carb lifestyle. That's where the (mostly) part comes in.

You can have your cake and have healthy blood sugar too.

It's all about taking a long term approach to find a sustainable balance and build your habits around this. It can take time but by taking small steps you'll not only get where you want to go. You'll be able to stay there!

11. You only 'fail' at something when you stop trying.

Making changes is hard. There will be setbacks along the way. That's a given no matter how dedicated you are.

The key thing to remember is that you only 'fail' when you give up or quit trying. So the answer is to treat 'failures' as learning experiences or experiments and keep trying!

When you find yourself eating more carbs than you should, that's not the time to quit. Use it as a chance to 'double down' on your commitment to achieving your health goals.

It's easier than you think.

RECIPE index

VEGETARIAN

Easy 1-Dish Ratatouille
Chilli Oil Halloumi
Melt-in-the-mouth Savoury Cheesecake
Broccoli & Goats Cheese Soup
Cheesy Broccoli
Goats Cheese & Basil Omelette
The 'Pizza' Baked Frittata
Cauliflower Pizza
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FISH & SEAFOOD

Fast Roast Fish & Snow Peas
Fast Roast Salmon & Peppers
Crispy Fish with Tahini Yoghurt & Walnut Herb Salad
Fish Steaks with Olive Tapenade

Easy Fish Curry
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Tuna Melts

RED MEAT

Eggplant & Chorizo Supper
Pepper Steak with Ricotta
Quick Beef Ragu
Killer Kale Gratin
Quick Steak & Rocket Salad
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Broccoli, Bacon & Avocado Salad
Bacon Sang Choi Bau
Pork Kebabs with Zucchini Tzatziki

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RECIPE index

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Super Green Saag Chicken
Thai Chicken & Zucchini 'Rice'
Chicken with Red Pepper & Hazelnut Sauce
Zucchini Laksa
Quick Chicken & Parmesan Salad
Chicken Burgers with Zucchini
Thai Chicken Soup with Lime
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SWEET TREATS

Last Minute Peanut Butter Mousse
Strawberry Ripple Cheesecake
Magic Lemon Creams
No Bake Berry Tart
Easy Little Chocolate Puddings
Crunchy Almond Crumbles
Little Lemon Cheesecakes
Berry Mousse
Salted Chocolate Chip Cookies
Peanut Butter Chocolate Fudge



MEAL PLAN ONE

one pot meals



MEAL PLAN ONE

one pot meals

[1.] MONDAY: Super Green Saag Chicken

[2.] TUESDAY: Fast Roast Fish & Snow Peas

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Eggplant & Chorizo Supper

[4.] THURSDAY: Thai Chicken & Zucchini 'Rice'

[5.] FRIDAY: Pepper Steak with Ricotta

[6.] SWEET TREAT: Last Minute Peanut Butter Mousse

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [3] Pan fry chorizo and eggplant until soft.

Vegetarian: [1] Chicken = Paneer or halloumi. [2] Fish = firm tofu. [3] Chorizo = chickpeas. [4] Chicken = mushrooms + cashews. [5] Steak = Eggplant.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Steamed rice. [2] Boiled potatoes. [3] Diced sweet potato. [4] Steamed rice. [5] Crusty bread.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Coconut yoghurt. [5] Smashed avocado instead of ricotta. [6] Coconut cream.



MEAL PLAN ONE: one pot meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

- 2 bunches spinach or kale [1]
- 2 large handfuls snow peas [2]
- 2 limes [2]
- 1 bunch coriander (cilantro) [1]
- 1 large eggplant (aubergine) [3]
- 250g (1/2lb) cherry tomatoes [3]
- 1 bag baby spinach or salad leaves [3]
- 2 small zucchini [4]
- 1 bunch basil [4]
- 1 lemon or lime [4]
- 1 bag salad leaves [5]

PROTEIN

- 450g (1lb) chicken thighs or breasts [1]
- 2 fish fillets [2]
- 2 chorizo or other sausage [3]
- 450g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken [4]
- 2 steaks [5]

DAIRY

- 6T cream [1]
- natural yoghurt [1]
- 8T ricotta [5]
- 4T double cream [6]

PANTRY

- extra virgin olive oil
- salt & pepper
- chilli oil (optional) [1]
- 2T curry powder [1]
- 2T soy sauce [2]
- mayonnaise [3]
- 4T Thai green curry paste [4]+
- 2T freshly ground pepper [5]
- 1T sherry or wine vinegar [5]
- 2T crunchy peanut butter [6]
- 2T linseeds (flax seeds) [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon **'T'** = tablespoon

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g / 14oz. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz).

+ [4] Or use 1-4 chopped fresh chillies.

* Based on serving 2 people.
Please adjust as required.
[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each
ingredient is required for.



super green saag chicken

super green saag chicken

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

450g (1lb) chicken thighs
or breasts, chopped

2 tablespoons
curry powder

2 bunches spinach or kale,
washed &
sliced into ribbons

4-6 tablespoons cream

natural yoghurt & chilli oil
(optional), to serve

1. Heat a little oil in a large pot. Brown chicken, on a medium high heat stirring every few minutes until just cooked through. Remove and place in a clean bowl.

2. Add a little more oil to the pan and toast curry powder on a medium high heat for about 20 seconds. Add the chopped spinach / kale and a splash of water. Cover and cook for 5-10 minutes until the greens are wilted down. Check and stir every few minutes and if drying out or starting to burn add more water.

3. Remove from heat and add cream. Roughly puree the greens with a stick blender or leave chunky. Taste and season with lots of salt and pepper. If you'd prefer a stronger curry flavour add more curry powder.

4. Return chicken to the pan and heat again until warmed through. Divide between two bowls and top each with a generous dollop of yoghurt and a drizzle of chilli oil (if using).

One of my first real jobs was waitressing at an Indian restaurant. While I was pretty crap at waiting tables, I did develop a deep love for Indian food. One of my all time favourite curries was an intensely green spinach sauce called 'saag'. It's amazing with lamb but also great for giving chicken a meaty 'iron' rich boost.

Although spinach is traditional, I prefer it with the more intense flavour of kale. But any greens are good. It's one of those dishes where the complex curry flavours satisfy the taste buds and the greens satisfy your body. So good!

VARIATIONS

different greens – use whatever greens you like such as collards, silverbeet (chard), rainbow chard, beet tops,

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with steamed rice, warm naan bread, or steamed potatoes. Or knock yourself out and go with all three!

dairy-free – use coconut cream.

vegetarian – it's brilliant with the Indian cheese paneer (just crumble through at the end). I've tried it with home made paneer and it was amazeballs, if a little time consuming. Or pan fry some halloumi or add feta. I imagine saag chickpeas or lentils would be amazing. My Irishman loves it with a handful of roasted cashews on top.

no chilli oil – use dried chilli flakes or powder or chopped fresh chilli for some visual interest and extra heat.

mild / little person-friendly – use garam masala instead of curry and skip the chilli oil.



MEAL PLAN ONE: one pot meals



fast roast fish & snow peas

fast roast fish & snow peas

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 large handfuls
snow peas, trimmed

2 limes, halved

2 fish fillets

2 tablespoons
soy sauce

1 bunch coriander
(cilantro), leaves picked

1. Preheat your oven to 250C (480F).
2. Line a baking tray with foil or paper and scatter over snow peas and lime halves. Top with fish (skin side down) and drizzle with a little oil. Sprinkle over a little salt.
3. Bake for 5-10 minutes or until fish is just cooked through.
4. To serve divide snowpeas and fish between two plates. Drizzle over soy sauce and carefully squeeze over the hot lime (or leave for the diners to do themselves).
5. Scatter with coriander leaves and you're done!

Now that I have a 2.5 year old in the house, I find I'm turning more and more to meals I can just pop in the oven to cook while we're doing other important things. Like reading books, playing with Lego and drinking milk.

Fast roasting fish like this is brilliant because it's quick AND I can just wait for the timer to ring. So I'm less likely to forget!

VARIATIONS

hot! – add a little chopped fresh red chilli to the soy sauce.

more flavour – add chopped ginger, 1 teaspoon sesame oil or a tiny pinch chopped garlic to the soy.

family-friendly – skip the herbs. Replace snowpeas with frozen peas (straight from the freezer is fine). Consider serving some steamed rice or roast sweet potato on the side.

carb-lovers / more substantial – serve a side of steamed rice or cooked rice noodles.

vegetarian – roast firm tofu instead (and add the additions in the more flavour suggestion). Or pan fry the snow peas and serve with some crispy fried eggs and the soy and herbs.



fast roast fish & snow peas

MORE VARIATIONS

different herbs – mint or basil are also great. Or a combo.

soy-free – use coconut aminos instead or use a small drizzle of sesame oil instead of the soy.

carnivore – replace fish with pork chops, chicken breasts or chicken thigh fillets. Increase cooking time accordingly. I'd start checking after 15 minutes.

no oven – just pan fry snow peas and fish in a little oil until cooked through.



eggplant & chorizo supper



eggplant & chorizo supper

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES AN HOUR

1 large eggplant
(aubergine)

250g (1/2lb)
cherry tomatoes

2 chorizo or other spicy
sausage

mayo, to serve

baby spinach or
salad leaves, to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Chop eggplant into 2cm (1in) cubes. Halve tomatoes if large and thickly slice chorizo. Toss eggplant, tomato and chorizo in a large baking tray. Drizzle with a good glug of olive oil and season with salt.
3. Roast for 45 minutes. Stir and cook longer if needed. You want the eggplant to be really soft.
4. Divide between two bowls and serve with spinach / salad and mayo on the side.

At the end of last Summer I was heavily into roasting eggplant, zucchini and capsicum (bell peppers). This simple combo of eggplant and spicy sausage was one of my favourites!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace chorizo with extra veg such as sliced zucchini or an extra eggplant (aubergine). Consider serving with some roast nuts or a poached egg for extra protein.

no mayo / egg-free – replace Mayo with a dollop of soft cheese like labneh or goats cheese. Hummus will also be lovely as will natural yoghurt.

other veg – feel free to add diced onion, sliced zucchini, chopped capsicum (bell peppers) and / or whole cloves of garlic.

not hot / small person-friendly – use mild chorizo or non-spicy sausages. You can bake the sausages whole if it's easier than slicing (or crumble the meat out of the casings).

carb-lovers – toss in cooked pasta before serving or serve on a bed of cooked quinoa or brown rice. Also great with crusty bread for mopping up the juices!

herby – toss in torn basil or parsley before serving.

short on time – pan fry instead of roasting.





thai chicken & zucchini 'rice'

thai chicken & zucchini 'rice'

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

450g (1lb) minced
(ground) chicken

3-4 tablespoons Thai
green curry paste

2 small zucchini,
grated

1 bunch basil,
leaves picked

1 lemon or lime

1. Heat a little oil in a large frying pan or wok. Stir fry chicken until no longer pink.
2. Add curry paste and stir fry for a few more minutes or until fragrant.
3. Stir in the zucchini. Allow to warm a little then remove from the heat.
4. Taste. Season with salt or more curry paste.
5. Serve with basil leaves on top and lemon or lime on the side.

I love grating vegetables to use as a low carb alternative to steamed rice. This zucchini rice is especially great with the green colour and fresh flavour really complimenting the Thai green curry paste.

VARIATIONS

no green curry paste? – use 1-4 chopped fresh chillies instead. Or use a [home made Thai red curry paste](#) instead.

italian-style – skip the curry paste and serve with grated parmesan on top.

different veg – cauliflower works well but you could also use carrots.

vegetarian / vegan – replace chicken with crumbled firm tofu or mushrooms. Make sure your curry paste doesn't contain fish sauce or paste.

pescetarian – replace chicken with finely chopped salmon or white fish fillets.

more substantial – serve with steamed rice or rice noodles cooked according to the packet.



pepper steak with ricotta



pepper steak with ricotta

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 steaks

1-2 tablespoons freshly
ground pepper

8 tablespoons ricotta

1 tablespoon sherry
or wine vinegar

1 bag salad leaves

1. Heat a frying pan or your BBQ on a very high heat. Rub steaks with a little oil. Season with salt and sear for 4 minutes on the 1st side.
2. While the steaks are cooking, whisk vinegar with 2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and a little salt in the bottom of a medium salad bowl. Toss in the salad leaves.
3. Turn steaks. Sprinkle pepper on the cooked side. Keep cooking for another 2-3 minutes or until steaks are cooked to your liking.
4. To serve, divide ricotta between two plates. Top with steaks (pepper side up) and serve salad on the side.

I've never been a huge pepper steak fan until I tried this trick! Instead of adding the pepper before cooking and risking it getting burnt and bitter tasting, we add the freshly ground goodness as soon as the steaks are cooked. Much fresher and pepperier!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan – try [eggplant 'steaks'](#) . And see [dairy-free options for vegans](#).

dairy-free – just skip the ricotta or replace with hummus.

more substantial / carb lovers – serve with easy home fries or mashed potato or roast spuds.

different meat – also great with lamb chops.

more veg – serve with frozen peas cooked in a little butter. Or add different raw veg to the salad.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – replace ricotta with avocado, cashew butter or roast sweet potato.





last-minute peanut butter mousse

last-minute peanut butter mousse

ENOUGH FOR 1
TAKES 5 MINUTES

2 tablespoons
double cream

1 tablespoon crunchy
peanut butter

1 tablespoon golden
linseeds (flax seeds)

1. Place cream in a tiny cup or ramekin. Spoon on peanut butter and linseeds.

2. Stir and dig in!

You know those nights when you decide after dinner that you really need something else to eat? But you haven't organized anything? Well, my friend, I'm going to share with you my favourite little last-minute indulgence. Mostly it's something I whip up for myself, but occasionally I share it with company and grandly call it my Peanut Butter Mousse. But it's also great as a post-run snack.

VARIATIONS

no double cream? – use whatever cream you have. Mascarpone is also good or even ricotta.

dairy-free – use coconut or cashew cream. Coconut yoghurt will also work. Or try 1 tablespoon coconut oil.

chocolate! – drizzle with melted chocolate or just add a small handful of chopped chocolate.

less fiber – skip the linseeds or replace with other seeds or nuts. Or just use more peanut butter.

fruity / sweeter – add a handful of berries. Or if you don't mind the sugar add a chopped medjool date. Or drizzle with a little honey or maple syrup.

different seeds – use whatever you have, chia seeds are good but you could also use sunflower seeds or any chopped nut. It's all about the crunch!

regular linseeds – I like golden ones because they look prettier but regular are fine!





MEAL PLAN TWO

one pot meals



MEAL PLAN TWO

one pot meals

[1.] MONDAY: Easy 1-Dish Ratatouille

[2.] TUESDAY: Quick Beef Ragu

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Killer Kale Gratin

[4.] THURSDAY: Fast Roast Salmon & Peppers

[5.] FRIDAY: Quick Steak & Rocket Salad

[6.] SWEET TREAT: Strawberry Ripple Cheesecake

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [1] Pan fry veggies in oil until soft instead of roasting. [3] Skip the onion and serve kale and bacon with cream and cheese drizzled over. Skip the cheese melting.

Vegetarian: [2] Beef = chickpeas. [3] Red peppers (capsicum) or semi dried tomatoes instead of bacon. [4] Salmon = eggplant. [5] Steak = field or portabello mushrooms.

Carb Lovers: [1] Crusty baguette. [2] Cooked spaghetti, [3] Cooked pasta. [4] Boiled potatoes or sweet potato. [5] Toss in torn chunks of sourdough bread and double the dressing.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [2] Sliced almonds for parmesan. [3] Serve wilted kale with a steak and squeeze of lemon. [5] Roast nuts instead of parmesan. [6] Coconut yoghurt instead of mascarpone.



MEAL PLAN TWO: one pot meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

4 red capsicum (bell peppers) [1&4]
2-3 zucchini [1]
1 large eggplant or 2 medium [1]
1 bunch basil or parsley [1]
1 bag baby spinach / baby kale [2]
1 onion [3]
1 bunch kale [3]
2 lemons [4&5]
1 bag salad leaves [4]
1 bag rocket (arugula) [5]*
250g (9oz) ripe strawberries [6]

PROTEIN

4 beef sausages [2]
6 slices bacon [3]
2 salmon fillets [4]
2 steaks [5]

DAIRY

4T butter [2]
parmesan shavings [2&5]
300ml (1 1/4 cups) double cream [3]+
2 large handfuls grated cheese [3]
250g (9oz) mascarpone [6]^

PANTRY

salt & pepper
extra virgin olive oil
aioli or mayo, to serve [1]
1T sherry or wine vinegar [1]
1 can tomatoes [2]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon 'T' = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz).

+**[3]** Or whipping cream.

***[5]** Or other salad leaves.

^**[6]** Or creamy ricotta or Greek yoghurt or whipped cream.

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.



easy 1-dish ratatouille

easy 1-dish ratatouille

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 60 MINUTES

2 red capsicum
(bell peppers)

2-3 zucchini

1 large eggplant
or 2 medium

1T sherry or
red wine vinegar

1 bunch basil or
parsley, to serve

aioli or mayo, to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F). Chop veg into 2cm (1in) chunks. Place veg in a large roasting pan. Drizzle generously with olive oil and toss to mix. Sprinkle with salt.

2. Roast veg for 45-50 minutes. Stirring once or twice.

3. When all the veg are soft, remove from the oven toss in the vinegar. Taste and season with more salt and /or vinegar if needed.

4. Toss through herbs and serve hot or at room temp with a big dollop of aioli or mayo.

Over the Summer I've had a bit of an eggplant fetish happening. I wish I could say that it was from all the eggplant in my garden but the sad truth is my 3 tiny aubergine were mauled by possums before they were ripe.

One of my fave ways to prepare eggplant is this super simple ratatouille. Just chop some veg, set your timer and let the oven do the rest!

VARIATIONS

short on time – pan fry veg instead of roasting.

different veg – finely chopped onion, garlic, cherry tomatoes or diced tomato, fennel or summer squash. Or even some mushrooms for a bit of Autumn flavour.

caponata – replace the zucchini and capsicum with an extra eggplant and finely chopped onion. Toss in toasted pine nuts to serve.

carb-lovers – toss in cooked pasta, quinoa or brown rice and serve with grated Parmesan.

carnivore – add cooked chicken, bacon or chorizo.

more substantial – add some protein! Cooked chicken or sausages or chorizo are great. Or try a poached egg, grilled Halloumi, salty feta, a handful of nuts or cooked beans or legumes for vegetarians.

favourite lunch – toss in a drained can of sardines or tuna and serve on a bed of salad leaves.





quick beef ragu

quick beef ragu

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

4 beef sausages

1 can tomatoes
(400g / 14oz)

4 tablespoons butter

1 bag baby spinach /
baby kale

parmesan shavings
(optional)

1. Heat a little oil in a large frying pan on a high heat. Remove beef sausage from the casings and add to the pan.
2. Cook beef, stirring until well browned, broken up and cooked through.
3. Add tomato and butter and simmer for a few minutes until everything is hot.
4. Taste and season with salt if needed.
5. To serve, divide baby spinach between two bowls. Top with ragu and scatter with parmesan (if using).

While I love to slow cook a ragu for hours and hours, sometimes you just need dinner quickly. The solution? Use lots of butter to soften the acidity of the tomatoes for almost instant deliciousness.

VARIATIONS

different meat – feel free to use plain minced beef, pork, chicken or veal or a combo.

vegetarian / vegan – replace beef with cooked lentils or chopped mushrooms. Or both! Vegans will need the dairy-free option.

dairy-free / paleo – skip the parmesan or replace with grated brazil nuts or sliced almonds. Replace the butter with lashings of extra virgin olive oil.

more veg – after browning the beef, soften a diced onion, carrot and stick of celery in the pan before adding the tomato. Mushrooms are also lovely here. Add chopped raw veg to the baby spinach like red peppers, snow peas or grated carrot. Or serve on a bed of zucchini or carrot noodles.

more substantial / carb-lovers – serve with cooked spaghetti, your fave garlic bread or quinoa.

no canned tomatoes – use a jar of tomato puree or your fave commercial tomato pasta sauce.



killer kale gratin



killer kale gratin

ENOUGH FOR 2 to 3
TAKES 45 MINUTES

1 onion, chopped

6 rashers bacon,
chopped

1 bunch kale, sliced

300ml (1 1/4 cups)
double cream

2 large handfuls
grated cheese

1. Preheat your oven to 180C (350F).
2. Heat a little oil in an oven proof pot and add bacon and onion. Cook over a medium heat until the onion is soft, about 10 minutes.
3. Add kale and cook for a few minutes, stirring so it starts to wilt down. Add cream and stir well.
4. Cover the pot and transfer to the oven. Cook for 15 minutes with the lid on.
5. Sprinkle over the cheese and cook for another 10-15 minutes or until the kale is tender and the cheese golden. Serve.

I used purple kale in the picture but any kale or leafy green will work.

This is my idea of a perfect one pot meal, although if you're cooking for a particularly hungry carnivore you may need to serve it as a side to a roast chicken or juicy steak.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace bacon with sliced smoked tofu or skip the bacon and serve gratin sprinkled to smoked or roasted nuts. Pine nuts or almonds are especially good.

different greens – most greens will work here. Cavolo nero is great or curly kale, English spinach, silverbeet (chard) or even chinese broccoli or broccoli rabe.

dairy-free / vegan – replace cream with coconut milk and sprinkle with pinenuts or almonds instead of the cheese.

different cheese – I used a comb of emmental, gruyere and parmesan but any melting cheese will work including cheddar.

carb lovers / more substantial – toss in some cooked short pasta before adding the cheese.

can't find double cream? – just use whipping cream or heavy cream instead.

carnivore – serve as a side to a steak.



fast roast salmon & peppers



fast roast salmon & peppers

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 red capsicum
(bell peppers), sliced

2 salmon fillets

1 lemon, halved

1 bag salad leaves

1. Preheat your oven to 250C (480F).
2. Line a baking tray with paper or foil for easier cleanup. Scatter over sliced capsicum (peppers) and top with salmon fillets.
3. Tuck in the lemon halves and drizzle with a little oil, bake for 10 minutes or until the fish is cooked to your liking.
4. To serve, divide salmon and peppers and the lovely cooking juices between two plates. Add salad leaves on the side and squeeze over hot lemon.

Red bell peppers, or capsicum as we call them here in Australia are such an underrated vegetable. They seem so common place, boring almost but when you roast them quickly like in this dish, they transform into a complex sauce. It's almost a bit of kitchen magic!

VARIATIONS

different fish – feel free to use any fish fillets or plate sized whole fish for this recipe. Use your judgement in adjusting the cooking time. Thinner fish may only take 5 minutes and larger whole fish up to 20 minutes or even a little longer. Just keep checking regularly until you're happy.

carnivore – replace fish with fresh pork sausages or spicy sausages. Allow an extra 5-10 minutes to cook the sausages through.

vegetarian / vegan – replace salmon with an eggplant chopped in half and flesh scored. Allow an extra 5-10 minutes for the eggplant to cook. Serve the roast veg with a dollop of mayo, pesto or hummus.

more veg – add more veg to the pan such as sliced fennel, boiled potatoes, sliced zucchini or eggplant (as in the vegetarian option). Or consider adding more veg to the salad.



fast roast salmon & peppers

MORE VARIATIONS

carb-lovers / more substantial – par boil some spuds and toss in with the peppers.

no oven – soften the peppers in a frying pan with a little olive oil over a medium high heat. Remove from the pan then cook salmon about 4 minutes each side.



quick steak &
rocket salad



quick steak & rocket salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

2 steaks
about 200g (7oz) each
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 bag rocket (arugula),
washed & dried
parmesean shavings,
to serve

1. Heat your frying pan on a very high heat. Trim any fat from the steak and slice into super fine strips. Drizzle with a little olive oil and season.
2. Cook beef in the hot pan for about 1 minute. Then stir and keep cooking till browned on all sides.
3. Meanwhile, combine lemon juice and 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a bowl.
4. When the steak is cooked transfer to the lemon dressing.
5. Toss in rocket leaves. Serve with parmesan shaved over.

I love a warm salad for a quick dinner. There's something about having part of the meal served warm that makes it feel more substantial and 'dinner-like'.

There are 2 benefits to chopping the steak into slivers. First it cooks in a flash and second it tenderizes the meat. Win win!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – skip the parmesan and replace the steak with halloumi sliced into batons. You could also replace the steak with chickpeas.

vegan – replace the steak with sliced field or portabello mushrooms. You'll need 1-2 per person and they'll take more like 7-8 minutes to cook. Replace the parmesan with either chunks of avocado or some slivered almonds.

chicken – replace steak with a chicken breast or thigh fillets. Make sure the chicken is cooked through before tossing in the dressing.

carb lovers – serve with crusty bread + butter or toss in roast cubes of sweet potato.

paleo (gluten, grain + dairy-free) – flaked almonds instead of cheese. Or replace parmesan with halved cherry tomatoes.



quick steak & rocket salad

MORE VARIATIONS

different leaves – I love the bitterness of rocket but you could use any salad leaves. A little radicchio is lovely here in the Autumn or Winter.

more veg – add grilled red peppers (capsicum), zucchini, eggplant or cherry tomatoes to the pan.

dairy-free – replace the parmesan with a handful of toasted breadcrumbs, some halved cherry tomatoes or just skip it.



strawberry ripple cheesecake



strawberry ripple cheesecake

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

250g (9oz)
ripe strawberries

250g (9oz) mascarpone

1. Keep 2 good looking strawberries aside. Remove the stems of the remaining strawberries. Place them in a small bowl and smash with a fork or your hands until you have a chunky mess.
2. Stir in the mascarpone until the strawberries are 'rippled' through it.
3. Divide between two little glasses or tea cups. Top with the reserved strawberries. Eat now or refrigerate until you're ready to serve.

It's hard to go past a good cheesecake. These little individual ones are super quick to make and best of all don't leave you with a heap of tempting leftovers.

Mascarpone is a delicious Italian cream cheese. If you can't find it see the 'variations' for alternatives.

VARIATIONS

dairy-free / paleo – replace mascarpone with 'cashew cheese' – soak 200g raw cashews in water for at least 6 hours. Drain and whizz in a food processor with a little water until smooth and creamy. Add more water if too thick. Another alternative here would be to replace mascarpone with chilled coconut cream (discard watery part).

different fruit – lovely with raspberries or blueberries. Or for a lemon version use a commercial lemon curd instead of the berries.

no mascarpone? – replace with other soft creamy cheese such as ricotta or even Philadelphia cream cheese.

crunchy – line the base of your cups with roasted chopped nuts or your fave granola.

sweeter – if your strawberries aren't super ripe, add in a little stevia or your choice of sweetener.





MEAL PLAN THREE

warmer weather

MEAL PLAN THREE

warmer weather

[1.] MONDAY: Chilli Oil Halloumi

[2.] TUESDAY: Chicken with Red Pepper & Hazelnut Sauce + Green Salad

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Beef & Balsamic Salad

[4.] THURSDAY: Zucchini Laksa

[5.] FRIDAY: Quick Chicken & Parmesan Salad

[6.] SWEET TREAT: Magic Lemon Creams

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [6] Serve berries & cream or dark chocolate.

Carnivore: [1] Pan fry chorizo with the halloumi.

Vegetarian: [2] Chicken = cooked lentils. [3] Steak = mushrooms. [4] Chicken = extra veg. [5] Chicken = fried eggs.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Warm flat bread. [2] Cooked couscous or quinoa. [3] Crusty bread. [4] Egg noodles. [5] Cooked pasta.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Chicken instead of halloumi. [3] [Macadamia ricotta](#). [5] Roast almonds for parmesan. [6] Dark chocolate.



MEAL PLAN THREE: warmer weather SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

6 small hot fresh red chillies [1]
2 handfuls green beans or asparagus [1]
1 bag salad [2]
2 bags rocket (arugula) or salad [3&5]
2 medium zucchini [4]
basil small bunch [4]
2 lemons [5&6]

PROTEIN

8 chicken thigh fillets or 4 breasts [2&4]
450g (1lb) steak [3]
450g (1lb) chicken thigh fillets [5]

DAIRY

250g (9oz) halloumi [1]+
6T ricotta [3]
2 handfuls parmesan shavings [5]
300mL (1 1/4C) whipping cream [6]

PANTRY

extra virgin olive oil
salt & pepper
1 jar roasted red peppers (250g / 9oz) [2]
1 clove garlic [2]
200g (7oz) roasted hazelnuts [2]
2T red wine or sherry vinegar [2]
2t smoked paprika [2]
2T flour (optional) [3]
2T balsamic vinegar [3]
1 jar laksa paste [4]*
1 can coconut milk (400mL / 14oz) [4]
1/8t pure stevia powder[^][6]
sliced almonds (optional) [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon **'T'** = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+ [1] Halloumi is a cheese that is lovely pan fried. Substitute feta or saganaki. Or use chicken breast or thighs.

*** [4]** Laska paste is available in Asian grocery stores. Substitute other curry paste such as Thai red curry. Or use 1 tablespoon curry powder instead.

^ [6] Or 1-2 tablespoons granular stevia. Or use 75g (3oz) sugar instead of the stevia.

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.

chilli oil halloumi



chilli oil halloumi

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

1-6 small hot fresh red
chillies, finely sliced

4 tablespoons extra virgin
olive oil

250g (9oz) halloumi,
sliced into 4 thin slices

2 large handfuls green
beans, tops trimmed OR 2
small bunches asparagus,
bottoms trimmed

1. Combine sliced chillies and oil in a small bowl and leave to infuse.
2. Heat a large frying pan on a high heat for a few minutes.
3. Add a little oil and the beans OR asparagus and pop the lid on. Cook for 2 minutes.
4. Stir and add a splash of water and cook for another 2 minutes with the lid on. Or until beans or asparagus are tender.
5. Transfer beans to a serving plate and reduce the heat in the pan to medium.
6. Add a little more oil to the pan and cook halloumi for about 2 minutes on each side, or until golden and soft.
7. Serve halloumi on top of the beans and drizzle generously with the chilli oil.

If you haven't ever tried pan fried halloumi before you're in for a real treat. Once you get over the idea of eating fried cheese, you'll soon become addicted!

I've included instructions to make a super quick fresh chilli oil in the recipe. However if you wanted to take it to the next level, I recommend taking the time to make a batch of roast chilli oil ([recipe here](#)).

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – replace the halloumi with firm tofu. Pan fry in a similar manner, although it will take a little longer to brown up.

asparagus – I've made this with asparagus instead of the beans and it was just lovely.

carnivore – pan fry some chicken thigh fillets or pork chops instead of the halloumi.

more substantial – toss a drained can of white beans in with the beans to heat through for a few seconds.

BBQ – you could cook the beans and halloumi on a BBQ hot plate.



chicken with red pepper &
hazelnut sauce



chicken with red pepper & hazelnut sauce

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

1 jar roasted red peppers
(250g / 9oz), drained

1 clove garlic, peeled &
finely chopped

200g (7oz) roasted
hazelnuts

1 tablespoon red wine or
sherry vinegar

2 teaspoons
smoked paprika

4 chicken thigh fillets
or 2 breasts

1. Whizz peppers, garlic, hazelnuts, vinegar and paprika in a food processor until you have a rough paste.
2. Add a few tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and process until just mixed. Taste and season.
3. Heat a little oil in a frying pan on a medium high heat. Season chicken and pan fry until cooked through, about 5 minutes on each side.
4. Serve chicken on a bed of the sauce.

The sauce for this dish was inspired by one of my favourite Middle Eastern dips, marramah that is usually made with roasted red capsicum (peppers), walnuts and pomegranate molasses. This quick version with hazelnuts and red wine vinegar is every bit as good.

VARIATIONS

nut free – replace with a cup of fresh breadcrumbs.

different nuts – almonds, walnuts, pine nuts or cashews would be great.

cheaper version – replace half or more of the nuts with 1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs.

home roasted peppers – try the smoky red peppers [recipe over here](#).

vegetarian – serve sauce with cooked lentils or quinoa or pan fried halloumi.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with cooked quinoa or couscous.





the classic mixed green salad

the classic mixed green salad

ENOUGH FOR 2 AS A SIDE
TAKES 5 MINUTES

1 tablespoon sherry
or wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon soy sauce

1 bag salad leaves,
washed and dried

1. Combine vinegar, soy and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl.

2. Toss leaves gently in the dressing using clean hands.

3. Taste and season.

The most frequent thing I cook is a simple green salad. It goes with pretty much anything and is a quick solution if you're like me and feel that a meal isn't complete without greens in some form.

I've even convinced my Irishman that it's essential to have a green salad with our eggs for Sunday brunch.

VARIATIONS

soy-free – skip the soy sauce and season with salt instead.

can't find sherry vinegar – my next favourite is rice wine vinegar (aka rice vinegar) but any wine vinegar will be fine. For a sweeter dressing try balsamic.

fresher – replace vinegar with lemon juice.

asian – use fish sauce instead of the vinegar and soy and drizzle over a little sesame oil.

more veg – add fresh veg to the salad like snow peas.





beef & balsamic salad

beef & balsamic salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

450g (1lb) steak,
finely sliced

2 tablespoons
flour, optional

2 tablespoons
balsamic vinegar

2 large handfuls
rocket (arugula)

6 tablespoons ricotta

1. Heat some oil in a large frying pan or skillet over a high heat.
2. Toss beef strips in the flour (if using), in a plastic bag to coat. Shake to remove excess flour.
3. Test a piece of meat to make sure the oil is hot enough. If it sizzles violently, add the rest of the meat. If not, let it get hotter.
4. Cook meat for about a minute on each side or until browned. Drain on paper towel.
5. Combine balsamic with 3 tablespoons olive oil and use this to dress the rocket leaves.
6. To serve, smear ricotta over the base of two plates. Scatter over the hot steak and top with dressed salad leaves.

This is a great little salad combo. I just love the contrast between the hot crispy beef and the smooth creamy ricotta. So good. I don't normally bother using flour coatings when I'm pan frying food, however in this case it does make the beef extra crispy. Feel free to skip that step if you prefer, the salad will still be delicious.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – big eaters may need a larger serve of the steak.

vegetarian/vegan – replace the steak with sliced portabello or field mushrooms. You'll need to cook the mushrooms until they are tender as well as browned which will take longer than the steak but shouldn't be more than about 10 minutes. You could also replace the steak with grilled veg from the deli.

gluten-free – replace flour with corn flour (corn starch) or other gluten-free flour.

greens – in autumn I love to serve this with red radicchio instead of the rocket.

pescetarian – replace steak with salmon or other fish fillets.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with mashed potatoes or home made fries. Or toss in some cooked pasta.

paleo (gluten, grain + dairy-free) – skip flour and replace ricotta with mashed potatoes or smashed avocado.



zucchini laksa



zucchini laksa

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

2 medium zucchini

1 jar laksa paste

1 can coconut milk
(400mL / 14oz)

chicken 2-4 thighs,
diced

basil small bunch

1. Using a spiralizer, turn your zucchini into medium thick noodles. Sprinkle noodles with a little sea salt and stand while you make the soup.
2. Bring laksa paste and coconut milk to a simmer in a medium saucepan. Add chicken and continue to simmer until chicken is just cooked through (no longer pink.) About 5 minutes.
3. Add zucchini noodles and bring back to a simmer.
4. Taste and season with salt or fish sauce (if you have it). Some people might like a pinch of sugar.
5. To serve divide soup between two deep bowls and top with basil leaves.

Laksa is the most delicious noodle soup that hails from Malaysia. It's fragrant, it's rich, it's spicy. Plus there are noodles to slurp! Since focusing on eating grain-free and low carb, however, laksa has been off the menu at our place. But not any longer!

I was so excited when I had the idea to use some zucchini 'noodles' instead of the usual wheat or rice based laska noodles. It's really that good!

VARIATIONS

no spiralizer – use a mandoline or vegetable peeler to slice zucchini into long ribbons then hand cut into medium 'noodles'.

vegetarian / vegan – make sure your laksa paste is vegetarian and replace chicken with firm tofu chunks. Or use chunks of roast sweet potato instead. Cauliflower is also lovely – just simmer until florettes are tender.

carb lovers – add cooked hokkien, singapore or rice noodles with the zucchini noodles (or instead of the zucchini). Non purists could also use cooked spaghetti.

no laksa paste – use another thai curry paste like red or green curry or even an Indian curry paste. Just be careful to adjust the quantity to your liking (you probably won't need a whole jar). The other option is to go for a coconut milk based soup so just skip the laksa paste and use a good squeeze of lime juice for some zing.



zucchini laksa

MORE VARIATIONS

hot! – add finely sliced fresh red chilli.

no basil – you could skip it or replace with mint or coriander (cilantro) leaves.

more veg – add in chopped veg such as carrot, red capsicum (bell pepper), cauliflower and simmer until tender before adding the chicken. OR serve with a handful of rinsed bean sprouts.



quick chicken & parmesan salad



quick chicken & parmesan salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

450g (1lb) chicken
thigh fillets

2 tablespoons
lemon juice

4 handfuls rocket
(arugula) or salad leaves,
washed & dried

2 handfuls
parmesan shavings

1. Heat your frying pan on a very high heat. Trim any fat from the chicken and slice into super fine strips. Drizzle with a little oil and season.
2. Cook chicken in the hot pan for about 1 minute. Then stir and keep cooking till browned on all sides.
3. Meanwhile, combine lemon juice and 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a bowl. Season.
4. When the chicken is cooked transfer to the lemon dressing.
5. Toss in rocket leaves. Serve with parmesan shaved over.

I love a warm salad for a quick, healthy mid week dinner. There's something about having something proteiny and warm that makes it feel substantial enough for a dinner. Yet all those leaves keep it light. And best of all they tend to work all year round so well worth adding to your repertoire!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace chicken and parmesan with grilled halloumi or fried eggs. You could also replace chicken with field mushrooms or eggplant slices. Cook in a little oil until soft.

vegan – skip the chicken and cheese. Warm some cooked lentils or quinoa in a pan and toss in the dressing with the leaves. Add some roasted almonds for a little extra protein and crunch.

dairy-free / paleo – replace the parmesan with roasted sliced almonds. Or cook some bacon in the pan before cooking the chicken. And serve the crunchy bacon on top of the salad.

little person friendly – reduce the amount of rocket (arugula) or replace with less bitter tasting leaves such as butter lettuce or baby spinach.



quick chicken & parmesan salad

MORE VARIATIONS

different protein – lovely with steak or lamb fillets instead of the chicken. Also good with chorizo.

different leaves – any salad leaf will work well here. In the winter I'd go for red radicchio leaves or witlof (belgian endive).

carb lovers / more substantial – toss in torn sourdough and double the dressing or serve with crusty bread.



magic lemon creams



magic lemon creams

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 6 HOURS

300mL (1 1/4) cups pure
(heavy whipping) cream,
35% milk fat

1/8 teaspoon pure
stevia powder*

3 tablespoons
lemon juice

sliced almonds, toasted,
to serve (optional)

1. Place cream in a saucepan and simmer gently for 3 minutes for the cream to reduce slightly.
2. Remove from the heat and stir in the stevia and lemon juice. Divide between 2 serving containers - little glasses or tea cups (about 1/2 cup capacity).
3. Refrigerate for 6 hours or until you're ready to serve.
4. Sprinkle with a few almonds (if using) and serve with a small spoon.

This dessert is so so simple yet ultra fresh, creamy and needless to say, de-lic-ious! There's something truly magical in the way the lemon juice causes simple cream to set into a silky luscious dessert. I've made this with thickened cream and pure cream. Both are good.

VARIATIONS

***important note about stevia!** – there are 4 types of stevia:

1. Pure Stevia Powder – looks like icing (powdered / confectioners) sugar. It's expensive but a tiny amount goes a long long way. We're talking 1/2 teaspoon to sweeten a whole cake. This is what I use.
2. Granular Stevia (like Natvia or Truvia) – looks like regular white sugar. It's a blend of erythritol and stevia. Usually 1/8 teaspoon = 2-3 tablespoons granular stevia.
3. Fresh or Dried Stevia Leaves – from a real stevia plant! I haven't baked with them but they will behave similar to the pure stevia powder. Just add to taste.
4. Liquid stevia. I haven't used this. But add to taste.

granular stevia – replace pure powder with 2-3 tablespoons granular stevia.

no stevia – use your favourite sweetener... Honey, maple syrup, xylitol or white sugar! Just add and taste until you're happy with the sweetness level.



magic lemon creams

MORE VARIATIONS

sugar lovers – use 75g (3oz) sugar instead of the stevia. If you like things on the sweeter side, add more.

short on time – make a lemon marscapone cream. Stir a little grated lemon zest into marscapone. Serve in tiny tea cups. Or make a cheats version by stirring a commercial lemon curd (lemon butter) into whipped cream. You could also just serve cream with seasonal fruit.

different flavours – feel free to play around with the citrus. Lime is lovely and my Mum's version was a wonderful combination of lemon and passion fruit. So good.

short on time – make a lemon mascarpone cream. Stir a little grated lemon zest into mascarpone.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – serve seasonal fresh fruit or dark chocolate instead.





MEAL PLAN FOUR

warmer weather

D MEAL PLAN FOUR warmer weather

[1.] MONDAY: Broccoli, Bacon & Avocado Salad

[2.] TUESDAY: Bacon Sang Choi Bau

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Crispy Fish with Tahini Yoghurt & Walnut Herb Salad

[4.] THURSDAY: Chicken Burgers with Zucchini

[5.] FRIDAY: Pork Kebabs with Zucchini Tzatziki

[5.] SWEET TREAT: No Bake Berry Tart

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [6] Serve berries with fresh cream.

Vegetarian: [1] Bacon = feta cheese. [2] Meat / bacon = cooked lentils. [3] Fish = eggplant steaks [4] Chicken = [Chickpea Burgers](#). [5] Pork = firm tofu.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Toss in cooked pasta. [2] Steamed rice. [3] Warm flat bread. [4] Burger buns. [5] Warm tortillas.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [3] Coconut yoghurt. [4] Smashed avocado for sour cream. [5] Coconut yoghurt. [6] Serve berries with coconut cream.

MEAL PLAN FOUR: warmer weather SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

1 head broccoli [1]
1 large avocado [1]
1 iceberg, cos or romaine lettuce [2]
1-4 red chillies [2]
1 bunch mint [3]
1 bunch coriander (cilantro) [3]
2 lemons [3&5]
2-3 cloves garlic [3&5]
3 small zucchini [4&5]
1 bag salad leaves [5]
250g (1/2 lb) berries [6]^

PROTEIN

4-8 slices bacon [1&2]
450g (1lb) minced (ground) pork [2]
2 salmon fillets [3]
450g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken [4]
450g (1lb) pork fillet or chops [5]

DAIRY

250g (9oz) Greek yoghurt [3&5]
6T sour cream [4]
100g (3.5oz) unsalted butter [6]^
500g (1lb) smooth ricotta [6]^

PANTRY

extra virgin olive oil
salt & pepper
2T Dijon mustard [1]
2T sherry or wine vinegar [1]
6T oyster sauce [2]+
100g (3.5oz) walnuts [3]
100g (3.5oz) tahini [3]*
2t sumac or lemon zest [4]
2t ground cumin [5]
2t smoked paprika [5]
200g (7oz) almonds [6]^
1/8 teaspoon pure stevia powder [6]^+
1 vanilla bean (optional) [6]^

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon **'T'** = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+ [2] Oyster sauce is available in Asian grocery stores. Substitute soy sauce or hoisin sauce.

*** [3]** Tahini is a paste made from sesame seeds. Use extra yoghurt if you can't find it.

^ [6] Tart serves 6-8. You could reduce the quantities to serve 2 if you prefer.

+ ^ [6] Pure stevia powder is available online. Substitute 2-3 tablespoons granular stevia like Natvia or use a little icing (confectioners) sugar to sweeten.

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.

broccoli, bacon &
avocado salad



broccoli, bacon & avocado salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2-4 slices bacon,
chopped into matchsticks

2 tablespoons Dijon
mustard or other mustard

2 tablespoons sherry
or wine vinegar

1 head broccoli

1 avocado

1. Heat a small frying pan on a medium high heat. Add a little oil and cook bacon, stirring every now and then for a few minutes until bacon is crisp and browned.
2. Meanwhile combine mustard, vinegar and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a salad bowl. Season.
3. Chop broccoli into tiny bite sized trees and toss in the dressing.
4. Chop avocado in half and scoop bite sized chunks into the dressing using a spoon.
5. Toss salad to distribute the dressing and serve with crispy bacon on top.

Raw broccoli salads are one of my favourite quick healthy meals. Especially this version which is kept from being too virtuous with the addition of some crispy bacon.

VARIATIONS

vegan – replace bacon with roasted almonds, smoked tofu or chopped red pepper (capsicum).

carnivore – double the bacon or add cooked sliced chorizo or other sausage.

vegetarian – replace bacon with crumbled salty feta, ricotta salata cheese. Also good with hard boiled or poached eggs.

different veg – mix it up with different types of broccoli such as purple sprouting broccoli, or broccolini or even try cauliflower.

warmer salad – simmer broccoli in boiling water for a few minutes until bright green but still a little crunchy. Drain and use as per the recipe.

short on time / easier to eat – grate broccoli using your food processor.

bacon alternatives – smoked chicken, BBQ chicken, pork sausages, chorizo, salami or prosciutto are all good.

carb lovers / more substantial – toss in cooked pasta or canned chickpeas.





bacon sang choy bau

bacon sang choi bau

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

3-4 slices bacon
450g (1lb) pork minced
(ground pork)
1-4 red chillies
4-6 tablespoons
oyster sauce
iceberg lettuce,
washed

1. Heat a little oil in a wok or large frying pan on a very high heat.
2. Cook bacon for a few minutes or until starting to brown.
3. Add pork and chilli. Continue to stir fry until the meat is well browned.
4. Remove from the heat and add enough oyster sauce to season it well.
5. Wrap a little of the hot meat in lettuce leaves and eat with your fingers.

We love a bit of sang choi bau action for a quick week night dinner in our house. There's something so delicious about spicy meat being wrapped in cooling lettuce leaves. We love it so much we often serve other stir fries like this instead of with cauliflower 'rice' (finely grated raw cauli) or steamed rice.

I can't remember exactly why I decided to put bacon in the sang choi bau. Probably because we were going away and I didn't want to waste it. I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that bacon made this classic dish taste even more amazing. But I was. And it's good enough to warrant a stand alone recipe, rather than just tacking on bacon to one of my 'variations'.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan – skip the bacon and try seasoning some cooked green lentils with (vegetarian) oyster sauce and chilli. Serve with lettuce. Also works with browning crumbled tofu. Expect to use more oyster sauce.

sugar-free – replace oyster sauce with soy sauce (start with much less so it's not too salty) and a drizzle of sesame oil.

different meat – also great with minced (ground) beef or chicken. Actually most ground meat will work well.

fish – you could use finely chopped fish fillets. Expect them to cook quite quickly.



bacon sang choy bau

MORE VARIATIONS

more veg – toss in some sliced water chestnuts, chopped red capsicum (bell pepper), mushrooms and/or sliced green onions.

herby – serve with torn mint, basil and/or coriander (cilantro) leaves.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with steamed rice.

tiny person friendly – serve the chopped chilli at the table for everyone to add their own.



crispy fish with tahini yoghurt
+ walnut herb salad



crispy fish with tahini yoghurt + walnut herb salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 30 MINUTES

100g (3.5oz) walnuts

100g (3.5oz) tahini

100g (3.5oz) Greek yoghurt

1 large clove garlic, finely chopped

2 salmon fillets

1 bunch mint (leaves picked)

1 bunch coriander /
cilantro (leaves picked)

2 tablespoons lemon juice

4 tablespoons extra
virgin olive oil

1. To roast the walnuts, place on an ovenproof tray and pop in the oven 200C (400F) for about 12 minutes or until they smell all nutty. If you're short on time or energy use pre-roasted nuts or just skip this step.

2. While the nuts are roasting, mix tahini, yoghurt and garlic in a medium bowl to make your sauce. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

3. Rub salmon with some oil and season with salt. Cook in a small frying pan on a medium high heat for 3 minutes skin side down. Turn and cook for another 3-4 minutes on the second side or until cooked to your liking.

4. While the salmon is cooking, make the salad by combining mint, coriander, walnuts, lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl. Toss until well combined.

5. To serve, divide the tahini sauce between two plates. Top with cooked salmon (crispy skin side up) and place herby salad on the side.

This is my idea of the perfect midweek dinner... It's fast, it's fresh, it's tasty. And with the tahini, fish and walnuts, it's super satisfying without weighing you down. Did I mention it's tasty?

I love this mix of tahini and yoghurt as a sauce / base to serve with different types of protein. It's just as delicious as hummus but with a fraction of the carbs. Tahini is a paste made from ground sesame seeds. It can be tricky to track down but my supermarket and health food store stock it. If you can't find tahini see the 'variations' below for alternatives.

VARIATIONS

no tahini – replace with sunbutter, cashew butter or almond butter. Or replace the whole sauce with store bought hummus.

dairy-free – replace yoghurt with coconut cream and a squeeze of lemon or use coconut yoghurt.

different fish – I love crispy salmon but any fish fillets will work well here.

different protein – the sauce and salad are also amazing with lamb chops, lamb fillets or even a steak.

easier – use all mint or all coriander (cilantro) instead of both. Or skip the salad and serve with washed salad leaves instead.



crispy fish with tahini yoghurt + walnut herb salad

MORE VARIATIONS

nut-free – skip the walnuts in the salad or replace with cooked chickpeas or lentils (carb alert!). Or use roast broccoli or cauliflower florettes.

vegetarian – replace fish with roast mushrooms, roast eggplant (aubergine) halves or pan fried eggplant slices (aka eggplant ‘steaks’)

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with warm flat bread.





chicken burgers with zucchini

chicken burgers with zucchini

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

450g (1lb) minced
(ground) chicken

2 small zucchini, very
finely sliced

2 tablespoons lemon juice

6 tablespoons sour cream

2 teaspoons sumac
or lemon zest

1. Season chicken and add a few tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Form into 2 patties.
2. Heat a medium frying pan on a medium heat. Rub burgers with a little more oil and cook for 4-5 minutes on each side or until chicken is well browned and cooked through.
3. Meanwhile, mix lemon juice with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Toss in zucchini and season generously.
4. Serve burgers with dressed zucchini on the side and sour cream on top. Sprinkle over sumac or lemon zest.

As much as I love a chicken burger, one of the biggest problems is that chicken mince tends to be pretty lean which means dry burgers. I've found two great ways to combat this, just add in some olive oil when you're forming your burger patties. And then serve with something nice and creamy like this sour cream. Problem solved!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – serve these accompaniments with [chickpea burgers](#).

pescetarian – replace chicken with fish fillets. Finely chop by hand before salting and forming into burgers.

different meat – chicken thighs or breasts are lovely with these accompaniments if burgers aren't your thing.

more substantial – serve on burger buns.

no zucchini – if it's not zucchini season just serve with baby spinach or your favourite salad leaves.

dairy-free – use cashew sour cream – soak a handful of cashews in water for a few hours or overnight. Whizz in a food processor with a little lemon juice until you have a creamy mixture.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – equal parts tahini, lemon juice and water instead of the sour cream. You could also just replace the sour cream with smashed avocado.





pork kebabs with zucchini tzatziki

pork kebabs with zucchini tzatziki

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

2 teaspoon ground cumin

2 teaspoon
smoked paprika

1-2 cloves garlic,
finely chopped

450g (1lb) pork
fillet, diced

1 small zucchini

10 tablespoons
natural yoghurt

1 bag salad leaves,
to serve

1. Combine cumin, paprika, most of the garlic and 3 tablespoons olive oil in bowl. Toss in the pork to coat each piece and leave to marinate while you heat the grill (broiler).
2. Place 2 wooden skewers in water to soak.
3. Preheat an overhead grill (broiler) on the highest heat. Thread pork onto the skewers.
4. Cook pork under the grill for about 3 minutes each side, or until cooked to your liking.
5. While the pork is cooking, coarsely grate the zucchini and mix with the yoghurt and remaining garlic and season well.
6. Serve skewers with tzatziki and salad leaves on the side.

Things on sticks tend to be a crowd pleaser, whatever form they take. These kebabs are no exception.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – replace the pork with firm tofu or tempeh and possibly some vegetable chunks such as broccoli, eggplant, mushrooms, zucchini or red peppers (capsicum). You might like to serve with hummus as well for extra protein.

fun – explore different vegetables or meat. Beef or chicken would be equally as good – just make sure you use a tender cut such as eye fillet or steak.

different spices – you could use cumin or paprika on their own. Baharat (lebanese spice blend) would be a lovely substitute. Ground coriander seed would also work really well with the pork.

more substantial – serve with pita bread or tortillas.

more veg – add chopped veg to the skewers like zucchini or red bell peppers (capsicum).

paleo – use coconut yoghurt.



no-bake berry tart



no-bake berry tart

ENOUGH FOR 6 to 8
TAKES 45 MINUTES

100g (3.5oz) unsalted
butter

200g (7oz) almonds

500g (1lb) smooth ricotta

1/8 teaspoon pure
stevia powder*

1 vanilla bean (optional)

250g (1/2 lb) berries

1. Melt butter in a small saucepan. Line a 20cm (8in) pie dish or tart case with foil or baking (parchment) paper.

2. Whizz almonds in your food processor until it looks like bread crumbs. You want a few little chunks. Add the melted butter and whizz again until combined.

3. Scoop almond mixture into the lined pie dish and use your fingers and a spoon to spread evenly over the base and sides. Freeze for at least 20 minutes. You just want the butter to solidify to set the base.

4. While the base is chilling, mix stevia, the scraped seeds from your vanilla bean (if using) into the ricotta. Keep the vanilla bean for another use. Taste and adjust sweetness if needed.

5. When you're ready to serve, spread ricotta into your base. Pile berries into the center and let everyone admire before you cut into wedges.

This recipe came about one extremely hot summer's day when I had masses of blackberries from one of my playgroup friends. I definitely didn't want to turn on the oven but had this idea to make a blackberry tart for our dinner guests. And thus the no-bake tart was born!

You can make the tart base ahead of time and keep in the freezer for whenever you need it. Just remember to move it to the fridge 30 minutes before you want to serve so you can actually cut it. And make sure you use smooth creamy ricotta from a tub instead of the more crumbly ricotta from the deli.

VARIATIONS

***important note about stevia!** – there are 4 types of stevia:

1. Pure Stevia Powder – looks like icing (powdered / confectioners) sugar. It's expensive but a tiny amount goes a long long way. We're talking 1/2 teaspoon to sweeten a whole cake. This is I use.

2. Granular Stevia (like Natvia or Truvia) – looks like regular white sugar. It's a blend of erythritol and stevia. Usually 1/8 teaspoon pure stevia powder = 2-3 tablespoons granular stevia.

3. Fresh or Dried Stevia Leaves – from a real stevia plant! I haven't baked with them but they will behave similar to the pure stevia powder. Just add to taste.

4. Liquid stevia. I haven't used this. But add to taste.

granular stevia – replace pure powder with 2-3 tablespoons granular stevia.



no-bake berry tart

MORE VARIATIONS

no stevia – feel free to use sugar or your fave sweetener for the ricotta.

different fruit – summer berries are a fave but any seasonal fresh or cooked fruit will work here. Think [roast pears](#), [rosy rhubarb](#) or [sunny peaches](#).

nut-free / budget – use sunflower seeds or your favourite plain sweet cookie instead of the almonds.

different nuts – I like almonds best here but pretty much any nut will work.

dairy-free – use coconut oil for the base and make some [macadamia 'ricotta'](#) for the filling.

short on time – serve berries with fresh cream.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – serve berries with coconut cream.





MEAL PLAN FIVE

cooler weather



MEAL PLAN FIVE

cooler weather

[1.] MONDAY: Thai Chicken Soup with Lime

[2.] TUESDAY: Moroccan Meatball Tajine

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Fish Steaks with Olive Tapenade

[4.] THURSDAY: Melt-in-the-mouth Savoury Cheesecake

[5.] FRIDAY: Super Simple Coq au Vin (slow cooker) + Green Salad

[5.] SWEET TREAT: Easy Little Chocolate Puddings

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [2] Roast zucchini at the same time as the cheesecake and serve on top of the cooked cheesecake. [5] Use boneless chicken thighs and roast with the onions and mushrooms with a little oil at 200C / 400F will take about 30-40 minutes.

Carnivore: [4] Top with salami or prosciutto as well as or instead of the zucchini.

Vegetarian: [1] Chicken = mushrooms. [2] Beef = [Lentil balls](#). [3] Fish = halloumi or tofu. [5] Chicken = eggplant.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Noodles. [2] Couscous. [3] Crusty bread and butter [4] Warm flat bread. [5] Baguette or boiled potatoes.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [4] Make [this baked frittata](#) instead of the cheesecake. [6] Dairy-free milk like almond milk.



MEAL PLAN FIVE: cooler weather SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

6 kaffir lime leaves or zest of 1 lime [1]
 2 bunches coriander (cilantro) leaves [1&2]
 cauliflower rice or cooked couscous [2]
 1 bag baby spinach [3]
 1 lemon [1]
 3 small zucchini (500g / 1lb) [4]
 small bunch mint [4]
 1 bag salad leaves [4&5]
 4 small onions [5]*
 8-12 large button mushrooms [5]*

PROTEIN

4 chicken thigh fillets [1]
 450g (1lb) minced (ground) beef [2]
 2 fish steaks [3]
 3 eggs [4]
 4 chicken marylands
 (thighs with drumstick attached) [5]*
 1 egg [6]

DAIRY

4T butter [2]
 250g (8oz) cream cheese (Philadelphia) [4]
 200g (7oz) feta [4]

PANTRY

extra virgin olive oil
 salt & pepper
 1 can coconut milk (400mL / 14oz) [1]
 2T thai green curry paste [1]+
 125g (5oz) almond meal [2]
 2t ras el hanout, baharat or ground coriander [2]
 1 jar tomato passata or puree (700g / 25oz) [2]
 4T olive tapenade [1]
 3/4cup OR 1 1/2cups red wine [5]*
 4T tomato paste [5]*
 1T sherry or wine vinegar [5]*
 4T almond meal [6]
 3T milk [6]
 2T cocoa powder [6]
 1 tiny pinch pure stevia powder [6]^
 1t vanilla extract (optional) [6]
 1/2 teaspoon baking powder [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

‘t’ = teaspoon ‘T’ = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+**[1]** Or use another curry paste or replace with 2-4 large green fresh chillies finely chopped.

***[5]** Enough for 4 but leftovers are really lovely!

^**[6]** Or use 1-2 tablespoons granular stevia or 2-3 tablespoons brown sugar.

* Based on serving 2 people.
 Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each
 ingredient is required for.

thai chicken soup with lime



thai chicken soup with lime

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

1 can coconut milk
(400mL / 14oz)

2 tablespoon thai green
curry paste

3-4 chicken thigh fillets

6 kaffir lime leaves
or zest of 1 lime

1 bunch coriander
(cilantro) leaves

1. Place a large saucepan over a high heat.
2. Scoop a tablespoon of the coconut cream from the top of the can and add it to the saucepan with the curry paste.
3. Cook curry paste for about 15 seconds and then add 2 cups water and the remaining coconut milk.
4. While the water is coming to the boil, chop chicken into bite sized pieces and add to the pot along with the lime leaves or zest.
5. Simmer gently for 3-4 minutes or until the chicken is just cooked through.
6. Serve with coriander leaves.

This soup is equally delicious on a chilly winter evening or a hot summers day. I think the coconut creaminess makes it so warming in winter. But the fragrance of the coriander and lime leaves make it refreshing enough to serve when the weather is warmer.

If you can't find kaffir lime leaves, use the zest of a lime. It won't be the same but it will still be wonderful.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – replace the chicken with tofu or button mushrooms.

basil – for a different fragrance replace the fresh coriander with fresh basil or better yet, fresh Thai basil.

noodles – for a more substantial soup, soften some rice noodles by covering in boiling water and standing while the chicken cooks. Then drain and add to the soup before bringing back to the boil.

red soup – replace green curry paste with red curry paste.

more veg – try adding cauliflower, peas, snowpeas or Thai eggplant to the soup.

carb lovers / more substantial – add cooked rice noodles.





moroccan meatball tajine

moroccan meatball tajine

ENOUGH FOR 2 to 3
TAKES 40 MINUTES

450g (1lb) minced
(ground) beef

125g (5oz) almond meal

2 teaspoons ras el hanout,
baharat or ground
coriander

1 jar tomato passata or
puree (700g / 25oz)

4 tablespoons butter

1 bunch coriander
(cilantro), leaves picked

cauliflower rice or cooked
couscous to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Combine beef and almond meal and your chosen spice in a large bowl. Season generously with salt. Roll teaspoonfuls of the mixture into balls and place in an ovenproof dish.
3. Pour over the tomato passata or puree and top with butter. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes or longer until the meatballs are browned on top and cooked through.
4. Serve meatballs on a bed of cauliflower rice or couscous with coriander leaves on top.

This is a dish I've been making for years and am kinda surprised I haven't ever written about it on Stonesoup. About time! It's a brilliant example of how using spices can transform a boring old dish (Italian meatballs) into something exotic and super tasty.

VARIATIONS

to serve with couscous/more substantial – cook couscous according to the packet but add some extra butter.

to serve with cauli rice – grate 1/2 small cauliflower using your food processor or a box grater and serve meatballs on top. No need to cook or warm it.

different accompaniments – great wrapped in lebanese bread, tortillas or other flat bread. Could be served with your favourite pasta.

short on time – skip the onion and simmer the tajine on the stovetop until the meatballs are just cooked through – about 15 minutes.. You might also like to skip the meatball rolling and just cook the meat more like a bolognese sauce.

different meat – beef is a favourite but lamb is also great. Pork, chicken, turkey or buffalo could all be used.



moroccan meatball tajine

MORE VARIATIONS

vegetarian – try adding the spice above to [these lentil balls](#).

more veg – add carrots and peppers to the sauce.

nut-free – replace almond meal with soft bread crumbs or cooked quinoa.

dairy-free – replace butter with lots of extra virgin olive oil.

different herbs – mint, basil, parsley or baby spinach are all great.

italian meatballs – just skip the spice and serve with basil instead of the coriander.

indian meatballs – use garam masala as your spice and serve with a dollop of natural yoghurt.



fish steaks with olive tapenade



fish steaks with olive tapenade

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

2 fish steaks

4 large handfuls baby
spinach or other greens

lemon juice

4 tablespoons
olive tapenade

1. Preheat a large frying pan on a high heat.
2. Rub fish generously with olive oil. Season.
3. Cook fish for about 1 1/2 minutes each side, or until cooked to your liking.
4. Remove fish from the pan. Add baby spinach. Stir and cook until wilted. Splash with a little lemon juice.
5. Combine tapenade with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and 1 tablespoon lemon juice.
6. Serve fish on a bed of wilted greens with the tapenade on top.

While I adore swordfish, I try to eat it only every now and then because it tends to have high levels of mercury. Tuna or marlin steaks would work here, as would salmon cutlets. Halibut would be a good northern hemisphere choice.

Olive tapenade may seem like a strange accompaniment to fish, but it is delicious with the more robust, meaty fish steaks. Somehow the olive intensity brightens and complements the fish in a similar way to lemon juice.

VARIATIONS

vegan – use 2 portobello or field mushrooms per person and sear until tender, about 4 minutes each side.

carnivore – replace fish with minute beef steaks or pork cutlets.

vegetarian – try halloumi, sliced 1cm thick, and pan-fried until golden on both sides – about 3 minutes as a side.

tapenade alternatives – try pesto, hummus or aioli.

more summery – skip wilting the greens.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve fish with roast or mashed potatoes.

make your own tapenade – pit and chop 2 large handfuls of olives. Stir in enough olive oil to make a chunky paste. Season with lemon juice. Optional extras: a few capers, anchovies, flat leaf parsley, garlic.

more veg – use extra spinach or some kale.



melt-in-the-mouth
savoury cheesecake



melt-in-the-mouth savoury cheesecake

ENOUGH FOR 4 AS A LIGHT MEAL
TAKES 60 MINUTES

3 small zucchini
(500g / 1lb)

small bunch mint,
leaves picked

250g (9oz) cream cheese
(Philadelphia), softened

200g (7oz) feta

3 eggs

1 bag salad leaves

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F). Slice zucchini into rounds and pop in a roasting tray. Drizzle with a little oil but don't add salt because you'll be getting lots from the feta.

2. Roast for 20 minutes or until zucchini has softened and started to brown. Remove from the oven and toss in the mint.

3. Meanwhile, place cream cheese, feta and eggs in a food processor and whizz until well combined. There will still be a few tiny lumps from the feta. Grease a 20cm (8in) oven proof frying pan or spring form pan. Spoon the cheesy mixture into the pan and smooth the surface with a spoon. Press the cooked zucchini into the top.

4. Bake cheesecake for 15 minutes. Turn and cook for another 5-10 minutes or until browned around the edges and puffed up a little. Serve warm with salad leaves on the side.

I love this cheesecake so so much. I've served it multiple times for brunch but it's also fab as a simple vegetarian weeknight meal. I like it best when still warm from the oven but am totally happy having cold leftovers for lunch the next day. If it's not zucchini season where you are, see the 'variations' for alternative topping ideas. And if you're short of time you can easily roast the zucchini at the same time you cook the cheesecake and then serve it on top.

VARIATIONS

short on time – bake zucchini at the same time as the cheesecake and serve on top. Or skip the zucchini and just serve with a side salad for greenery. Or try a big dollop of pesto just before serving. Or cook [this Baked Frittata](#) instead.

different veg – roast eggplant is really good, grilled red peppers, roast mushrooms, roast diced root veg like sweet potato, wilted greens.

carnivore – top with salami or prosciutto as well as or instead of the zucchini.

no food processor – just mash the cheeses and eggs together with a fork and go for a more chunky, rustic style.

different cheese – replace feta with goats cheese or ricotta.

more substantial – serve with a side of bacon and/or hot buttered toast. For a more middle eastern vibe serve with warm pita bread.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – make [this Baked Frittata](#) instead.



super simple coq au vin



super simple coq au vin

ENOUGH FOR 4
TAKES 5 HOURS

4 chicken marylands
(thighs with drumstick
attached)

4 small onions,
peeled & halved

8-12 large button
mushrooms

4 tablespoons
tomato paste

3/4cup OR 1 1/2cups
red wine

1. Preheat oven to 100C (210F). Or get your slow cooker ready.
2. Place chicken, onions, mushrooms and tomato paste in an ovenproof casserole dish or the bowl of your slow cooker.
3. Pour over 3/4 cup wine for the slow cooker or 1 1/2cup for the oven method.
4. Cover with a lid. Place the slow cooker on HIGH or place the casserole in the oven and cook for 5 hours. Or until the chicken is tender and the vegetables are cooked. Taste and season.

My super simple version of this classic French dish is almost the complete opposite of Julia Child's recipe in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. Where Julia browns her chicken and cooks the onion, mushrooms and bacon separately, I like to pop them all in together and let the long, slow cooking process work its magic.

Feel free to add to this very basic recipe. A little bacon would be my first addition. Followed by a couple of bay leaves or some thyme.

VARIATIONS

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with mashed potatoes.

more veg – add extra onions, carrots & celery.

short on time – use boneless chicken thighs and roast with the onions and mushrooms with a little oil at 200C / 400F will take about 30-40 minutes.

vegetarian – sliced eggplant instead of chicken (make sure you vary the cooking time).





the classic mixed green salad

the classic mixed green salad

ENOUGH FOR 2 AS A SIDE
TAKES 5 MINUTES

1 tablespoon sherry
or wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon soy sauce

1 bag salad leaves,
washed and dried

1. Combine vinegar, soy and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl.

2. Toss leaves gently in the dressing using clean hands.

3. Taste and season.

The most frequent thing I cook is a simple green salad. It goes with pretty much anything and is a quick solution if you're like me and feel that a meal isn't complete without greens in some form.

I've even convinced my Irishman that it's essential to have a green salad with our eggs for Sunday brunch.

VARIATIONS

soy-free – skip the soy sauce and season with salt instead.

can't find sherry vinegar – my next favourite is rice wine vinegar (aka rice vinegar) but any wine vinegar will be fine. For a sweeter dressing try balsamic.

fresher – replace vinegar with lemon juice.

asian – use fish sauce instead of the vinegar and soy and drizzle over a little sesame oil.

more veg – add fresh veg to the salad like snow peas.



easy little chocolate puddings



easy little chocolate puddings

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 25 MINUTES

4 tablespoons (30g / 1oz)
almond meal

3 tablespoons
(45g / 1.5oz) milk

2 tablespoons (12g / 0.5)
cocoa powder

1 tiny pinch pure
stevia powder*

1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract
(optional)

1/2 teaspoon
baking powder

1. Preheat your oven to 180C (350F). Grease two
1 cup ramekins or oven-proof tea cups.

2. In a small bowl mix almond meal, milk, cocoa
powder, stevia, egg, vanilla (if using) and baking
powder until well combined. Taste and add more
stevia if needed. Divide mixture between your
prepared ramekins / cups.

3. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until the puddings
feel springy to touch. I like them slightly under
baked so they're squidgy in the middle. Serve
warm or at room temp.

I love these for so many reasons. First they're not going to spike your blood sugar. But more importantly they only take a few minutes to stir up AND use ingredients you probably have in your pantry – perfect for those nights when you haven't planned anything for dessert but then feel like something warm and chocolatey. I like them with lashings of double cream but if you're OK with a sugar hit, ice cream is also good.

VARIATIONS

***important note about stevia!** – there are 4 types of stevia:

1. Pure Stevia Powder – looks like icing (powdered / confectioners) sugar. It's expensive but a tiny amount goes a long long way. We're talking a tiny pinch here.

2. Granular Stevia (like Natvia or Truvia) – looks like regular white sugar. It's a blend of erythritol and stevia. You'll need 1-2 tablespoons here.

3. Fresh or Dried Stevia Leaves – from a real stevia plant! I haven't baked with them but they will behave similar to the pure stevia powder. Just add to taste.

4. Liquid stevia. I haven't used this. But add to taste.

granular stevia – replace powder with 1-2 tablespoons granular stevia.

no stevia – use your favourite sweetener... Honey, maple syrup, xylitol or white sugar! Just add and taste until you're happy with the sweetness level. A few tablespoons should be enough.



easy little chocolate puddings

MORE VARIATIONS

sugar lovers – use 3 tablespoons white or brown sugar. If you like things on the sweeter side, add more.

dairy-free – use your favourite non-dairy milk such as almond, hemp or coconut.

ginger puddings – replace the cocoa powder with 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger.

peanut butter – add a big tablespoon of peanut butter to the center of each pud before baking.

double chocolate – add a square of dark chocolate to the middle of each pud before baking.

hazelnut – replace almond meal with hazelnut meal.

nut-free – replace the almond meal with 2 tablespoons flour and 2 tablespoons melted butter or coconut oil – and they won't be low carb any more.

more servings – feel free to double or triple. I've included the weight measurements in case you have more mouths to feed!

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with ice cream!





MEAL PLAN SIX

cooler weather



MEAL PLAN SIX

cooler weather

- [1.] MONDAY: Broccoli & Goats Cheese Soup
- [2.] TUESDAY: Spiced Beef with Cabbage
- [3.] WEDNESDAY: Chorizo with Kale
- [4.] THURSDAY: Easy Fish Curry
- [5.] FRIDAY: Roast Chicken Soup
- [5.] SWEET TREAT: Crunchy Almond Crumbles

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [5] Use a commercial chicken stock instead of the water and simmer for 20 minutes. [6] Fresh blueberries and cream with roasted almonds on top.

Carnivore: [1] add sliced chicken and simmer until cooked. [3] Extra chorizo.

Vegetarian: [2] Beef = chickpeas. [3] Chorizo = halloumi. [4] Fish = eggplant or tofu. [5] Chicken = chickpeas + veg stock.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Crusty bread + butter. [2] Warm flat bread. [3] Cooked potatoes. [4] Steamed rice. [5] Toss in cooked pasta.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Dairy-free pesto instead of the goats cheese. [2] Use tahini instead of hummus. [4] Coconut cream. [5] Coconut oil for butter.



MEAL PLAN SIX: cooler weather SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

- 2 heads broccoli [1]
- 1/4 large cabbage [2]
- 2 lemons [2&3]
- 1-2 cloves garlic [3]
- 1 large bunch kale [3]
- 1/2 small cauliflower [4]
- 1 bunch coriander (cilantro) [4]
- 4 red chillies [4]
- 2 carrots [5]
- 2 onions [5]
- 2 tomatoes [5]
- 2T thyme leaves (optional) [5]
- 2 cups berries [6]

PROTEIN

- 450g (1lb) minced (ground) beef [2]
- 2 chorizo or other spicy sausage [3]
- 450g (1lb) fish fillets [4]
- 1/2 BBQ chicken [5]

DAIRY

- 100g (3oz) goats cheese [1]
- 4T whipping cream [4]
- 50g (2oz) grated butter [6]
- cream, to serve [6]

PANTRY

- extra virgin olive oil
- salt & pepper
- 3C water or mild stock [1]
- 4T hummus [2]*
- 2t baharat, ras El hanout or ground cumin [2]
- handful roasted almonds [3]
- 2T garam masala or curry powder [4]
- 1 can tomatoes [4]
- 100g (3.5oz) almond meal [6]
- 20g (2 tablespoons) granular stevia [6]
- 50g (2oz) sliced almonds (optional) [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

‘t’ = teaspoon ‘T’ = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

*[2] For an even lower carb option use 2 tablespoons tahini mixed with 1 tablespoon each water and lemon juice.
Or use mayo or Greek style yoghurt instead.

*Based on serving 2 people.
Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each
ingredient is required for.

broccoli & goats cheese soup



broccoli & goats cheese soup

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

3 cups water or mild stock

2 heads broccoli

100g (3oz) goats cheese,
sliced

extra virgin olive oil,
to serve

1. Bring water or stock to the boil in a medium saucepan. Chop broccoli into bite sized pieces.
2. Add broccoli to the pan. Simmer uncovered for about 10 minutes or until the broccoli isn't crunchy any more.
3. Remove from the heat and whizz using a stick blender or a blender until you have a smooth purée.
4. Taste and season with lots of salt. Bring back to a simmer. Serve with goats cheese on top and an exceedingly generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

This super simple soup is brilliant for those days when you just need a big bowl of something warm, nourishing and green! It's a bit fancier with the goats cheese but also super lovely without.

I normally make it with water to maximize the fresh broccoli flavour. If you want to use stock make sure it's not too strong to overpower the brocc.

VARIATIONS

paleo / dairy-free – serve with dairy-free pesto instead of the goats cheese. Or just skip it.

different cheese – also loved with shaved Parmesan, feta, or creamy ricotta.

fresh – if it tastes a bit flat and you've already added lots of salt try a squeeze of lemon.

carb-lovers – serve with crusty bread and butter or stir in some cooked quinoa, couscous or brown rice just before serving. You could serve the goats cheese on top of toast for dipping.

herby – add a bunch of flat leaf parsley or basil leaves before puréeing.

carnivore – add sliced chicken and simmer until cooked.



spiced beef with cabbage



spiced beef with cabbage

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

450g (1lb) minced
(ground) beef

2 teaspoons baharat,
ras El hanout
or ground cumin

1/4 large cabbage, sliced

1 lemon

4 tablespoons hummus

1. Preheat a large frying pan on a medium high heat. Add a little oil and cook beef, stirring every now and then until beef is well browned.
2. Add spice, salt and pepper and cook for another minute or so. Remove beef from the pan and place in a clean bowl.
3. Add a little more oil to the pan and reduce the heat to medium. Add cabbage and cook covered stirring periodically until the cabbage is no longer crunchy. Will take 5-10 minutes.
4. Return beef to the pan and warm through. Add a squeeze of lemon, taste and add more if needed.
5. Serve beef and cabbage with hummus on top.

Cabbage is one of the most underrated vegetables. I find it's delicious as long as you don't boil it! It's super nutritious and as a bonus will keep in the fridge for weeks if not months.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan – replace beef with cooked lovely lentils or crumbled firm tofu. You might want to soften a chopped onion and add it as well for extra depth of flavour. And serve with some toasted nuts for extra protein.

different meat – lamb is my favourite alternative but you could use and minced (ground) meat. Just make sure it has a good amount of fat so the dish isn't too dry.

different veg – try brussels sprouts (sliced), kale, broccoli, broccolini, cauliflower, bok choy, asparagus, peas or zucchini.

different spice? – for a completely different vibe use a little curry powder or garam masala instead. Chinese 5 spice and bok choy is another great combo. Plain fresh or dried chilli is great for those who like it hot!



spiced beef with cabbage

MORE VARIATIONS

more substantial – serve with cooked noodles tossed through, or with flat bread such as pita or tortillas on the side. You could also serve with couscous or quinoa.

herby – serve with some flat leaf parsley, mint or coriander (cilantro) leaves.

more veg – soften an onion before cooking the beef. Feel free to add any of the 'different' veg listed above. Also a little chopped carrot or halved cherry tomatoes can be lovely. For more greens serve on a bed of baby spinach or with salad leaves on the side.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – replace the hummus with mayo or tahini.



chorizo with kale



chorizo with kale

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 chorizo, sliced

1-2 cloves garlic,
peeled & sliced

1 large bunch kale,
finely sliced crosswise

1/2 lemon

handful
roasted almonds

1. Heat a frying pan on a medium high heat. Add a little oil and the chorizo. Cook for 2-3 minutes or until well browned on the first side.
2. Turn and cook for a few seconds on the other side. Remove from the pan to a clean plate.
3. Add garlic and kale to the chorizo oil in the pan and stir fry for 2-3 minutes or until kale is wilted and tender.
4. Return chorizo to the pan to warm up. Taste and season with salt, pepper and a small squeeze of lemon.
5. Serve with almonds sprinkled over.

Inspired by my favourite food writer, Nigel Slater in his latest book the Kitchen Diaries II.

When I say I 'adapted' this recipe, the only thing I really changed was adding in a splash of lemon juice for freshness. It's not very often I find myself adding an ingredient to other people's recipes!

This is now a firm favourite in our house and there has been much discussion on possible variations. See below for ideas...

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace chorizo with sliced halloumi and add in a teaspoon smoked paprika with the kale. Or you could try sun dried tomatoes and roast almonds instead of chorizo.

vegan – replace the chorizo with 2 large red onions or bell peppers (capsicum) chopped. Cook on a medium heat until soft. Add kale and 1 teaspoon smoked paprika and continue to cook as per the recipe. Double the almonds to serve.

no chorizo? – use spec, chopped bacon, pancetta, salami or even ham. Other fresh sausages can also be substituted.

different greens – most greens will work well here. Try cavolo nero, collard greens, spinach, silverbeet (chard), rainbow chard even baby spinach or defrosted frozen spinach. Cabbage, brussels sprouts, broccoli, asparagus, broccoli rabe can also be used but will need a little longer to cook.



chorizo with kale

MORE VARIATIONS

nut-free – skip the almonds or replace with toasted bread crumbs.

budget / more substantial – make the chorizo go further – toss in a drained can of chickpeas or white beans with the kale. You could also serve with crusty bread and butter.

sunday breakfast – serve topped with a poached or fried egg.

more veg – soften an onion before adding the kale. Serve with fresh parsley.



easy fish curry



easy fish curry

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

450g (1lb) fish fillets,
chopped into chunks

1-2 tablespoons
garam masala

1-4 red chillies, chopped

1 can tomatoes
(400g / 14oz), chopped

4 tablespoons whipping
cream (35% milk fat)

1 bunch coriander
(cilantro), leaves picked

cauliflower 'rice' or
steamed rice to serve

1. Heat a few tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan (skillet) over a medium high heat.
2. Add the fish and brown for a few minutes. Then add the garam masala and chilli. Stir for a few seconds.
3. Add tomatoes and their juices. Simmer for about 5 minutes, or until the fish has cooked through.
4. Stir in cream and bring back to a gentle simmer.
5. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve on a bed of cauliflower 'rice' or steamed rice with coriander on top.

My Irishman and I have been on a mission to eat more fish so we have been having a regular pescetarian Monday. This curry was inspired by one such Monday. I've found buying fish at our local farmers market makes fish cooking much more affordable and delicious. I've served it on a bed of cauliflower 'rice' (raw grated cauliflower) but you're welcome to use steamed basmati rice if you prefer.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace fish with drained canned chickpeas (or home cooked chickpeas), lentils tofu, or eggplant.

vegan – replace fish with diced eggplant. Will take longer for the eggplant to cook in the sauce, around 20 minutes. And replace cream with coconut milk.

dairy-free – replace cream with coconut milk. Butter or ghee could also be used instead of cream.

paleo – use unsweetened coconut cream.

different herbs – if coriander (cilantro) isn't your thing consider basil, mint, a handful of fresh curry leaves. Or just skip the herbs.



easy fish curry

MORE VARIATIONS

carnivore – replace fish with diced chicken thighs fillets or sliced steak. Adjust the cooking time as needed.

no garam masala – replace with a mild curry powder or loads of black pepper and a little ground cumin.

for cauliflower 'rice' – just grate raw cauli in the food processor or chop as finely as possible with a knife. I generally serve it cold with the hot curry on top.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with steamed rice instead of cauli 'rice'.

more veg – simmer veg in the sauce before adding fish. Broccoli or cauli or snowpeas.



roast chicken soup



roast chicken soup

ENOUGH FOR 2 TO 3
TAKES 60 MINUTES

bones from 1 roast or BBQ
chicken + meat from 1/2 of
the chicken

2 carrots, finely diced

2 onions, finely diced

2 tomatoes, diced

1-2 tablespoons thyme
leaves, optional

1. Pop the meat from the chicken, carrots, onion, tomato and 4 cups water in a medium saucepan. Place the bones in a small strainer that will fit in your saucepan. Then pop it on top of the soup so the bones are mostly covered with the liquid. You might need to move the veg around a bit to fit it in.

2. Simmer, covered for 45 minutes to an hour or until the soup tastes heavenly and the veg are tender.

3. Remove the bones. Season. Serve with thyme on top or cool and store in the fridge or freezer.

I used to freeze leftover chicken bones thinking I'd make stock 'one day'. Which of course never came. Recently I've started collecting the bones and keeping them in the fridge so I remember to use them. Makes all the difference. This soup is so nurturing and lovely I've found myself planning a roast or BBQ chicken just so I could have leftovers for the soup!

VARIATIONS

different veg – play around with the veg you use. Celery is always great. You could also try fresh corn, cauliflower, zucchini, even eggplant.

no fresh tomatoes – pop in a tablespoon or two of tomato paste.

vegetarian / vegan – make a [chickpea soup](#). Replace the chicken and bones with 2 cans of chickpeas + their juices. You'll only need 3 cups water and simmer uncovered so it reduces down nicely.

different herbs – thyme is one of my all time favourite herbs, but you could serve with fresh parsley or mint for something different.

chicken broth / stock – save the chicken meat for another use. Simmer the bones and veg. Then strain everything and discard the solids.



roast chicken soup

MORE VARIATIONS

roast chicken & lemon – skip the tomato and simmer a finely sliced lemon in with the veg for a different freshness.

short on time – use a good quality chicken stock and skip simmering the bones.

carb lovers / more substantial – toss in cooked noodles or serve with crusty bread and butter.

more veg – simmer chopped veg like carrot, celery, broccoli or root veg until tender. Or add green leaves such as spinach or kale and allow to wilt just before serving.





crunchy almond
crumbles

crunchy almond crumbles

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 45 MINUTES

2 cups berries
or other fruit

100g (3.5oz) almond meal

20g (2 tablespoons)
granular stevia*

50g (2oz) grated butter

50g (2oz) sliced almonds
(optional)

1. Preheat your oven to 180C (350F). Divide your fruit between 2 x 1 cup baking dishes or ramekins - if your fruit isn't bite-sized, chop it first so it will cook in the time it takes the topping to cook.
2. Combine almond meal and stevia in a bowl. Toss in the grated butter and use a fork or your fingers to rub the butter into the almond meal. Or pulse in the food processor.
3. When the mixture looks like lumpy bread crumbs, stir in the sliced almonds (if using). Scatter the mixture to cover the berries leaving it fairly loose.
4. Bake for 30 minutes or until the crumble topping is golden brown and the fruit is cooked.
5. Serve warm with cream or ice cream or both.

A good crumble is totally up there in my 'favourite dessert' stakes. Especially during the cooler months. I love the contrast between sweet, soft baked fruit, crunchy hot almond topping and cooling cream. So so good! And even better, you can bake them ahead if you're having guests and just warm in the oven before serving. Or pop them in to bake while you're eating your main course (just don't forget to set your timer!).

VARIATIONS

***important note about stevia!** – there are 4 types of stevia:

1. Pure Stevia Powder – looks like icing (powdered / confectioners) sugar. It's expensive but a tiny amount goes a long long way. We're talking 1/4 teaspoon to sweeten a whole cake. This is what I normally use except for things like this where I only need a tiny amount. For this dessert I use granular stevia.
2. Granular Stevia (like Natvia or Truvia) – looks like regular white sugar. It's a blend of erythritol and stevia. This is what I've used here.
3. Fresh or Dried Stevia Leaves – from a real stevia plant! I haven't baked with them but they will behave similar to the pure stevia powder. Just add to taste.
4. Liquid stevia. I haven't used this. But add to taste.

pure stevia powder – replace granular stevia with a pinch of pure powder. I prefer granular here because it's hard to measure such a tiny amount of the pure powder.



crunchy almond crumbles

MORE VARIATIONS

dairy-free / vegan – replace butter with coconut oil.

nut-free – replace almond meal with plain all-purpose flour or chickpea flour and skip the sliced almonds or use whole sunflower seeds.

different fruit ideas – all berries are lovely (fresh or frozen), apple, pear, peaches, cooked rhubarb (add extra stevia to the fruit), pitted cherries.

extra flavouring – add a little vanilla or cinnamon to the crumble topping.

different nuts – pecans, walnuts or macadamias.

short on time – serve fresh fruit with cream instead.

smaller serves – the one cup dishes are a very large dessert. Feel free to divide the mixture between 4 x 1/2 cup ramekins or other oven proof dishes. Check after 20 minutes.





MEAL PLAN SEVEN

20-minute meals

MEAL PLAN SEVEN

20-minute meals

- [1.] MONDAY: Cheesy Broccoli
- [2.] TUESDAY: Ginger Beef Stir Fry
- [3.] WEDNESDAY: Chicken with Pine Nut Sauce
- [4.] THURSDAY: Quick Fish Salad
- [5.] FRIDAY: Vietnamese Beef Salad
- [5.] SWEET TREAT: Little Lemon Cheesecakes

VARIATIONS

Carnivore: [1] Add bacon! [4] Good with lamb chops instead of the fish.

Vegetarian: [2] Beef = tofu. [3] Chicken = halloumi. [4] Fish = eggplant [5] Beef = mushrooms + brown rice.

Carb Lovers / More Substantial: [1] Cooked pasta [2] Steamed Rice. [3] Warm flat bread. [4] Potatoes. [5] Rice noodles.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Cheese = smashed avocado + lime. [4] Almond flour [6] Dark chocolate.

D MEAL PLAN SEVEN: 20-minute meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

2 heads broccoli [1]
6 small red chillies (optional) [1]
3T ginger [2]
4-5 green onions (scallions) [2]
1 bunch bok choy [2]+
1 clove garlic [3]
2 lemons [3&4]
1 bag baby kale or other salad [3]
2 bags salad leaves [4&5]
6T lime juice [5]

PROTEIN

4 steaks [2&5]
4 chicken thigh fillets [3]
400g (14oz) fish fillets [4]

DAIRY

4 large handfuls grated cheese [1]
125g (4 1/2oz) mascarpone
or other cream cheese [6]

PANTRY

extra virgin olive oil
salt & pepper
5T coconut oil, olive oil or butter [1]
sesame oil (optional) [2]
100g (3.5oz) pine nuts [3]
mayonnaise [4]
5T fish or soy sauce [5]
1t dried chilli flakes, or fresh chilli [5]
1 handful roast nuts [6]
4T lemon curd or lemon butter [6]*

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon 'T' = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+**[2]** Or use other Asian greens or even broccoli.

***[6]** [Recipe here](#) to make your own Low Carb / Sugar-Free [lemon curd](#).

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.



cheesy
broccoli

cheesy broccoli

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

4-5 tablespoons coconut
oil, olive oil or butter

2 heads broccoli

2-6 small red chills
chopped, optional

4 large handfuls
grated cheese

1. Heat oil in a frying pan or skillet over a medium heat.
2. Rinse broccoli and don't dry as the water will help the broccoli to steam. Slice broccoli stems finely then chop the top into bite sized chunks. I just hack through it with a knife but you're welcome to chop into individual 'trees' if you like.
3. Add broccoli and chilli to the oil. Cook, covered for about 5 minutes or until the broccoli is tender. You'll need to stir a few times. If it starts to burn add a little water.
4. Add cheese and stir until well combined and just melted. Serve hot.

I made this the other night for a 'batchelorette' dinner because my Irishman was out. I was craving something healthy but also cheesy and comforting. Talk about hitting the spot!

If you have coconut oil, I really recommend using it because it add a lovely subtle coonutty sweetness which sounds weird but actually works really well. Of course if you don't have any butter or olive oil are just as good.

VARIATIONS

different veg – also great with cauliflower or broccolini.

vegan – replace cheese with chopped nuts such as cashews.

carb lovers / more substantial – toss in cooked pasta and some toasted pine nuts, or a little cooked quinoa, cous cous or a poached egg or toss in a drained can of chickpeas and add a little more cheese.

carnivore – serve as a side to a well grilled juicy steak or chicken breast.

different cheese – I used a combo of parmesan and emmental but any melting cheese is good here. Try raclette, gruyere, cheddar or even some blue. It's a good way to use up little scraps of cheese floating around the fridge.

more veg – serve with cauliflower 'rice' or soften an onion first. Serve with soft herbs.





ginger beef stir fry

ginger beef stir fry

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

2 steaks, trimmed
& finely sliced

2-3 tablespoons ginger,
chopped into matchsticks

4-5 green onions
(scallions), sliced

1 bunch bok choy,
sliced crosswise

sesame oil, to serve
(optional)

1. Heat a wok or large frying pan on a fierce heat.
2. Add a little oil and stir fry the beef & ginger until no longer pink. Remove from the heat and place in a clean bowl.
3. Add the green onion and bok choy and stir fry until the bok choy is starting to wilt - a few minutes.
4. Return the ginger and beef to the pan. Stir fry for another few seconds or until the beef is hot.
5. Remove from the heat. Season with salt & pepper and drizzle with sesame oil (if using), serve.

The older I get the more I find myself loving ginger in both sweet and savoury dishes. Many stir fry recipes start off with the 'holy trinity' of ginger, garlic and chilli. I prefer to focus on one element at a time. But feel free to use all three seasonings if you like.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – replace the beef with sliced tofu, setian cooked white beans.

herby – serve sprinkled with flat leaf parsley or mint leaves.

hot! – add a few finely sliced red chillis with the ginger.

different veg – brussels sprouts are lovely cooked like this as is broccoli, broccolini or asparagus. Also consider other root veg such as parsnips, turnip or swede (rutabaga). Tougher root veg may need to be simmered before stir frying.

sesame-free – season with soy sauce instead of the salt and sesame oil.

don't have sesame oil – use sesame seeds instead. Or use a handful of roasted nuts such as cashews to deliver the nuttiness needed to balance the ginger heat.

more substantial – increase the amount of beef or serve with rice or noodles.

more veg – stir fry chopped broccoli, red peppers or carrots with the bok choy.



chicken with pine nut sauce



chicken with pine nut sauce

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

4 chicken thigh fillets

100g (3.5oz) pine nuts

1/2 clove garlic

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 bag baby kale or other
salad leaves to serve

1. Preheat a large frying pan or skillet on a high heat.
2. Trim fat from chicken and bash with the palm of your hand so that the thigh fillets are an even thickness across. Rub with a little oil. Season.
3. Pop chicken into the pan and cook for 3-4 minutes on the first side.
4. Meanwhile, whizz pine nuts, garlic, lemon juice, 2 tablespoons water and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil until you have a smoothish sauce. Taste and season.
5. Turn chicken when well browned and cook on the second side for another 3-4 minutes or until cooked through and no longer pink.
6. Divide sauce between 2 plates. Top with chicken and serve leaves on the side.

This pine nut sauce is a favourite of mine. It's based on the Turkish nut sauce called 'tarator' which is usually made with walnuts. To be honest I prefer this creamy pine nut version. It's super lovely served with chicken and doubles up as a tasty dressing to have with the salad leaves.

VARIATIONS

different meat – chicken breasts, 1 per person will work (bash them until flattened and about 1/2in thick before cooking). Also good with fish fillets (adjust cooking time and no need to bash) or pork chops. Lamb fillet or back straps will also be great.

vegetarian – replace chicken with sliced halloumi – just cook until golden on both sides. OR try serving the sauce and salad with a couple of fried eggs each.

vegan – replace chicken with eggplant 'steaks'. Slice 1 large eggplant crosswise and cook in oil until well browned on both sides and super tender. Will take about 5 minutes a side. You might like to increase the sauce recipe to make it more substantial too.

budget – replace pine nuts with cheaper nuts like cashews or almonds. Also consider using 1/2 nuts and 1/2 soft breadcrumbs.



chicken with pine nut sauce

MORE VARIATIONS

nut-free – serve chicken and salad with a yoghurt sauce (natural yoghurt seasoned with salt & pepper) or just use a good quality mayonnaise or aioli.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with warm pita bread to wrap chicken, sauce and salad or serve with cooked couscous or quinoa.

more veg – add grilled veg like zucchini, red peppers (capsicum) or eggplant.



quick fish salad



quick fish salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

400g (14oz) fish fillets

2 tablespoons flour
(optional)

2 tablespoons
lemon juice

1 bag salad

mayo, to serve

1. Heat a frying pan on a medium high heat with a little oil. Toss fish in the flour (if using) with some salt and pepper.
2. Cook the fish until golden on both sides, about 3-5 minutes depending on how thick it is.
3. Meanwhile, combine lemon juice with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season and toss in the salad leaves.
4. Divide salad between 2 plates. Top with the hot fish and serve with mayo on the side.

We've been trying to eat fish at least once a week. And I'm really enjoying it! This recipe is one of my fishy favourites. I love it with flat head fillets but it works with any fish or even chicken for that matter. Hooray for fish!

VARIATIONS

gluten-free – the flour is just there to add a light crispy coating to the fish but you can easily skip it or use your favourite GF flour. I used chickpea flour which adds a lovely yellowy colour.

chicken – replace fish with chicken breast or thigh fillets. Chicken will take an extra minute or 2 on each side to cook. I wouldn't bother with the flour if cooking chicken.

carnivore – replace fish with steaks.

beef – this salad is also surprisingly good with steak sliced into strips and tossed in the flour.

vegan – replace fish with a drained can of chickpeas or white beans. Skip the flour and just pan fry the legumes in a little oil until well browned. Use a vegan mayo or see below for other egg-free ideas.



quick fish salad

MORE VARIATIONS

egg / mayo-free – replace mayo with lots of lemon juice, natural yoghurt, a dollop of creamy ricotta or goats cheese or with a tahini lemon sauce (3 tablespoons each lemon juice, tahini and water).

paleo (grain + dairy-free) – use almond meal instead of flour.

vegetarian – replace the fish with eggplant . You could also replace the fish with sliced halloumi cheese. Skip the flour and pan fry until the cheese is well browned on both sides. Or try a fried or poached egg salad.

more veg – feel free to add your favourite raw salad veg such as grated carrot, cherry tomatoes, grated beets, sliced cucumber, sliced zucchini, chopped red capsicum (bell peppers). Or add a handful of frozen peas to the pan for the last minute of cooking the fish. You could also try shaved cabbage or fennel salad.

more substantial – serve with home made fries or toss in some steamed potatoes or torn chunks of sourdough bread.



vietnamese beef salad



vietnamese beef salad

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 steaks

5 tablespoons fish
or soy sauce

6 tablespoons lime juice

1 teaspoon dried chilli
flakes, or fresh chilli

1 bag salad leaves

1. Drizzle 2 tablespoons fish or soy sauce over the steak and allow to marinate while you heat a pan on a high heat.
2. Pan fry the steaks for about 3 minutes on each side until cooked to your liking.
3. Meanwhile, combine lime juice with remaining 3 tablespoons fish sauce and the chilli.
4. When the beef is cooked, transfer to the dressing and rest for a few minutes.
5. Finely slice the steaks and return to the dressing. Toss in the salad leaves and serve immediately.

This is one of my go-to dinners when I'm looking for something fast and fresh. I just love the combo of lime juice and fish sauce for bringing boring old steak to life.

I've just used salad leaves here but feel free to add in fresh herbs, especially mint and coriander (cilantro).

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan – replace the fish sauce with soy sauce (2 tablespoons should do it). And stir fry sliced mushrooms to use in place of the beef and serve with steamed brown rice.

herby – add in fresh coriander (cilantro) or mint leaves as well as or instead of the salad leaves.

budget – replace the steak with ground (minced) beef. Brown it well then toss into the dressing.

more substantial – serve with cauliflower 'rice' or steamed rice or toss in some rice noodles cooked as per the packed directions.

more veg – add bean sprouts, chopped red peppers (capsicum).



little lemon cheesecakes



little lemon cheesecakes

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

1 handful roast nuts

125g (4 1/2oz) mascarpone
or other cream cheese

4 tablespoons [lemon curd](#)

1. Place nuts in a plastic bag and bash with a rolling pin or something heavy until they are coarsely crumbled. Or use your food processor.
2. Divide between two small tea cups or pretty glasses.
3. Combine mascarpone and lemon curd in a bowl. Taste, and add a little more lemon curd if it needs more kick. Or add a little more mascarpone if you'd like it to be creamier.
4. Divide lemon cream between the tea cups and refrigerate until you're ready to eat.

Growing up cheesecake was one of my favourite desserts – and truthfully it still is. When I don't have the time or inclination to bake a whole cheesecake, these quick little 'cheats' versions always hit the spot in a fraction of the time (and without the tempting leftovers!).

VARIATIONS

nut-free – replace the nuts with shortbread or your sweet biscuit (cookie).

lemon & raspberry – serve with a small handful of fresh raspberries on top.

lemon & ginger – replace short bread with ginger nut cookies. If you're after a full-on ginger experience, stir a teaspoon of finely grated fresh ginger in with the lemon curd.

lime cheesecakes – if you can get your hands on some lime curd, give it a go.

no mascarpone – use smooth ricotta or softened Philadelphia cream cheese and be prepared to add a little extra lemon curd.

sugar-free / low carb – use sugar-free cookies or granola and lemon curd.





MEAL PLAN EIGHT

20-minute meals

MEAL PLAN EIGHT

20-minute meals

[1.] MONDAY: Chorizo & Broccoli

[2.] TUESDAY: Goats Cheese & Basil Omelette

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Pork Larb

[4.] THURSDAY: Baked Salmon with Herby Yoghurt

[5.] FRIDAY: Oregano & Feta Steaks

[5.] SWEET TREAT: Berry Mousse

VARIATIONS

Vegetarian: [1] Pan fried halloumi instead of chorizo. [3] Replace pork with crumbled firm tofu or cooked lentils. [4] Mushrooms or eggplant instead of salmon. [5] Serve dressing with cooked lentils or beans.

Carb Lovers [1] Toss in cooked pasta [2] Hot buttered toast. [3] Steamed rice. [4] Cooked quinoa or brown rice. [5] Roast potatoes

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [2] Replace goats cheese with halved cherry tomatoes, sun dried tomatoes, cooked mushrooms. [4] Coconut yoghurt. [5] Roast almonds instead of feta. [6] Coconut yoghurt instead of cream.

MEAL PLAN EIGHT: 20-minute meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

2 bunches broccolini or broccoli [1]
2 lemons [1&4]
small bunch basil leaves [2]
2 bags salad leaves [2&4]
2-6 small red chillies [3]
2 limes [3]
2 bunches coriander (cilantro) or mint [3]
1 small bunch flat leaf parsley [4]
handful oregano leaves [5]
1 bag baby spinach [5]
125g (4.5oz) mixed berries [6]

PROTEIN

2 chorizo (200g / 7oz) [1]+
6 eggs [2]
450g (1lb) ground pork (mince) [3]
2 salmon or other fish fillets [4]
2 steaks [5]

DAIRY

100g (4oz) goats cheese [2]
8T natural (Greek) yoghurt [4]
handful feta [5]
150mL (3/4 cup) whipping cream [6]

PANTRY

salt & pepper
extra virgin olive oil
handful pinenuts [1]#
3T fish or soy sauce [3]
2T sherry or wine vinegar [5]
1/2t vanilla extract [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

t = teaspoon **T** = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+ [1] Or other spicy or mild sausage or salami.

[1] Or other nuts like almonds, brazil nuts or hazelnuts.

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.

chorizo & broccoli



chorizo & broccoli

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

2 chorizo (200g / 7oz),
sliced into rounds

2 bunches broccolini /
broccoli, chopped into bite
sized chunks

squeeze lemon

handful pinenuts or
other nuts, optional

1. Heat a little oil in a large frying pan. Cook chorizo on a medium high heat until well browned on both sides. About 10 minutes.
2. Remove chorizo from the pan and place in a clean bowl, leaving behind as much lovely chorizo oil as possible.
3. Add the broccolini / broccoli to the pan with a splash of water. Cover with a tray or lid or foil and cook stirring every 5 minutes or so until the veg is bright green and tender with a little bit of crunch left. If it starts to burn add a little more water.
4. Return the chorizo to the pan and allow to warm. Squeeze over some lemon. Taste and season with salt and pepper and more lemon if needed.
5. Serve in bowls topped with pine nuts (if using).

Dishes like this are some of my favourite weeknight dinners. They're quick, there's a substantial hit of green veg and enough protein and chilli to keep my Irishman happy. There's also only one pot so the cleaning up is quick too. Yay!

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – cook broccoli first in oil with a teaspoon of smoked paprika. Pan fry sliced halloumi and serve with broccoli, lemon juice and pine nuts.

vegan – cook broccoli first in oil with a teaspoon of smoked paprika. Add in a drained can of beans (white, red or black) and serve with lots of lemon, pine nuts and a good drizzle of peppery extra virgin olive oil.

different veg – any greens are good here. Try kale, cavolo nero, collard greens, spinach, chard or rainbow chard. You could also use zucchini, asparagus or snow peas.

more decadent – I love this served with a big dollop of home made aioli (garlicky mayo).

hotter – add in a little chopped fresh or dried chilli with the chorizo.



chorizo & broccoli

MORE VARIATIONS

different meat – replace chorizo with other spicy sausages or chunks of bacon.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with mashed potatoes or steamed potatoes tossed into the lovely chorizo oil. You could also serve with cooked pasta.

more veg – serve a green salad to serve.

family friendly – use mild chorizo or other sausages + toss in cooked pasta.



goats cheese & basil omelette



goats cheese & basil omelette

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

6 eggs

100g (4oz) goats cheese

small bunch basil leaves

1 bag salad leaves,
to serve

1. Preheat a small frying pan or omelette pan on a medium high heat.
2. Lightly whisk 3 eggs in a bowl. Season.
3. Add a few glugs of oil or butter to the pan. Add eggs and cook for about 30 seconds. If they're sizzling too rapidly, turn the heat down.
4. After 30 seconds gently bring the cooked edges of the egg into the centre and let the raw egg flow out to the edges.
5. When the egg is mostly cooked and set (about 1 minute or a little longer), slide the omelette onto your plate.
6. Repeat with remaining 3 eggs.
7. Divide goats cheese and basil between the two omelettes. Serve with salad leaves on the side.

It's hard to go past an omelette when you feel like a super quick, healthy meal. The possibilities are endless when it comes to additions and flavours but this goats cheese and basil combo is one of my all time favourites.

VARIATIONS

different cheese – finely grated parmesan, cheddar, ricotta, cottage cheese, crumbled feta, blue cheese.

vegetables / dairy-free – replace goats cheese with halved cherry tomatoes, sun dried tomatoes, cooked mushrooms, artichoke hearts in oil, finely shaved asparagus, shaved fennel, cooked zucchini or leftover roast potatoes.

carnivore -drape prosciutto over the omelette, or finely sliced salami, diced cooked bacon, or shredded cooked chicken.

fishy – replace cheese with smoked salmon, smoked trout, salmon roe, caviar, canned sardines, smoked oysters, cooked crab meat, lobster, canned tuna, canned salmon.

different herbs – lemony sorrel, thyme, basil, parsley, mint.



goats cheese & basil omelette

MORE VARIATIONS

different accompaniments – baby spinach, salad leaves, shaved fennel, shaved zucchini, shredded kale, wilted kale, wilted spinach, a glass of wine!

vegan – try scrambled tofu instead.

richer – use butter instead of the oil and add a few tablespoons of cream or sour cream as you whisk the eggs.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with hot buttered toast.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – replace goats cheese with halved cherry tomatoes, sun dried tomatoes, cooked mushrooms.

more veg – add mushrooms or tomatoes to omelette.





pork larb

pork larb

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

450g (1lb) pork mince
(ground pork)

2-6 small red chillies,
chopped

2-3 tablespoons fish or
soy sauce

4 tablespoons lime juice +
2 lime halves to serve

2 bunches coriander
(cilantro) or mint,
leaves picked

1. Heat a large frying pan or wok on a very high heat. Add a little oil and cook the pork and chillies, stirring continuously until the pork is well browned.

2. Remove from the heat and toss in the fish sauce and lime juice. Taste and add more fish sauce (or salt) or lime juice as needed.

3. Serve hot with mint or coriander leaves on top.

‘Larb’ is a spicy Thai dish usually made from minced (ground) chicken or pork. I love to use mince in stir fries because it cooks so quickly and stays nice and tender... so it’s hard to mess up!

VARIATIONS

no fish sauce – use soy sauce or coconut aminos instead.

vegetarian – replace pork with crumbled firm tofu or cooked lentils.

more veg – serve with cauliflower ‘rice’ (raw grated cauliflower). Feel free to add your fave stir fry veg like chopped carrot, corn, bok choy or red bell peppers (capsicum) to the pan.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with steamed rice or toss cooked rice noodles in with the meat.

different meat – any ground (minced) meat is fine. Try chicken or beef. Note that beef may need a bit more lime juice.

more flavour – feel free to add finely chopped garlic and/or ginger to the pan.



baked salmon with herby yoghurt



baked salmon with herby yoghurt

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

2 salmon or other
fish fillets

1 lemon, sliced

8 tablespoons
natural yoghurt

1 small bunch flat leaf
parsley, finely chopped

1 bag salad leaves,
to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Tear off two large squares of al foil. Divide the lemon slices between the two parcels. Top each with a fish fillet. Season generously with salt and pepper.
3. Wrap up the foil into 2 parcels and seal tightly.
4. Bake for 10 minutes or until salmon is just cooked through.
5. Meanwhile, combine yoghurt and parsley. Season.
6. Serve salmon on a bed of the yoghurt sauce with lemon slices on top and salad leaves on the side.

If you're not very confident with cooking fish (or even if you are) baking fish in a bag is a brilliant technique to have in your arsenal. I love it for two reasons.

First there's no fishy smell taking over the whole house that can happen when pan frying fish. Second you almost don't have to think. Just pop it in the oven, set the timer and you're free to do something else while dinner cooks itself. Too easy.

VARIATIONS

different fish – salmon is great but pretty much any fish fillets can be cooked this way. For thinner fillets best to check after 7-8 minutes to make sure they don't overcook. Whole fish can also be baked in parcels like this, with a longer cooking time.

vegetarian – veggie parcels can be a lovely surprise. My favourite are chunky mushrooms. Add a little olive oil or butter for extra richness. Will take about 30 minutes. You could also serve the herby yoghurt with roast eggplant.

dairy-free – replace the yoghurt with equal parts of tahini, lemon juice and water.

vegan – combine the vegetarian and dairy-free alternatives.

carnivore – the best meat for baking like this is chicken breasts or thigh fillets. Expect them to take 15-20 minutes.



baked salmon with herby yoghurt

MORE VARIATIONS

more substantial – serve with cooked quinoa, lentils, steamed rice, cooked couscous or just crusty bread and butter. If you have time, roast potatoes are always lovely with fish.

extra flavourings – lemon is lovely in your parcels but you might also like to try any of the following: thyme, chilli (fresh or dried), lime, sumac, coriander seeds, or a pinch of saffron.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – replace yoghurt with mashed avocado.



A top-down view of a white plate with a dark blue rim, resting on a wooden surface. The plate features a cooked steak topped with a mixture of fresh green herbs and crumbled white cheese. A side of fresh arugula is served on the left. A small portion of another dish is visible on a separate plate in the upper right corner.

oregano & feta steaks

oregano & feta steaks

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

2 steaks

2 tablespoons sherry
or wine vinegar

handful oregano leaves,
chopped

handful feta, crumbled

baby spinach or salad
leaves to serve

1. Remove steaks from the fridge preferably an hour before you want to cook them, or as long as you've got.
2. For the dressing, combine vinegar with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and oregano. Season with salt and pepper and leave to marinate while you cook the steaks.
3. Heat a char grill pan, BBQ or frying pan on a high heat. Rub steaks with a little oil and sprinkle with salt.
4. Cook steaks for 3-5 minutes each side, or until cooked to your liking.
5. Place steak on plates and crumble over feta. Drizzle over dressing and allow to rest for 5-10 minutes before serving with the salad leaves on the side.

Oregano is one of those herbs I often forget to use. Now that I have masses of it growing in my garden I'm finding myself reaching for it more and more.

Oregano and steak is a classic combination in the Argentinian sauce 'chimmichurri'. I've simplified it here using some feta for a salty creamy contrast.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – this feta dressing is super lovely on pan fried mushrooms. Field or portabello are my favs expect them to take 8-10 minutes in a hot pan. Another option is to serve the cheesy dressing on a big bowl of [lovely lentils](#).

dairy-free – go for a more traditional chimmichurri and replace feta with a small bunch finely chopped flat leaf parsley or replace feta with black olives such as little ligurian ones.

vegan – combine the dairy-free and vegetarian options.

different herbs – if you don't have oregano, marjoram is the next best thing. After that my preference would be flat leaf parsley, basil or mint.

different cheese – marinated Persian feta is particularly lovely but any soft, creamy cheese will work such as goats cheese or ricotta.



oregano & feta steaks

MORE VARIATIONS

more substantial / carb lovers – steak and potato are always a winner in my house. Pretty much any spuds are good but [roast potatoes](#) are a classic and a [creamy mash](#) also works well. Sometimes I serve our steaks with a packet of commercial potato chips or crisps for a quick crunchy fix.

different protein – chicken breasts or thigh fillets are great. A pork chop or lamb chop is another good alternative. The more robust fish like swordfish or tuna steaks are also options.

more veg – add other veg to the salad like snowpeas, red capsicum (bell peppers), cucumber or zucchini.





berry mousse

berry mousse

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

150mL (3/4 cup)
whipping cream

1/2 teaspoon
vanilla extract

125g (4.5oz)
mixed berries

1. Whip cream until you have soft peaks. Add in vanilla.
2. Mash berries with a fork until you have a rough puree.
3. Fold the berries through the cream, leaving it a little unmixed or 'swirled'.
4. Divide between 2 small glasses and serve immediately or refrigerate until you're ready to eat.

This super quick dessert is great for when you feel like whipping up something sweet after your main course. Feel free to play around with different berries – either frozen or fresh. Or for more ideas see the variations section.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free / paleo – try berry sorbet instead, Whiz frozen berries in a food processor until you have a lovely 'sorbet' texture. About 300g (10oz) berries will serve 3-4. Or see the coconut idea below.

berry & coconut – chill 2 cans of coconut milk. Remove the lid and whip the solid coconut 'cream' leaving behind the watery liquid. Swirl in berry puree as above.

stone fruit mousse – remove the seeds from 4 ripe peaches or 8 apricots and puree the fruit in the food processor. Swirl through cream instead of the berries.

tangy mousse – whip only half the cream and stir in natural (Greek) yoghurt to make up the remaining half.

other flavour ideas – any ripe fruit will work if you mash or puree it first. Chocolate chunks are a nice addition as are chopped roasted nuts for a little crunch.





MEAL PLAN NINE

30-minute meals

MEAL PLAN NINE

30-minute meals

- [1.] MONDAY: The 'Pizza' Baked Frittata
- [2.] TUESDAY: Herby Green Roast Chicken
- [3.] WEDNESDAY: 10-Minute Massaman Curry
- [4.] THURSDAY: Super Yum Bacon & Cabbage
- [5.] FRIDAY: Green Spaghetti & Meatballs
- [6.] SWEET TREAT: Salted Chocolate Chip Cookies

VARIATIONS

Vegetarian: [2] Replace chicken with canned chickpeas. [3] Replace steaks with hard boiled eggs. [4] Replace bacon with feta. [5] Lentil balls.

Carb Lovers: [1] Crusty bread. [2] Toss in cooked pasta. [3] Steamed rice. [4] Cooked pasta or potatoes. [5] Cooked spaghetti.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Parmesan = sliced almonds. [5] Dairy free pesto or basil oil.



MEAL PLAN NINE: 30-minute meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

1 punnet cherry tomatoes (250g / 9oz) [1]
handful basil leaves (optional) [1]
1 bag salad leaves [1]
1 bunch coriander (cilantro) [2]
1 bunch flat leaf parsley [2]
2-4 small red chillies [2]
2 limes [2]
1 bag baby spinach [2]
1/2 cauliflower [3]
1 bunch leeks OR 1 onion [4]
1/2 small cabbage or 1/4 large [4]
3 medium zucchini [5]

PROTEIN

6 eggs [1]
4 chicken thigh fillets [2]
2 steaks [3]
4 slices bacon [4]
500g (1lb) minced (ground) beef [5]

DAIRY

handful grated parmesan [1]

PANTRY

salt & pepper
extra virgin olive oil
2T soy sauce [2]
1 jar (200g / 7oz) massaman curry paste [3]+
1 can unsweetened coconut milk [3]
3T crunchy peanut butter [3]
1T rice or wine vinegar [4]
8T pesto [5]
2t onion powder (optional) [5]
75g (3oz) almond meal [5]
200g (7oz) smooth peanut butter [6]*
1/2t baking powder [6]*
1/8t pure stevia powder [6]*^
1 egg [6]*
50g (2oz) dark chocolate [6]*

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon **'T'** = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz).

+ [3] Or other curry paste such as Thai red curry.

*** [6]** Makes 6 cookies. Leftovers can be frozen. Or just serve dark chocolate smeared with peanut butter.

^ [6] Or 3T granular stevia like natvia OR 100g (3.5oz) brown sugar (but watch those carbs!).

* Based on serving 2 people.

Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each ingredient is required for.

the 'pizza' baked frittata



the 'pizza' baked frittata

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

6 eggs

handful grated parmesan
+ shavings to top

1 punnet cherry tomatoes
(250g / 9oz), halved

handful basil leaves
(optional)

1 bag salad leaves

1. Preheat your oven to 180C (350F). Grease and line a 20cm (8in) springform pan or skillet.

2. Crack eggs into a bowl and stir in the grated cheese. Season with salt. Pour the egg mixture into the prepared pan. Top with cherry tomatoes cut side up and scatter over extra parmesan shavings.

3. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until the eggs are just set and no longer runny.

4. Slice frittata in two and serve with basil leaves on top (if using) and salad on the side.

Eggs are the best source of protein out there but I often leave them to have for breakfast and forget about dinner egg options. Baked frittatas are the key to making eggs more dinner friendly. I love the pizza-inspired flavours of this recipe but feel free to play around with it.

VARIATIONS

dressed salad – whisk together 1 tablespoon sherry or wine vinegar with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season and taste. Toss in the leaves to dress.

dairy-free/paleo – just skip the cheese or replace with a handful of sliced almonds sprinkled over the top.

carnivore – add some cooked shredded chicken or cooked sliced sausages or salami to the egg mixture before baking. Or serve with prosciutto or salami.

carb-lovers / more substantial – serve with garlic bread on the side or add a few handfuls of cooked short pasta or drained canned chickpeas to the egg mixture. The frittata also makes a lovely sandwich filling.

no basil – just omit it or serve with a dollop of pesto on top. Or replace with other herbs such as chopped chives, flat leaf parsley or thyme.

more veg – add grilled veg to the egg mixture such as eggplant, red peppers (capsicum), mushrooms or zucchini. Or add chopped raw veg to the salad such as radish, cucumber, carrot or snow peas.



herby green roast chicken



herby green roast chicken

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 30 MINUTES

1 bunch coriander
(cilantro), leaves & stems

1 bunch flat leaf parsley,
leaves & stems

2-4 small red chillies

2 tablespoons soy sauce

6-8 tablespoons neutral flavoured
oil, (I used rice bran oil)

4 chicken thigh fillets,
bone out (about 450g / 1lb)

2 limes, halved, to serve

4 handfuls baby spinach,
to serve

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Whizz coriander, parsley, chilli, soy sauce and oil until you have a chunky paste.
3. Toss chicken in the herb mixture. Marinate for up to 36 hours or cook straight away.
4. Lay chicken fillets out flat in an oven proof dish and pour over the herb mixture.
5. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink in the middle.
6. Serve on a bed of baby spinach with lime on the side.

This is one of those brilliant dinners that you can just pop in the oven and let dinner practically cook itself. The chicken can be marinated in the sauce for up to about 36 hours if you like. But its still delish if you don't have time.

I love how the herby marinade keeps everything moist and fresh at the same time.

VARIATIONS

vegan – marinate and roast some tofu or mushrooms instead. Root veg like sweet potato, carrots or parsnip could be cooked like this. As could asparagus or sliced zucchini (courgettes) OR replace chicken with 2 drained cans chickpeas – will just need to roast for 15-20 minutes.

vegetarian – try roast halloumi. Will take about 15 minutes or less OR replace chicken with 2 drained cans chickpeas – will just need to roast for 15-20 minutes.

different herbs – you could just use either coriander or parsley. Basil or oregano are also good.

different meat / fish – try chicken breasts (will take a little longer to cook'), chicken on the bone such as wings or drumsticks (will take 45mins or so), whole chicken cut into pieces (about 1 hour), whole chicken butterflied (cut down the back bone and flattened out like a book), pork chops, fish fillets (will take about 15 mins or less depending on how thick), whole fish (about 1/2 hour depending on size), pork sausages will also work (about 1/2 hour), lamb cutlets (about 15 – 20 mins).



herby green roast chicken

MORE VARIATIONS

budget – serve with steamed rice or cauliflower rice and just serve 1 thigh fillet per person.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with hot buttered noodles.

more veg – add baby carrots to the chicken.



10-minute massaman curry



10-minute massaman curry

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 10 MINUTES

500g (1lb) chicken thigh
fillets

4-6 tablespoons
massaman curry paste

400mL (14oz)
coconut milk

1/2 cup roasted peanuts

4-6 sprigs fresh curry
leaves, optional

4 handfuls baby spinach,
to serve

1. Heat some olive oil in a large pot. Finely slice chicken and stir fry over a high heat for a few minutes or until no longer pink.

2. Add curry paste and stir fry for another 30 seconds before adding the coconut milk and curry leaves, if using.

3. Bring to a simmer and cook for another few minutes or until chicken is just cooked through and serve.

Massaman curry is a Malaysian curry that's normally slow cooked with beef and potatoes. We're lightening it up and speeding it up by using chicken thigh fillets and serving on a bed of baby spinach or cauliflower 'rice' instead of the spuds.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – replace the chicken with beef chuck or stewing steak. Simmer gently for an hour or until the beef is tender.

nut-free – just skip the peanuts and serve with fresh coriander leaves (cilantro) instead.

vegetarian – replace the chicken breast with firm tofu chopped finely and some fresh cauliflower chopped into florettes. Simmer curry until the cauli is tender – 10 minutes or so.

vegan – replace the chicken with 2 cans drained lentils.

budget – serve with steamed rice to stretch the curry to 4 servings or stir in a few handfuls of cooked potatoes.





super yum bacon & cabbage

super yum bacon & cabbage

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 15 MINUTES

3-4 slices bacon, chopped

1 bunch leeks, washed &
white parts sliced
OR 1 onion

1/2 small cabbage or
1/4 large, sliced

1 tablespoon rice or
other wine vinegar

1. Heat a medium saucepan on a medium heat. Add a little olive oil and brown bacon.
2. Then add the leeks and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring when you think of it.
3. When the leeks have started to soften, add the cabbage and a splash of water. Cover and cook, stirring every few minutes until the cabbage is 'al dente' or just soft. Somewhere from 5-10 minutes.
4. Season with salt and pepper and vinegar. Serve hot.

My Irishman tells me that bacon and cabbage is a traditional dish from Limerick. He's a big fan of his Mum, Geraldine's version. I knew it was a bit risky to mess around with a family favourite but I couldn't help myself. Instead of boiling the cabbage, I just soften it in a little oil which saves time and reduces the risk of any 'smelly' cabbagey flavours.

VARIATIONS

different cabbage thicknesses – I like to slice my cabbage finely using my knife, so not as fine as a mandoline. This way the cabbage cooks quickly. If you're after a more chunky look, cutting the cabbage into 1 inch ribbons will also work, just expect a longer cooking time.

more veg – serve with flat leaf parsley leaves, baby spinach or a few spoonfuls of [home made sauerkraut](#). Another option is to serve with salad or add carrot, onion or Brussels sprouts.

different cabbage – I've used white cabbage in the picture but we love this with red cabbage (and balsamic vinegar) or savoy as well. You could also use brussels sprouts, just remember to slice them finely so they cook quickly. Kale can also be used.

vegetarian – just skip the bacon and serve with a salty cheese crumbled over like feta OR replace bacon with sun dried tomatoes and serve with a poached egg.

super yum bacon & cabbage

MORE VARIATIONS

herby – a little thyme or sage added with the onions is also lovely.

carb lovers – toss in cooked pasta or serve with steamed or mashed potatoes.

vegan – replace bacon with smoked tofu or skip the bacon and serve topped with roasted or smoked nuts such as almonds.

carnivore – add extra bacon or serve with pork chops.



green 'spaghetti' & meatballs



green 'spaghetti' & meatballs

ENOUGH FOR 2 to 3
TAKES 30 MINUTES

500g (1lb) minced
(ground) beef

2 teaspoons onion powder
(optional)

75g (3oz) almond meal

2-3 medium zucchini

6-8 tablespoons pesto

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F). Combine meat, onion powder (if using) and almond meal in a large bowl. Season with salt.
2. Scoop with a soup spoon and roll into meatballs. Place balls in a baking tray as you go.
3. Pop meatballs in the oven and set your timer for 15 minutes.
4. While the balls are cooking make spaghetti from your zucchini using a spiralizer. Or shave into ribbons using a vegetable peeler or mandolin.
5. When the timer goes turn the meatballs and top with the zucchini. Return to the oven for another 2-5 minutes to warm the zucchini.
6. Remove from the oven and serve with pesto on top.

I'm so glad I invested in a spiralizer to make noodles out of veggies. My favourite are these green 'spaghetti' from zucchini which work so well with pesto.

If you don't have a spiralizer don't worry! You can use a vegetable peeler or mandolin to make slices of zucchini more like pappardelle.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – use these [lentil balls](#).


dairy-free – use [dairy-free pesto](#).

to make pesto – whizz a large bunch basil in a food processor with 2 handfuls grated Parmesan, a handful pine nuts, a clove of garlic and enough extra virgin olive oil to make a chunky paste.

carb-lovers – toss in cooked spaghetti or serve with garlic bread.

no onion powder – just skip it or replace with a chopped onion softened in a little oil.

nut-free – replace almond meal with soft bread crumbs. Or just skip it.

A close-up photograph of four salted chocolate chip cookies resting on a white parchment-lined baking sheet. The cookies are golden-brown with a cracked, textured surface and are studded with dark chocolate chips. The baking sheet is placed on a light-colored wooden surface.

salted chocolate chip cookies

salted chocolate chip cookies

ENOUGH FOR 6 COOKIES
TAKES 20 MINUTES

200g (7oz) smooth
peanut butter

1/2 teaspoon
baking powder

1/8 teaspoon
pure stevia powder*

1 egg

50g (2oz)
dark chocolate

sea salt flakes

1. Preheat oven to 180C (350F). Line a cookie tray with baking paper.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together peanut butter, stevia and baking powder.
3. Stir in egg to form a wet dough. Break chocolate into chunks and add to the dough.
4. Use a tablespoon to form 6 balls and place on your prepared tray. Press on cookies to flatten slightly until they're about 1cm (1/3in) high. Sprinkle with a little sea salt. I like to manually redistribute the chocolate chunks to make sure each cookie has enough.
5. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until cookies are golden at the edges. Cool on the tray.

Apart from potatoes, two of my Irishman's favourite foods are chocolate and peanut butter. Needless to say, these cookies are one of his all time favourite sweet treats to have with a hot cup of tea.

I should also note they're super rich and one of the few baked goods that tastes better if you allow them to cool to room temperature before eating.

VARIATIONS

* **important note about stevia!** – there are 4 types of stevia:

1. Pure Stevia Powder – looks like icing (powdered / confectioners) sugar. It's expensive but a tiny amount goes a long long way. We're talking 1/4 teaspoon to sweeten a whole cake. This is what I use.
2. Granular Stevia (like Natvia or Truvia) – looks like regular white sugar. It's a blend of erythritol and stevia. Usually 1/4 teaspoon = 4-6 tablespoons granular stevia.
3. Fresh or Dried Stevia Leaves – from a real stevia plant! I haven't baked with them but they will behave similar to the pure stevia powder. Just add to taste.
4. Liquid stevia – I haven't used this. If you want to use it just add to taste.

sugar-lovers / budget / no stevia – use my original recipe to make 12 cookies – 250g (9oz) smooth peanut butter, 200g (7oz) brown sugar, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 egg, 100g (3.5oz) chocolate. Bake 180C (350F) for 10 minutes (all the extra sugar binds up moisture so less baking is needed. It also provides bulk so you get more cookies!).

salted chocolate chip cookies

MORE VARIATIONS

peanut-free – replace peanut butter with almond, cashew, brazil nut or other nut butter.

nut-free – sunflower seed butter ‘sunbutter’ instead of the peanut butter.

crunchy – use crunchy peanut butter if you prefer.





MEAL PLAN TEN

family friendly meals



MEAL PLAN TEN

family friendly meals

[1.] MONDAY: Tuna Melts

[2.] TUESDAY: The Great Aussie Rissolle

[3.] WEDNESDAY: Sausages with Mushrooms

[4.] THURSDAY: Cauliflower Pizza + Salad

[5.] FRIDAY: Polpettone

[6.] SWEET TREAT: Peanut Butter Chocolate Fudge

VARIATIONS

Short on time: [1] Use commercial low carb bread. [4] Use a commercial low carb pizza base. [6] Brown beef in a large frying pan. Add other ingredients and simmer until thick. Serve on a bed of baby spinach or salad.

Vegetarian: [1] Tuna = chickpeas. [2] Lentil balls. [3] Sausages = poached eggs. [4] Skip salami. [5] Beef = eggplant.

Carb Lovers: [1] Extra bread. [2] Soft bread rolls or burger buns. [3] Cooked beans or pasta. [4] Garlic bread. [5] Spaghetti.

Paleo (Grain, Legume & Dairy-Free): [1] Replace cheese with smashed avocado. [4] Replace parmesan in crust with extra almond meal and replace mozzarella with extra salami. [5] Replace butter with olive oil and skip the cheese.



MEAL PLAN TEN: family friendly meals

SHOPPING LIST*

VEGGIES

500g (1lb) broccoli, 2 small [1]+
4 bags salad leaves [1,2,4,5]
1 small bunch flat leaf parsley [2]
1 bag baby spinach [3]
4 large mushrooms [3]
4 sprigs thyme [3]
500g (1lb) cauliflower [4]

PROTEIN

2 medium cans tuna (200g / 7oz each) [1]
7 eggs [1,2,4]+
500g (1lb) minced (ground) beef [2]
4 sausages [3]
1kg (2lb) minced (ground) beef [5]**

DAIRY

2 handfuls grated cheese [1]
8T butter [3&5]
your favourite pizza toppings [4]*
100g (3.5oz) grated parmesan cheese [4]
150g (5oz) grated cheese [5]**

PANTRY

salt & pepper
extra virgin olive oil
4T mayonnaise [1]
200g (7oz) almond meal [1&4]+
75g (3oz) almond meal [2]
2T tomato ketchup [2]^
1 handful pine nuts [2]
your favourite pizza toppings [4]*
1T psyllium husks (optional) [4]
1T sherry or wine vinegar [4]
1t soy sauce [4]
150g (5oz) almond meal [5]**
1 jar (3C) tomato passata (puree) [5]**
200g (7oz) coconut milk [6]
200g (7oz) dark chocolate [6]
100g (3.5oz) peanut butter [6]
1t vanilla extract [6]
4T oat bran (optional) [6]

OTHER

[add your other items here]

COOKS NOTES

't' = teaspoon **'T'** = tablespoon. Standard bag of salad = approx 150g (5oz)

Unless otherwise stated all cans are 400g (14oz)

+ [1] for the broccoli bread. Replace with 2-4 slices commercial low carb bread if you're short on time.

^ [2] or use tomato puree if you're avoiding sugar.

*** [4]** I used a few tablespoons tomato puree, bocconcini (baby mozzarella) and sliced salami.

**** [5]** Polpettone serves 4. You can make half, however leftovers keep really well.

* Based on serving 2 people.
Please adjust as required.

[NUMBERS] refer to the recipe each
ingredient is required for.



tuna melts

tuna melts

ENOUGH FOR 1
TAKES 15 MINUTES

- 1 medium can tuna
(200g / 7oz)
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 handful grated cheese
- 1 slice broccoli bread
(see next page)
- salad leaves, to serve

1. Preheat your overhead grill (broiler) on the highest heat.
2. In a medium bowl mash drained tuna with a fork. Stir in mayo and grated cheese.
3. Place bread on an oven-proof baking tray or sheet (lined with foil for easier cleanup). Press tuna mixture on top of the bread.
4. Place your prepared bread under the grill and leave until the topping is all melted and browned in places.
5. Scatter with salad leaves and serve with lashings of black pepper.

One of the best things about discovering my [Broccoli Sandwich Bread](#) was being able to start having ‘things on toast’ again without worrying about carbs or gluten. And knowing I was actually getting an extra serve of veggies. Win!

Of course you’re welcome to use your favourite rustic sourdough or even white sliced if you can’t be bothered making your own bread.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – use cooked or canned chickpeas or black beans instead of the tuna. Or use more cheese!

carb-lovers – use your favourite carb-based bread.

hot! – use tuna with chilli oil or add in a small finely chopped fresh red chilli.

different cheese – my favourite is emmental but any melting cheese will work like cheddar, gruyere, raclette, even parmesan.

no mayo – you can use sour cream, melted butter or even regular cream but mayo is my fave.

carnivore – replace tuna with some diced cooked bacon or chorizo.





broccoli sandwich bread

broccoli sandwich bread

MAKES 6-8 SLICES
TAKES 40 MINUTES

500g (1lb) broccoli,
2 small

4 eggs

100g (3.5oz) almond meal

1/4 teaspoon salt

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F).
2. Whizz your broccoli using your food processor until it looks a bit like fine couscous. Or chop as finely as possible.
3. Add eggs, almond meal and salt to the food processor bowl. Stir with a spoon until combined.
4. Line a baking tray with baking (parchment) paper. Tip the broccoli mixture onto the lined tray then using your hands smooth into a rectangle about 1cm (1/3in) thick.
5. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the bread is slightly browned and feels firm and springy when touched.
6. Cool on the tray. Cut in half crosswise and then into 3-4 lengthwise to make 6-8 slices (or cut to your preferred size).

When I'm in the mood for a sandwich or a slice of toast, this is my go-to recipe. I love how something that feels and tastes quite 'bread-y' is actually a serve of vegetables. I slice and freeze so I can just defrost in the toaster as needed.

This broccoli version does look very green, which I love but I've found my boys are much happier eating the white, cauliflower version instead.

VARIATIONS

different quantities – the 500g (1lb) broccoli is a guideline but if you only have 400g (14oz) or up to 600g (21oz) it will be fine.

nut-free – replace almond meal with bread crumbs, ground linseeds (flax seeds) or ground sunflower seeds. Each of these will soak up different amounts of moisture so you'll need to be prepared for different baking times. When I made it with ground sunflower seeds the texture was wetter and it took 30 minutes.

different vegetables – cauliflower works really well. You could also replace up to half the broccoli / cauliflower with grated raw veg like carrot, beets, sweet potato, parsnip or zucchini. I wouldn't use all root veg though.

other flavours – I like to keep this simple so my sandwich flavours come through but you could play around with some grated parmesan, garlic or chopped herbs.





the great aussie rissole!

the great aussie rissole!

ENOUGH FOR 2 to 3
TAKES 30 MINUTES

500g (1lb) minced
(ground) beef
75g (3oz) almond meal
1 egg
2 tablespoons
tomato ketchup
1 handful pine nuts
1 small bunch flat leaf
parsley (optional)
1 bag salad leaves,
to serve

1. Mix beef, almond meal, egg, pine nuts, parsley (if using) and a little salt in a large bowl.
2. Using your hands form into patties. It's up to you how big or small. I like mine medium sized so they don't take too long to cook.
3. Heat a little oil in a frying pan on a medium high heat and cook rissoles for about 5 minutes on each side until well browned and just cooked through. Be careful as the sugar in the ketchup makes them easy to burn.
4. Serve with salad leaves or however you like your burgers.

At first glance I know these just look like a burger or meatballs but there's something really special about the humble rissole. As far as I know they're an Australian invention.

I hadn't had them in years until I was inspired to make a much simplified version of the rissoles in the *Three Blue Ducks* cookbook. Talk about a winner!

VARIATIONS

sugar-free – just skip the ketchup or replace with 1 tablespoon tomato paste.

egg-free – just skip the egg. The texture will be slightly dryer and more prone to crumbling but it won't be the end of the world.

5 ingredients – skip the parsley.

nut-free – skip the pine nuts and replace the almond meal with soft bread crumbs.

vegetarian – add pine nuts, ketchup and parsley to these [lentil balls](#).

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with roast spuds or fries.



sausages with mushies



sausages with mushies

ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 20 MINUTES

4 tablespoons butter

4 sausages

4 large field
mushrooms, sliced

4 sprigs thyme

2 large handfuls
baby spinach

1. Heat half the butter on a medium high heat in a large frying pan. Remove sausage casings and crumble the sausage meat into the pan.

2. Cook, stirring and breaking up any large chunks of sausage meat for a few minutes or until sausage meat is starting to brown.

3. Add the remaining butter, mushrooms and thyme. Continue to cook, stirring every now and then until the mushrooms are tender and brown and the sausage meat is all cooked through.

4. Taste and season. Serve on a bed of the baby spinach.

The secret to success with this recipe is to make sure you use good quality sausages – it's worth seeking out a good butcher rather than using any old supermarket 'banger'.

And make sure you cook until the mushrooms are really well browned and soft for maximum mushroomy flavour.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free – make sure your sausages are gluten-free or replace with ground (minced) beef or pork (about 450g / 1lb).

breakfast / higher protein – serve with a poached egg on top.

vegan – replace butter with olive oil and replace sausages with cooked lentils (about 450g / 1lb). Make sure you're generous with the oil and you may like to splash in some sherry or other vinegar to add freshness to the lentils. The cooked lentils can be added after the mushrooms are cooked and just heated through.

vegetarian – replace sausages with lentils as per the vegan recipe. Use the butter. Or you could just double the mushies and serve with soft cheese like ricotta.



sausages with mushies

MORE VARIATIONS

paleo – use olive oil instead of butter.

different greens – any washed salad leaves will work here. Or you could try wilted greens such as kale, collards, spinach or chard. Also lovely on top of a bed of steamed broccoli or broccolini.

too dry – add in another good hunk of butter... don't be shy.

carb lovers / more substantial – used canned beans, add the butter beans to the pan and cook for another few minutes or until heated through. You could serve on hot buttered toast, a bed of mashed potatoes, with cooked pasta or couscous or even steamed rice.



cauliflower 'pizza'



cauliflower 'pizza'

MAKES: 1 LARGE PIZZA - ENOUGH FOR 2
TAKES 60 MINUTES

500g (1lb) cauliflower,
about 1 small

100g (3.5oz) grated
parmesan cheese

1 tablespoon psyllium
husks (optional)

2 eggs

100g (3.5oz)
almond meal

your favourite pizza
toppings

1. Preheat your oven to 180C (350F).
2. Whizz your cauliflower using your food processor until it looks a bit like fine couscous. Or chop as finely as possible.
3. Add parmesan, psyllium (if using), eggs, almond meal and a really generous pinch of salt. Stir until combined.
4. Line a baking tray with foil or baking paper. Tip the cauli mixture onto the lined tray then using your hands smooth into a pizza shaped circle about 28cm (11in) in diameter. I like to make a 'crust' by shaping the edges to be taller than the middle.
5. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until the pizza is deeply browned and feels springy when touched.
6. Increase the heat to to 200C (400F) add your toppings and bake further 5-10 minutes or until you're happy.

I was tempted to call this a tart rather than set the expectations that pizza involves. But really it is closer to being a pizza than a tart. Either way it's delicious. And I love that it's low-carb so I don't have to limit myself to only 1-2 modest slices.

VARIATIONS

psyllium alternatives – psyllium is a form of fiber. The pizza is perfectly fine without but you could use oat bran, ground chia seeds or ground flaxseeds if you like.

dairy-free – replace parmesan with extra almond meal. If you have some nutritional yeast lying around a tablespoon or so wouldn't hurt.

nut-free – replace almond meal with bread crumbs or extra parmesan.

martian 'green pizza' – replace cauliflower with broccoli.

do ahead – you can bake the base ahead of time and then just continue from step 6. Will keep in the fridge for a week or so or in the freezer for months. Defrost before baking.



cauliflower 'pizza'

MORE VARIATIONS

smaller pizzas – feel free to make into whatever size (or shape) you like. Smaller pizzas won't need quite as long so check after 20 minutes. I often make 2 pizzas so we can vary the toppings.

other veg – also thinking it would work well with grated zucchini or broccoli instead of the cauli. And if you don't mind the carbs, grated sweet potato would be lovely.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with garlic bread.





the classic mixed green salad

the classic mixed green salad

ENOUGH FOR 2 AS A SIDE
TAKES 5 MINUTES

1 tablespoon sherry
or wine vinegar

1/2 teaspoon soy sauce

1 bag salad leaves,
washed and dried

1. Combine vinegar, soy and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl.

2. Toss leaves gently in the dressing using clean hands.

3. Taste and season.

The most frequent thing I cook is a simple green salad. It goes with pretty much anything and is a quick solution if you're like me and feel that a meal isn't complete without greens in some form.

I've even convinced my Irishman that it's essential to have a green salad with our eggs for Sunday brunch.

VARIATIONS

soy-free – skip the soy sauce and season with salt instead.

can't find sherry vinegar – my next favourite is rice wine vinegar (aka rice vinegar) but any wine vinegar will be fine. For a sweeter dressing try balsamic.

fresher – replace vinegar with lemon juice.

asian – use fish sauce instead of the vinegar and soy and drizzle over a little sesame oil.

more veg – add fresh veg to the salad like snow peas.





polpettone

polpettone

ENOUGH FOR 4 to 6
TAKES 60 MINUTES

1kg (2lb) minced
(ground) beef

150g (5oz) almond meal

1 jar tomato passata
(puree), about 3 cups

3-4 knobs (hunks) butter

150g (5oz) grated cheese

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F). Combine beef, almond meal and a few pinches of salt in a bowl. Mix well and form into a loaf.
2. Place tomato and butter in a baking dish and top with your loaf.
3. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes.
4. Spoon sauce over the top of the loaf and scatter over the cheese. Bake for another 20 minutes or until cheese is melted and the polpettone is cooked through. I like it a little pink.
5. Eat now or allow to cool before storing in the fridge or freezer.

When I was at boarding school one of my least favourite things to eat was meatloaf. But as I've learned over the years just because I didn't like something when I was younger doesn't mean there isn't a better version that I can love... And here it is!

I still can't bring myself to call it meatloaf though. Besides it's much more fun to say 'polpettone' – the Italian for large meatball.

VARIATIONS

no onion powder? – just skip it or soften a chopped onion in a little butter and add to the raw beef.

vegetarian – try [these lentil balls](#) instead.

nut-free – replace almond meal with soft breadcrumbs.

different cheese – any good melting cheese works well. I used a mixture of gruyere, parmesan and emmental.

short on time – roll into meatballs and bake 30 minutes.

carb lovers / more substantial – serve with soft polenta, mash, cooked pasta or garlic bread.

paleo (grain, legume & dairy-free) – use olive oil for butter and skip the cheese.





peanut butter chocolate fudge

peanut butter chocolate fudge

MAKES 16-20 SQUARES
TAKES 20 MINUTES + SETTING

200g (7oz) coconut milk

200g (7oz) dark chocolate,
70% cocoa solids, chopped

100g (3.5oz)
peanut butter

1 teaspoon
vanilla extract

4 tablespoons
oat bran (optional)

1. Bring coconut milk to a simmer in a medium saucepan. Meanwhile, line a loaf pan with foil or baking paper.
2. Remove from the heat and add the chocolate. Stand for a few minutes so the chocolate melts.
3. Stir in the peanut butter, vanilla and oat bran (if using). I like to leave a few chunks of peanut butter in the mixture.
4. Transfer fudge mixture to the prepared tin and refrigerate for a few hours, or until set.
5. Chop into small squares.

Fudge isn't something you'd normally associate with healthy treats. But this version is super special, with no added sugar and hidden 'fiber' in the form of oat bran. I love how the little flecks remind me of the nougat 'bits' in Toblerone chocolate.

VARIATIONS

nut-free – just skip the peanut butter.

no coconut milk – replace the coconut milk with regular whipping cream.

fiber plus – double the level of oat bran.

gluten-free / no oat bran – skip the oat bran or replace with psyllium husks, chia seeds or linseeds (flax seeds).

super crunchy – mix in a handful of roasted peanut halves.

different nuts – use your favourite nut butter – all nuts love chocolate!

lower carb – use higher cocoa solids chocolate (90% is great). You might need to add a little sweetener but then again you may not.



About The Author



Hi There! I'm Jules Clancy, a food lover with a degree in Food Science.

Deliciously Diabetic is where I share my journey of taming my Type 2 Diabetes by eating fresh, delicious real food that also happens to be Low Carb.

I'm on a mission to help you do the same.

Why?

Because eating Low Carb is the easiest way I've found to manage my blood sugar without feeling deprived.

Because eating Low Carb need not be complicated or time consuming.

Because I love food! Especially Low Carb.

And Because I firmly believe you don't have to sacrifice taste to be healthy, even if you're diabetic, like me.

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