



Cooking Around the World

Nutrition and Food Services Healthy Teaching Kitchen



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[Table of Contents](#)



Table of Contents

<u>Cooking References</u>	1
<u>Cooking Safely</u>	2
<u>Measurements and Abbreviations</u>	4
<u>Recipes Inspired by Africa</u>	5
<u>Apricot Chicken Tagine – South Africa</u>	6
<u>Roasted Eggplant Spread – Egypt</u>	7
<u>Baklava-Inspired Baked Oatmeal – Egypt</u>	8
<u>Curried Chicken Salad – Morocco</u>	9
<u>Kofta (Turkey Kebabs) – Egypt</u>	10
<u>Microwave White Bean and Egg Shakshuka – Tunisia</u>	11
<u>Recipes Inspired by Eastern Asia</u>	12
<u>Black Rice Porridge – Indonesia</u>	13
<u>Chicken Chow Mein – China</u>	14
<u>Garlic Edamame – Japan</u>	15
<u>Hot-and-Sour Soup – Philippines</u>	16
<u>Kimchi – Korea</u>	17
<u>Vegetable Pad Thai – Thailand</u>	18
<u>Recipes Inspired by Western Asia</u>	19
<u>Coconut Red Lentil Dahl – India</u>	20
<u>Crispy Chickpea Falafel – Turkey</u>	21
<u>Jeweled Brown Rice – Iran</u>	22
<u>Sweet Potato-Lentil Samosas – Pakistan</u>	23
<u>Oven-Roasted Chickpeas – India</u>	24
<u>Mango-Vanilla Lassi – India</u>	25

<u>Recipes Inspired by Central America and the Caribbean</u>	26
<u>Black Bean Baleadas – Honduras</u>	27
<u>Chipotle Black Bean-Vegetable Soup – Costa Rica</u>	28
<u>Spiced Hot Cacao – Guatemala</u>	29
<u>Jerk Spice Rub – Jamaica</u>	30
<u>Turkey Tacos Picadillo – Honduras</u>	31
<u>Virgin Piña Colada – United States (Puerto Rico)</u>	32
<u>Recipes Inspired by North America</u>	33
<u>Calabacitas con Elote – Mexico</u>	34
<u>Eggs Benedict – United States (New York)</u>	35
<u>Basic Guacamole – Mexico</u>	36
<u>Haupia (Coconut Pudding) with Mango – United States (Hawaii)</u>	37
<u>Turkey Sausage Jambalaya – United States (Louisiana)</u>	38
<u>Maple-Glazed Roasted Salmon – Canada</u>	39
<u>Yellow Split Pea Soup – Canada</u>	40
<u>Recipes Inspired by South America</u>	41
<u>Baked Arepas – Venezuela</u>	42
<u>Plantain Tostones with Mojo Sauce – Columbia</u>	43
<u>Roasted Pork Tenderloin with Chimichurri – Argentina</u>	44
<u>Baked Heart of Palm Empanadas – Brazil</u>	45
<u>Recipes Inspired by Oceania</u>	46
<u>White Fish with Cucumber-Caper Sauce – Australia</u>	47
<u>Lemon Curd Pavlova – New Zealand</u>	48
<u>Creamy Pumpkin Soup – Australia</u>	49
<u>Savory Meat Pie – Tasmania</u>	50
<u>Recipes Inspired by Eastern Europe</u>	51
<u>Roasted Beet Borscht – Russia</u>	52
<u>Marinated Cucumber Salad – Denmark</u>	53
<u>Slow Cooker Poached Eggs and Salmon – Sweden</u>	54
<u>Sweet Potato Latkes (Potato Fritters) – Ukraine</u>	55

<u>Piernik-Spiced Zucchini Bread – Poland</u>	56
<u>Unstuffed Cabbage Rolls – Hungary</u>	57
<u>Recipes Inspired by Western Europe</u>	58
<u>Sweet-and-Tangy Braised Red Cabbage – Austria</u>	59
<u>Classic Crepes – Belgium</u>	60
<u>Skillet Shepherd's Pie (Cottage Pie) – Ireland</u>	61
<u>Honey-Glazed Baked Pears – Switzerland</u>	62
<u>Lemon Baked Fish and Chips – United Kingdom</u>	63
<u>Spätzle (German Dumplings) – Germany</u>	64
<u>Recipes Inspired by Mediterranean Europe</u>	65
<u>Chicken Couscous Paella – Spain</u>	66
<u>Baked Eggplant Parmesan – Italy</u>	67
<u>Lamb-Vegetable Kabobs with Tzatziki – Greece</u>	68
<u>Vegetable-Loaded Potato Salad – Portugal</u>	69
<u>Summer Vegetable Ratatouille – France</u>	70
<u>Plant-Based Tiramisu – Italy</u>	71
<u>Appendix</u>	72
<u>Healthy Teaching Kitchen Tools and Resources</u>	73
<u>Cooking Equipment</u>	74
<u>Herb and Spice Substitutions</u>	75
<u>Adding Flavor with Spices</u>	76
<u>Adding Flavor with Herbs</u>	79
<u>Reading a Recipe</u>	82
<u>Basic Knife Cuts</u>	84

Cooking References



Cooking Safely

Did you know that 1 in 6 Americans will get sick from food poisoning this year? Food poisoning not only sends 128,000 Americans to the hospital each year, it can also have long-term health effects.

The keys to basic food safety are cooking it to the right temperature and handling it properly. Follow these guidelines to keep you, your family, and your guests safe.

For more information on these and other food safety guidelines, please visit www.foodsafety.gov.

Practice Good Hygiene

Use hot water and regular soap to wash your hands. Scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Try humming the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice. Rinse hands, then dry with a clean towel.

Wash your hands often, especially during these key times when germs can spread:

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before serving food or eating
- After handling raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, or their juices
- After using the toilet, touching garbage, touching an animal or picking something up off the floor
- After changing a diaper or taking care of someone who is sick
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

Cook to Safe Temperatures

Cook all food to the minimum safe internal temperatures on the chart above. Use a food thermometer to be sure your food is safe. When you think your food is done, place the food thermometer in the thickest part of the food, making sure not to touch bone, fat, or gristle.

Safe Internal Food Temperatures

Poultry

Whole or Pieces	165°F
Ground	165°F

Beef, Pork, and Lamb

Steaks/Roasts/Chops	145°F
Ground	160°F
Pre-Cooked Ham	140°F

Seafood

Fish Fillet/Whole Fish	145°F
Shrimp/Lobster/Crab	Cook until flesh is pearly

Leftovers and Casseroles	165°F
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Egg Dishes	160°F
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Separate Hazardous Foods

Use one cutting board for hazardous foods (e.g. raw meat, poultry, seafood, eggs) and another for non-hazardous foods (e.g. fresh produce, cooked foods, foods that won't be cooked).

Use separate plates and utensils for cooked and raw foods. Use hot, soapy water to wash all plates, utensils, and cutting boards that touched hazardous foods before using them again.

Refrigerate and Freeze Properly

Your refrigerator should be set to 40°F or below and your freezer to 0°F or below. Use a refrigerator and/or freezer thermometer to be sure. Place raw meat, poultry, and seafood on plates, in containers, or in sealed plastic bags. Freeze them if you're not planning to use them within a few days. Freezing does not kill harmful germs, but it does keep food safe until you can cook it.

Avoid the Danger Zone

Bacteria that cause food poisoning grow quickest between 41°F and 135°F, also known as the danger zone. Never leave perishable foods at room temperature for more than two hours. If the food is exposed to temperatures above 90°F, refrigerate it within one hour.

If you're not serving food right after cooking, keep it out of the temperature danger zone by using a heat source like a chafing dish, warming tray, or slow cooker. Cold foods can be kept on ice or in a cooler for longer serving times.

Never thaw or marinate foods at room temperature. The safest way to thaw or marinate is in the refrigerator. Leftovers should be placed in small shallow containers and refrigerated promptly to allow for quick cooling.

Wash Produce

Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fruits and vegetables, then rinse under warm running water. Scrub firm produce like melons, potatoes, or cucumbers with a clean produce brush. Air dry or pat dry with a paper towel or clean cloth towel. Don't rinse raw meat, poultry, seafood, or shell eggs.

When In Doubt, Throw It Out

The germs that make you sick are not always the same ones that cause food to go bad. Don't use smell, taste, and appearance as your only guides. Use the storage times on the table above to guide you. If you're still not sure whether a food item is safe, it's better to be safe than sorry and throw it away.

Safe Food Storage Times (Refrigerated at 40°F or Below)

Raw Poultry

Whole, Pieces, or Ground	1-2 days
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Raw Beef, Pork, and Lamb

Steaks/Roasts/Chops	3-5 days
Pre-Cooked Ham	3-4 days
Ground	1-2 days
Stew Meat	1-2 days

Raw Seafood

Fish Fillet/Whole Fish	1-2 days
Shrimp/Lobster/Crab	1-2 days

Raw Eggs

In shell	3-5 weeks
Out of Shell	2-4 days

Cooked Leftovers

Beef, Pork, and Lamb	3-4 days
Poultry	3-4 days
Seafood	3-4 days
Egg Dishes	3-4 days
Hard-Cooked Eggs, In	7 days
Vegetables and Fruit	5-7 days
Soups and Stews	3-4 days



Measurements and Abbreviations

Common Abbreviations

- c — cup
- Tbsp — tablespoon
- tsp — teaspoon
- oz — ounce (usually weight, unless referring to a liquid)
- fl oz — fluid ounces
- lb — pound
- g — gram
- mg — milligram
- ~ — about/roughly

Volume Conversions

- 3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon
- ½ tablespoon = 1 ½ teaspoons
- 2 tablespoons = 1 (fluid) ounce = ⅛ cup
- 4 tablespoons = 2 (fluid) ounces = ¼ cup
- 5 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon = ⅓ cup
- 1 cup = 8 (fluid) ounces
- 2 cups = 16 (fluid) ounces = 1 pint
- 4 cups = 32 (fluid) ounces = 1 quart
- 2 quarts = 64 (fluid) ounces = ½ gallon
- 16 cups = 128 (fluid) ounces = 1 gallon

Fresh to Dried Herbs Ratios

Dried leafy herbs (e.g. oregano, basil, tarragon)

1 tablespoon fresh = 1 teaspoon dried

Dried ground herbs and spices (e.g. ginger, garlic, ground thyme)

4 parts fresh = 1 part dried

Dried leafy herb to dried ground herb

1 teaspoon dried leaf = ½ teaspoon ground herb

Reducing Recipes for Fewer Servings

When the Recipe Says...	To Make Half, Use...	To Make a Third, Use...
¼ cup	2 tablespoons	1 tbsp + 1 tsp
⅓ cup	2 tbsp + 2 tsp	1 tbsp + 2¼ tsp
½ cup	¼ cup	2 tbsp + 2 tsp
⅔ cup	⅓ cup	3 tbsp + 1½ tsp
¾ cup	¼ cup + 2 tbsp	¼ cup
1 cup	½ cup	⅓ cup
1 tablespoon	1 ½ teaspoon	1 teaspoon
1 teaspoon	½ teaspoon	¼ teaspoon
½ teaspoon	¼ teaspoon	Scant ¼ tsp
¼ teaspoon	⅛ teaspoon	Scant ⅛ tsp
⅛ teaspoon	Dash	Pinch

Recipes Inspired by Africa

Apricot Chicken Tagine

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 50 minutes | Total: 1 hour

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: ~1½ cups

Region: Africa | Country: South Africa

Ingredients

½ cup light (reduced-fat) sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
½ teaspoon hot sauce or hot chili oil
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
4 (3- to 4-ounce) boneless skinless chicken thighs (thigh fillets; about 1 pound)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large sweet onion, thinly sliced (about 3 cups)
2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
½ teaspoon ground allspice
1 (15-ounce) can low-sodium garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained and rinsed
1 (14.5-ounce) can no-added-salt diced tomatoes
¾ cup dried apricots, sliced or chopped
1 cinnamon stick (or 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, added to step 7)

Directions

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, parsley, and hot sauce or chili oil. Set in the refrigerator to chill.
2. In a separate small bowl, stir together the salt and pepper.
3. Pat the chicken dry with paper towels, then sprinkle evenly with the salt-pepper mixture.
4. Heat a tagine, a Dutch oven, or a large stockpot over medium-high heat.
5. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
6. Place the chicken in the pan and cook until golden-brown but not cooked through, about 3-5 minutes on each side. Transfer the chicken to a plate and set aside.
7. Reduce the heat to medium, then add the onion and cook until softened, about 5-7 minutes. Add the garlic and allspice. Cook until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
8. Add the beans, tomatoes with their juice, apricots, and cinnamon. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
9. Return the browned chicken to the pan and cover with a lid. Cook until the chicken is cooked through (internal temperature of 175°F), about 33-35 minutes.
10. Serve warm, with a heaping tablespoon of the sour cream mixture on top of each portion.

Recipe Notes

- This recipe also does very well in a pressure cooker. Follow steps 1-4 on “sauté” mode, then add the chicken, seal the lid, and pressure cook on high for 20 minutes. Allow the pressure to release naturally after cooking.
- Instead of the allspice, a spice blend may be used such as Ras el Hanout, garam masala, or Chinese five-spice.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 240 | Total Fat: 11 g | Saturated Fat: 2 g
Sodium: 305 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 13 g | Dietary Fiber: 3 g | Protein: 23 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Roasted Eggplant Spread

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~¼ cup

Region: Africa | Country: Egypt

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, peeled and cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks (about 12 ounces or 4 cups)
- 1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, toss together the eggplant, onion, oil, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper.
3. Transfer the mixture to a baking sheet and spread into a single layer.
4. Roast in preheated oven until caramelized and tender, about 25-30 minutes.
5. Remove from oven and set aside to cool slightly, about 10 minutes.
6. Transfer the roasted vegetable mixture to a food processor or high-powered blender and add the tomato paste.
7. Pulse to chop up and mix in the tomato paste. The spread will remain chunky.
8. Serve right away, or store in the refrigerator for later. Reheat in the microwave or let sit at room temperature for 20-30 minutes when ready to serve.

Recipe Notes

- Try this spread on toasted crusty bread, pita chips, crackers, or sandwiches.
- This spread may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 50 | Total Fat: 2 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 150 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 6.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 1.5 g | Protein: 1 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Baklava-Inspired Baked Oatmeal

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: 1 (2.5x4-inch) rectangle or 2 muffins

Region: Africa | Country: Egypt

Ingredients

Nonstick cooking spray
3 cups uncooked old-fashioned (rolled) oats
½ cup honey
3 eggs
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
1½ cups lowfat (1%) milk
⅓ cup chopped shelled pistachios
⅓ cup chopped toasted walnuts
1 medium orange, zested (about 2 tablespoons)
1 medium lemon, zested (about 1 tablespoon)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Spray an 8x8-inch baking dish or a 12-cup muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the oats, honey, eggs, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
4. Add the milk, pistachios, walnuts, orange zest, and lemon zest. Stir to combine.
5. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish or divide between the muffin tin cups.
6. Bake until fully set, about 30-35 minutes in an 8x8-inch baking dish or 25-30 minutes in a 12-cup muffin tin. The center should be firm when tapped and not indent.
7. Let cool for 5 minutes before slicing or removing from the muffin tin, then serve warm or at room temperature.

Recipe Notes

- Substitute your favorite unsweetened non-dairy milk (e.g. almond milk, soy milk), if desired.
- Store in an airtight container on the counter or in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or freeze for up to 6 months.
- A non-nutritive sweetener like ¼ teaspoon stevia or 2 tablespoons monk fruit can be substituted for ¼ cup of the honey. It is not recommended to replace all of the honey, as it is an essential flavor element of baklava.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 280 | Total Fat: 9.5 g | Saturated Fat: 1.5 g
Sodium: 270 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 42.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 2.5 g | Protein: 10 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Curried Chicken Salad

Prep: 20 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: 1 cup chicken salad with 1 cup arugula

Region: Africa | Country: Morocco

Ingredients

- 1½ pounds (24 ounces) boneless skinless chicken breast
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup olive oil mayonnaise
- ½ cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup finely diced onion
- 1 tablespoon lime juice (about ½ lime)
- 4 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup diced fresh or frozen mango, thawed if frozen (about 1 large mango)
- ¾ cup halved red grapes
- 8 cups of arugula (or salad greens of choice)

Directions

1. Fill a large sauté pan about halfway with water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
2. Add the chicken and salt, then cover with a lid. Cook until the chicken is cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F), about 10-12 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate and let cool slightly.
3. When cool enough to handle, cut the chicken into ¼- to ½-inch pieces and place in the refrigerator to chill, about 25-30 minutes (or about 10-15 minutes in the freezer) .
4. Meanwhile, add the mayonnaise, Greek yogurt, onion, lime juice, curry powder, honey, ginger, and black pepper to a large bowl. Whisk to combine.
5. Add the mango, grapes, and chicken. Toss to combine and coat with the dressing.
6. Serve right away, or chill before serving. When ready to serve, scoop each portion over 1 cup of the arugula.

Recipe Notes

- Substitute canned or cooked garbanzo beans (chickpeas) for the chicken, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 240 | Total Fat: 10 g | Saturated Fat: 2.5 g
Sodium: 305 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 11 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 27 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Kofta (Turkey Kebabs)

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 35 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 kebab

Region: Africa | Country: Egypt

Ingredients

Warm water

½ medium onion (or 1 small onion)

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground black pepper

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ teaspoon lemon juice or apple cider vinegar

1 pinch baking soda

1 pound (16 ounces) lean ground turkey
(90% lean or higher)

Directions

1. Fill a 9x13-inch baking dish about halfway with warm water. Place four wooden skewers in the water and set aside.
2. Peel the onion, then grate it using a box grater. Press with paper towels to remove the excess juice.
3. Add the onion, salt, black pepper, turmeric, lemon juice or vinegar, baking soda, and ground turkey to a medium mixing bowl. Knead the mixture until it is dough-like in texture, about 5 minutes, then divide into four portions.
4. Fill a small bowl or liquid measuring cup about halfway with water. Dampen your clean hands with the water, shaking off any excess, then take each portion of the turkey mixture and roll it into a sausage-like shape, about 4-5 inches long.
5. Push a skewer lengthwise into each portion of the turkey mixture. Squeeze the mixture gently, spreading it evenly to be about 7-8 inches long and ¾-inch-thick. Using your thumb and pointer finger, make indentations about 1 inch apart down the length of each kebab.
6. Cook the kebabs on an outdoor (gas/charcoal) or indoor (electric) grill over medium-high heat until cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F), about 4-5 minutes on each side. Serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 135 | Total Fat: 2 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 390 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 27 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Microwave White Bean and Egg Shakshuka

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 5 minutes | Total: 10 minutes

Yield: 1 serving | Serving Size: 1 bowl

Region: Africa | Country: Tunisia

Ingredients

Nonstick cooking spray
¼ cup no-salt-added tomato sauce
¼ cup no-salt-added white beans
(e.g. cannellini, great northern), drained and rinsed
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
¼ teaspoon sweet or smoked paprika
¼ teaspoon onion powder
1 pinch garlic powder
1 pinch salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
2 eggs

Directions

1. Coat the inside of a microwave-safe bowl with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Add the tomato sauce, beans, thyme, paprika, onion powder, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Stir to combine.
3. Make a well in the center of the sauce, and crack the eggs into it.
4. Microwave on high power (default setting) for 1 minute.
5. Continue cooking in 1-minute bursts at 50% power until the egg yolks and whites are set. Depending on your microwave, this will take about 1-3 minutes in total.
6. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- If you like heat, try adding a pinch of cayenne or crushed red pepper flakes.
- Transfer any extra beans and tomato sauce from the cans to airtight storage containers, then refrigerate for up to 5 days. The leftover tomato sauce could also be frozen in an ice cube tray, then transferred to a plastic storage zip-top bag and stored in the freezer for up to 3 months.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 200 | Total Fat: 9 g | Saturated Fat: 3 g
Sodium: 285 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 14 g | Dietary Fiber: 3.5 g | Protein: 16 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Eastern Asia

Black Rice Porridge

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 45 minutes | Total: 50 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup without toppings

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: Indonesia

Ingredients

- ½ cup uncooked black rice
- 1 (13.5-ounce) can light coconut milk, shaken
- 3 tablespoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 8 tablespoons (½ cup) fresh or frozen fruit, chopped or sliced if needed (optional; e.g. mango, strawberries, blackberries, pineapple)
- 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) toasted coconut flakes (optional)

Directions

1. Add the rice and coconut milk to a medium saucepan. Stir to combine.
2. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
3. Cover with a lid and cook until the liquid has been mostly absorbed and the rice is tender, about 35-45 minutes, without opening the lid or moving the pan.
4. Add the honey, vanilla, and salt. Stir to combine.
5. Serve warm, topped with the 2 tablespoons of the fruit (if using) and 1 tablespoon of the coconut (if using).

Recipe Notes

- This rice porridge will keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days, or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 135 | Total Fat: 6 g | Saturated Fat: 5 g
Sodium: 50 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 19 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 1 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Chicken Chow Mein

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: ~2 cups

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: China

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
½ pound (8 ounces) boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into bite-sized strips
½ medium onion, thinly sliced (about 1 cup)
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced on the bias (diagonal; about ½ cup)
3 white button or cremini mushrooms, thinly sliced (about ½ cup)
2 cups chopped or shredded Napa cabbage
1 cup (8 ounces) low-sodium chicken broth
1 (8-ounce) can bamboo shoots, drained and rinsed
1 (8-ounce) can sliced water chestnuts, drained and rinsed
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon water
½ teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup crunchy chow mein noodles, divided

Directions

1. Heat a medium skillet or sauté pan over medium heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the chicken and cook, stirring often, until cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F), about 6-8 minutes. Remove the chicken from the pan and set aside.
4. Set the pan back over medium heat. Add the onion, celery, and mushrooms. Cook until softened, about 6-8 minutes.
5. Add the cabbage, broth, bamboo shoots, and water chestnuts. Stir to combine.
6. Bring to a simmer over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
7. Cook until the cabbage is tender, about 5-7 minutes.
8. In a small bowl, whisk together the cornstarch and water with a fork to make a slurry.
9. Add the slurry, sugar, and black pepper to the vegetable mixture. Stir to combine.
10. Cook until a slightly thickened sauce forms, about 3-5 minutes.
11. Return the cooked chicken to the pan and stir to combine.
12. Serve warm, topping each serving with ¼ cup of the chow mein noodles.

Recipe Notes

- Tofu can be used in place of the chicken, if desired.
- Try substituting bok choy for the Napa cabbage, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 275 | Total Fat: 11 g | Saturated Fat: 1.5 g
Sodium: 500 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 25 g | Dietary Fiber: 6.5 g | Protein: 21 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Garlic Edamame

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 5 minutes | Total: 10 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup shelled edamame beans

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: Japan

Ingredients

- 1 (16-ounce) bag unshelled frozen edamame (in the pod)
- 6 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon lite (reduced-sodium) soy sauce
- ⅛-¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Directions

1. Add the edamame to a medium microwave-safe bowl and cook on high power (default setting) for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, stir together the soy sauce, red pepper flakes and sugar in a small bowl. Set aside.
3. Add the butter to a large skillet or sauté pan and place over medium-high heat.
4. Once the butter starts to brown, add garlic and cooked edamame. Cook, stirring often, until any liquid is evaporated, about 4-5 minutes.
5. Add the soy sauce mixture and continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the liquid is mostly evaporated and a sticky dark sauce starts to form.
6. Serve warm, removing the beans from the shell before eating (see Recipe Notes).

Recipe Notes

- Edamame shells (the outside of the pod) are not edible, only the beans inside. To remove the beans from the shell, place the edamame pod between your teeth, bite down gently, then pull the shell out.
- Fresh green beans (trimmed) can be substituted for the edamame, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 215 | Total Fat: 15 g | Saturated Fat: 8.5 g
Sodium: 450 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 12.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 2.5 g | Protein: 8.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Hot-and-Sour Soup

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Total: 20 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1½ cups

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: Philippines

Ingredients

- 4 cups (32 ounces) low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ cup thinly sliced mushrooms
- 2-3 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar, to taste
- 2-3 tablespoons lite (reduced-sodium) soy sauce, to taste
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)
- ½ teaspoon ground dried ginger
- ¼-1 teaspoon hot sauce or hot chili oil, to taste
- 1 egg
- ½ cup cubed firm tofu (about 4 ounces)
- 2 scallions (green onions), thinly sliced
- ¼ cup fresh or frozen corn
- ½ teaspoon toasted sesame oil

Directions

1. Add the broth to a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
2. Add the mushrooms, vinegar, soy sauce, garlic, ginger, and hot sauce or chili oil. Stir to combine, then return to a simmer.
3. Crack the egg into a small bowl, then gently beat with a fork to combine the whites and yolk.
4. Stirring the liquid in a circular motion, slowly drizzle the egg into the pot in a thin stream.
5. Add the tofu, scallions, corn, and sesame oil. Stir to combine, then simmer until heated through.
6. Adjust seasonings as desired; vinegar for more sour flavor, soy sauce for more salty flavor, or hot sauce or chili oil for more heat.
7. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- For a thicker soup, mix ¼ cup of the cool (unheated) broth with 2 tablespoons cornstarch, then add in step 5.
- This soup will keep for up to 4 days in the refrigerator.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 70 | Total Fat: 3 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 655 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 4.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g | Protein: 7 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Kimchi

Prep: 2 hours | Inactive: 1-5 days | Total: 1-5 days

Yield: 12 servings | Serving Size: ~¼ cup

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: Korea

Ingredients

1 medium head Napa cabbage (about 2 pounds)
¼ cup iodine-free salt (Kosher salt or sea salt)
Cold unchlorinated water (spring, distilled, or filtered water; 1-2 gallons)
1-5 tablespoons hot pepper spice or paste (gochugaru, gochujang, sriracha), to taste (optional)
1 tablespoon grated fresh garlic (about 6 cloves)
1-2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds (optional)
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons seafood-flavored ingredient (fish sauce, oyster sauce, shrimp paste, anchovy paste, kelp powder, or crumbled seaweed)
½ pound Korean radish (daikon) or carrots, cut into matchsticks
4 scallions (green onions), rinsed and cut into 4- to 6-inch sticks

Directions

1. Cut the head of Napa cabbage lengthwise into quarters and remove the core, then cut crosswise into 2-inch strips.
2. Place the cabbage and salt in large bowl. Using clean hands, massage the salt into the cabbage until it starts to soften. Add unchlorinated water to cover the cabbage and let rest for 1-2 hours.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, create a seasoning mixture by stirring together the hot pepper spice or paste (if using), garlic, sesame seeds (if using), ginger, sugar, and selected seafood-flavored ingredient. Set aside.
4. Rinse the cabbage with unchlorinated water and let air dry.
5. Drain, rinse, and dry the bowl. Add the cabbage, radish or carrot, scallions, and seasoning mixture. Using clean hands (gloves recommended), gently massage the seasoning mixture into the vegetables until they are coated.
6. Pack the vegetable mixture into a 1-quart glass jar, pressing down until the liquid rises to cover the vegetables. Leave at least 1-inch of space on top. Seal the jar with the lid.
7. Leave the jar at room temperature for 1-5 days to ferment, checking once a day to taste and press the vegetables back down into the liquid.
8. When the vegetables taste ripe enough for your liking, move the jar to the refrigerator. It can be eaten right away, but the flavor is best after 1-2 weeks.

Recipe Notes

- Be sure to choose salt without iodine and/or anti-caking agents, and water without chlorine to allow for successful fermentation.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 10 | Total Fat: 0 g | Saturated Fat: 0 g
Sodium: 240 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g | Protein: 0.5 g

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Vegetable Pad Thai

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 2 cups

Region: Eastern Asia | Country: Thailand

Ingredients

- ½ tablespoon sugar
- ½ tablespoon orange or tamarind marmalade
- ½ tablespoon fish sauce or soy sauce
- ½ tablespoon lime juice (about ¼ lime)
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced (about 2 cups)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
- ¼ teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 2 cups chopped Bok choy
- 1 medium carrot, shredded (about ½ cup)
- 2 eggs
- 4 ounces uncooked rice noodles
- 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) peanut oil or coconut oil, divided
- 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) chopped peanuts, divided
- 1 scallion (green onion), thinly sliced (about 2 tablespoons), divided
- 2 tablespoons chiffonade-cut fresh basil, divided

Directions

1. In a small bowl whisk together the sugar, marmalade, fish sauce or soy sauce, and lime juice. Set near the stovetop.
2. Add the onion, garlic and ginger to a small bowl. Add the prepped Bok choy and carrot to a medium bowl. Place both bowls near the stovetop.
3. Crack the eggs into a separate small bowl and gently beat with a fork to combine. Set near the stovetop.
4. Prepare the noodles as directed on the package, then transfer to a separate medium bowl set near the stovetop.
5. Heat a large wok or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of the oil and the eggs. Cook while stirring until scrambled, about 1 minute, then transfer to the bowl with the noodles along with the sauce mixture. Set aside.
6. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons of oil to the pan, along with the onion mixture. Cook while stirring for 2 minutes.
7. Add the Bok choy and carrot. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.
8. Add the noodle mixture. Cook while stirring for 2 minutes.
9. Serve warm, topped with 1 tablespoon of the peanuts, about ½ tablespoon of the scallion, and ½ tablespoon of the basil.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 270 | Total Fat: 20 g | Saturated Fat: 3.5 g
Sodium: 250 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 17 g | Dietary Fiber: 3 g | Protein: 7 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Western Asia



Coconut Red Lentil Dahl

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Region: Western Asia | Country: India

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
- ½ tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- ½ tablespoon curry powder
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 cup dry red lentils, picked through and rinsed
- 1 cup light coconut milk
- 1½ cups (12 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
4. Add the garlic, ginger, curry powder, turmeric, coriander, black pepper, salt, and red pepper flakes (if using). Cook and stir until fragrant, about 2-3 minutes.
5. Add the lentils, coconut milk, and broth. Stir to combine.
6. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
7. Cook uncovered until the lentils are soft and the liquid has thickened, about 25-30 minutes.
8. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- Consider topping with chopped fresh cilantro, lemon juice, and/or plain yogurt.
- Try serving with or on top of naan bread, pita bread, or a cooked grain.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 310 | Total Fat: 11 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 365 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 37 g | Dietary Fiber: 16 g | Protein: 14 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Crispy Chickpea Falafel

Prep: 20 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 3 falafel patties

Region: Western Asia | Country: Turkey

Ingredients

- 1 (15-ounce) can low-sodium garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained and rinsed, patted dry
- ½ cup chopped onion (about ½ medium onion)
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh parsley or cilantro
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 pinch ground coriander
- 1 pinch ground cardamom
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons canola, peanut, or grapeseed oil
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges

Recipe Notes

- Store in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or in the freezer for up to 6 months. Thawed falafel may be crumbly.

Directions

1. Add the beans, onion, parsley or cilantro, tahini, garlic, cumin, salt, black pepper, turmeric, coriander, cardamom, and flour to a food processor. Pulse until the mixture is coarse and mealy. Be careful not to puree.
2. Using a 2-tablespoon disher (cookie scoop), divide the mixture into 12 portions. Form each portion into a patty, about 2 inches wide, squeezing the mixture together tightly.
3. Place the patties on a plate lined with parchment paper, then chill in the refrigerator until firm, about 15-30 minutes.
4. Heat a large skillet over medium heat.
5. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
6. Working in batches, add the patties and cook until crispy and golden-brown, about 5 minutes on each side, then transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.
7. Serve warm, squeezing on lemon juice to taste. Consider serving with a dipping sauce such as tzatziki, in a pita with vegetables, over a cooked grain, or over a salad.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 180 | Total Fat: 10 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 110 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 19 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Jeweled Brown Rice

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 35 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Region: Western Asia | Country: Iran

Ingredients

Water (about 12 cups)
2 cups uncooked brown Basmati rice
1 teaspoon salt
⅓ cup sliced almonds
⅓ cup shelled and chopped pistachios
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
1 large onion, diced (about 2 cups)
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon cardamom
1 teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin
⅓ cup chopped dried apricots
⅓ cup golden raisins, chopped if large
⅓ cup dried cherries or cranberries, chopped if large

Directions

1. Fill a large stockpot or Dutch oven halfway with water and bring to a boil. Add the rice and salt. Cook until tender, about 14-16 minutes, then drain and cover. Set aside.
2. While the rice cooks, heat a medium skillet or sauté pan over medium heat.
3. Add the almonds and pistachios. Cook until toasted, about 4-6 minutes, stirring often. Transfer to a small bowl and set aside. Return the pan to the stovetop over medium heat.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of the oil and heat until shimmering.
5. Add the onion and cook until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
6. Add the cinnamon, cardamom, allspice, black pepper, and cumin. Cook while stirring until fragrant, about 2 minutes, then add the apricots, raisins, and cherries or cranberries. Transfer to a medium bowl and set aside.
7. When the rice is done cooking, place the pot back over medium heat. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil.
8. Spread half of the rice over the bottom of the pot. Top with the onion-dried fruit mixture, then the remaining rice.
9. Cook uncovered to brown the rice, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Top with the toasted nuts, then serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 195 | Total Fat: 11 g | Saturated Fat: 1.5 g
Sodium: 410 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 25 g | Dietary Fiber: 3 g | Protein: 3 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Sweet Potato-Lentil Samosas

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 35 minutes | Total: 45 minutes

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: 3 filled wrappers (samosas)

Region: Western Asia | Country: Pakistan

Ingredients

¼ cup dry lentils, picked through and rinsed
Water
½ cup diced sweet potato (about 3 ounces, or half of a medium sweet potato)
¼ cup diced onion (about ¼ medium onion)
½ teaspoon curry powder
¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon salt
1 pinch cayenne pepper (optional)
5 dried apricots, finely chopped
2 tablespoons lite coconut milk
24 wonton wrappers (about half of a 14-ounce package)
Nonstick cooking spray

Directions

1. Fill a small saucepan about halfway full with water. Add the lentils and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer. Cover with a lid and cook until tender, about 15-20 minutes, then drain and set aside.
2. While the lentils are cooking, preheat the oven to 400°F.
3. Add the sweet potato, onion, curry powder, cardamom, ginger, cumin, salt, and cayenne (if using) to a microwave-safe bowl. Stir to coat, then cover with plastic wrap.
4. Poke the plastic wrap three times with a fork, then microwave on high power (default setting) for 5 minutes.
5. Remove the plastic wrap and add the apricots, coconut milk, and cooked lentils. Mash with the fork into a paste.
6. Divide the mixture between the wonton wrappers, about 1 tablespoon in the center of each.
7. Dip a clean finger in water and run it along the edges of one wrapper, then fold over diagonally and press edges together to seal. Repeat with the remaining wrappers.
8. Place the filled wrappers on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and spray with cooking spray. Bake until golden brown, about 10-15 minutes, then serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 285 | Total Fat: 2 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 565 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 48 g | Dietary Fiber: 4 g | Protein: 11 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Oven-Roasted Chickpeas

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 35 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Region: Western Asia | Country: India

Ingredients

- 1 (15-ounce) can low-sodium garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala or ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon ground white or black pepper

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
2. Drain and rinse the beans, then dry well with a paper towel. Remove any loose skins that come off on their own. Transfer the beans to the prepared baking sheet.
3. Drizzle the beans with the oil, then shake the pan or stir to coat.
4. In a small bowl, stir together the curry powder, garam masala or turmeric, salt, garlic powder, and ground white or black pepper. Sprinkle the mixture over the beans, then shake or stir to coat.
5. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove from oven, shake the pan or stir, then continue baking for 15 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool.
6. Serve at room temperature.

Recipe Notes

- For extra-crunchy roasted chickpeas, turn the oven off and leave them in the oven for another 15-20 minutes.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 115 | Total Fat: 8 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 390 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 8 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 4 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Mango-Vanilla Lassi

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 0 minutes | Total: 5 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1½ cups

Region: Western Asia | Country: India

Ingredients

- ½ cup (4 ounces) reduced fat (2%) milk
- 1 cup chopped fresh or frozen ripe mango
- 1 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract or vanilla bean paste
- ½ cup ice cubes
- 2 pinches ground cardamom, divided (optional)

Directions

1. Add the milk, mango, yogurt, honey, vanilla, and ice to the pitcher of a blender. Blend until completely smooth, about 2-3 minutes.
2. Divide between two drinking glasses, then sprinkle each with 1 pinch of the cardamom (if using).
3. Serve cold.

Recipe Notes

- Use frozen mango and leave out the ice cubes for a thicker milkshake-like texture.
- Substitute your favorite unsweetened plant-based milk alternative and/or yogurt, if desired.
- This lassi is best served right away, but can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
- Lassis can be made with different fruits, extracts, and/or spice blends. Consider trying your own flavor combination.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 165 | Total Fat: 2 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 65 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 28 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 10 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Central America and the Caribbean



Black Bean Baleadas

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 15 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 baleada (filled tortilla)

Region: Central America | Country: Honduras

Ingredients

- ½ cup (4 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (15-ounce) can no-salt-added black beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ tablespoon lime juice (about ¼ lime)
- 4 (8-inch) whole-wheat tortillas
- 2 avocados, pitted and peeled, sliced
- 8 tablespoons (½ cup) crumbled queso fresco, divided
- 4 tablespoons (¼ cup) light sour cream, divided

Directions

1. Add the broth, onion powder, garlic powder, cumin, coriander, salt, and black pepper to a medium saucepan.
2. Place over medium-high heat and bring to a simmer.
3. Add the beans and stir to combine.
4. Bring the mixture back up to a simmer, then cook until warmed through and fragrant, about 5-7 minutes.
5. Use a potato masher, slotted spoon, or fork to mash the beans to the desired consistency. Add water or more broth to thin if desired.
6. Add the lime juice and stir to combine.
7. Divide the bean mixture between the tortillas, adding a quarter (~¼ cup) of the mixture to each tortilla.
8. Top each tortilla with a quarter of the avocado slices, 2 tablespoons of the queso fresco, and 1 tablespoon of the sour cream.
9. Fold the tortillas in half, then serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- The filling can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 7 days. To save time, use canned low-sodium refried beans.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 495 | Total Fat: 28 g | Saturated Fat: 8.5 g
Sodium: 440 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 50 g | Dietary Fiber: 17.5 g | Protein: 17 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Chipotle Black Bean-Vegetable Soup

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 45 minutes | Total: 1 hour

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~1½ cups

Region: Caribbean | Country: Costa Rica

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)
2 medium carrots, diced (about 1 cup)
2 celery stalks, diced (about ½ cup)
½ medium bell pepper, diced (about ½ cup)
1 medium tomato, diced (about 1 cup)
2 garlic cloves, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
¼-½ teaspoon chipotle chile pepper, to taste
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground coriander
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅛ teaspoon ground allspice
1 pinch ground cloves
1 (15-ounce) can no-salt-added black beans
1 cup (8 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth
4 tablespoons (¼ cup) light sour cream, divided
4 tablespoons (¼ cup) chopped fresh cilantro, divided

Directions

1. Heat a medium to large saucepan over medium-high heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 3-5 minutes.
4. Add the carrots, celery, and bell pepper. Reduce the heat to low and cover with a lid. Cook for 10 minutes.
5. Add the tomato, garlic, chipotle chile pepper, cumin, coriander, thyme, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. Cook and stir until fragrant, about 2-3 minutes.
6. Add the beans and broth. Stir to combine.
7. Cover with the lid and cook until the flavors have blended, about 30-40 minutes.
8. Serve warm, topped with 1 tablespoon of the sour cream and 1 tablespoon of the cilantro.

Recipe Notes

- This soup will keep in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.
- For a stronger flavor, use 1-3 tablespoons chipotle peppers in adobo sauce in place of the chipotle chile pepper.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 225 | Total Fat: 9.5 g | Saturated Fat: 2.5 g
Sodium: 75 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 28 g | Dietary Fiber: 8.5 g | Protein: 8.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Spiced Hot Cacao

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 15 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1 cup

Region: Central America | Country: Guatemala

Ingredients

- 2 cups (16 ounces) reduced fat (2%) milk
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1-2 tablespoons sweetener (e.g. honey, maple syrup, sugar), to taste
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-2 pinches hot pepper spice (e.g. chili powder, chipotle chile pepper, cayenne), to taste
- 1 pinch salt

Directions

1. Add the milk, cocoa powder, selected sweetener, vanilla, selected hot pepper spice, and salt to a small saucepan. Whisk to combine.
2. Bring to a simmer over medium heat.
3. Cook, whisking often, until the flavors have blended, about 5 minutes.
4. Taste and adjust with more sweetener and/or hot pepper spice, if desired.
5. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- This hot cacao will keep in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. Stir to recombine before reheating and serving.
- Substitute your favorite unsweetened plant-based milk alternative for the cow's milk, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 165 | Total Fat: 6 g | Saturated Fat: 3.5 g
Sodium: 115 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 24 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 9 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Jerk Spice Rub

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 0 minutes | Total: 5 minutes

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: ~½ tablespoon

Region: Caribbean | Country: Jamaica

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- ½ tablespoon ground black pepper
- ½ tablespoon ground allspice
- ¾ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¾ teaspoon onion powder
- ¾ teaspoon dried thyme
- ¾ teaspoon dry mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- ¼ teaspoon ground dried ginger

Directions

1. Mix the brown sugar with all the spices together in a small bowl.
2. Use right away, or transfer to a small airtight container and store at room temperature for up to 1 year.

Recipe Notes

- This seasoning goes well with poultry, especially chicken, but can be used on a variety of foods (e.g. pork, beef, burgers, beans, tofu, tempeh).
- Use 1-2 tablespoons of the spice rub per 1 pound or 3 cups of food being seasoned.
- Whisk the entire recipe with ¼ cup lime juice and ¼ cup olive oil to make a jerk-style marinade.

Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 10 | Total Fat: 0 g | Saturated Fat: 0 g
Sodium: 75 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2 g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g | Protein: 0 g

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Turkey Tacos Picadillo

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 35 minutes | Total: 50 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 2 tacos

Region: Central America | Country: Honduras

Ingredients

½ cup golden raisins, chopped if large
Water
1 pound (16 ounces) lean ground turkey (90% lean or higher)
1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)
1 medium apple, diced (about 1 cup)
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground cumin
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
10 whole pimento-stuffed green olives
8 (5-inch) corn tortillas, warmed
2 cups shredded cabbage, divided
1 cup diced tomato (about 1 medium tomato), divided
8 tablespoons (½ cup) shredded cheese, divided

Directions

1. Add the raisins to a small bowl and add water to cover. Set aside to soak for 10-15 minutes, then drain.
2. While the raisins soak, heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat.
3. Add the turkey and cook until no longer pink, about 6-8 minutes, breaking it into crumbles as it cooks.
4. Add the onion, apple, cinnamon, cumin, cloves, olives, and soaked raisins. Stir to combine, then reduce the heat to low.
5. Cover the pan with a lid and cook for 20 minutes.
6. Divided the turkey mixture between the tortillas, about ½ cup in the center of each. Top each with ¼ cup of the cabbage, 2 tablespoons of the tomatoes, and 1 tablespoon of the cheese.
7. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- Brown rice or whole-wheat flour tortillas can be used in place of the corn tortillas, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 455 | Total Fat: 16 g | Saturated Fat: 3.5 g
Sodium: 695 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 50 g | Dietary Fiber: 7 g | Protein: 28 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Virgin Piña Colada

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 0 minutes | Total: 5 minutes

Yield: 1 serving | Serving Size: 1 batch

Region: Caribbean | Country: United States (Puerto Rico)

Ingredients

½ cup lite coconut milk

1 cup chopped fresh or frozen ripe pineapple (about ¼ whole pineapple)

1-3 teaspoons sweetener (e.g. honey, agave, sugar), to taste (optional)

½ cup ice cubes

Optional garnish: Pineapple wedge

Directions

1. Add the coconut milk, pineapple, and selected sweetener (if using) to the pitcher of a blender.
2. Blend until completely smooth, about 2-3 minutes.
3. Add the ice blend until smooth, about 1-2 minutes.
4. Pour the mixture into a drinking glass.
5. Serve cold, garnished with a pineapple wedge if desired.

Recipe Notes

- Two drops of liquid stevia can be used in place of a sugar-based sweetener.
- Use frozen pineapple and leave out the ice cubes for a thicker milkshake-like texture.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 85 | Total Fat: 1 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 10 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 20 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 1 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by North America



Calabacitas con Elote

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Total: 25 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 cup

Region: North America | Country: Mexico

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 medium tomatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces (about 2 cups)
- ½ medium onion, diced (about ½ cup)
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 medium zucchini, trimmed, halved lengthwise and cut into 1-inch chunks (about 4 cups)
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- ½ lime, juiced (about 1 tablespoon)

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the tomatoes, onion, jalapeño, and salt.
4. Cook, stirring often, until the tomatoes release their juice and the onion is softened, about 5-7 minutes.
5. Add the zucchini and corn.
6. Increase the heat to high and cook, stirring occasionally, until the zucchini is just starting to soften and the corn is thawed, about 6-8 minutes.
7. Add the cilantro and lime juice. Stir to combine.
8. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- A little charring on the vegetables is okay and adds a nice flavor.
- If a crust forms on the bottom of the pan, use a rubber spatula to scrape it up and mix it into the vegetables. Adding the lime juice at the end will help to remove any that is still stuck on.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 100 | Total Fat: 4.5 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 165 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 15.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 3.5 g | Protein: 3.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Eggs Benedict

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes | Total: 20 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1 English muffin half with bacon, egg, and sauce

Region: North America | Country: United States (New York)

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 whole-wheat English muffin, halved
- 2 slices Canadian bacon

Hollandaise Sauce

- 1 tablespoon plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon unsalted butter, melted
- 1 egg yolk
- ½ tablespoon lemon juice
- ½ tablespoon half and half
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper

Directions

1. Fill a medium saucepan with about three inches of water. Bring the water to a boil, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer. Add the vinegar to the water.
2. Crack one egg into a small cup and lower the egg into the simmering water, gently pouring it out of the cup. Repeat with the second egg.
3. Cook the eggs in the water for 3-5 minutes, depending on how soft you want your egg yolk. Remove the cooked eggs gently, one at a time, with a slotted spoon. Set aside.
4. In a small microwave-safe bowl, add all ingredients for the hollandaise sauce. Microwave on high power (default setting) until smooth and frothy, about 60 seconds, stopping to whisk every 15 seconds.
5. Toast the English muffin.
6. Place the Canadian bacon on a small microwave-safe plate and heat on high power (default setting) for 30 seconds.
7. Top each English muffin half with 1 slice of the bacon, 1 of the eggs, and half the sauce. Serve right away.

Recipe Notes

- Use pasteurized eggs, if available, to reduce risk of foodborne illness from consuming undercooked egg yolks.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 295 | Total Fat: 12 g | Saturated Fat: 4.5 g
Sodium: 350 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 19 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 29 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Basic Guacamole

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 0 minutes | Total: 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ¼ cup without add-ins

Region: North America | Country: Mexico

Ingredients

- 2 large avocados (or 3 medium avocados)
- 2 tablespoons minced or grated onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)
- 1 tablespoon lime juice (about ½ lime)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Optional add-ins: 1 cup finely chopped ripe mango, ½ cup diced bell pepper, ½ cup diced tomato, ¼ cup minced fresh cilantro or parsley, 1 seeded and minced jalapeño pepper, 1 teaspoon lime zest

Directions

1. Cut the avocados in half, lengthwise around the pit, cutting on a cutting board and away from the body.
2. Remove the pit from the avocados by pressing gently on the avocado skin that is directly behind the pit.
3. Using a spoon, scoop the flesh out of the skin and into a medium mixing bowl. Use a fork or potato masher to mash the avocado into a smooth, slightly lumpy consistency.
4. Add the onion, lime juice, salt, and selected add-in(s) (if using). Stir to combine.
5. Serve right away or store for later use (see Recipe Notes).

Recipe Notes

- Guacamole will brown when exposed to air for too long. To minimize browning, store with plastic wrap pressed directly on the surface of the guacamole and place in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.
- Guacamole goes well with whole-grain tortilla chips, as a topping on a variety of dishes, or as a spread for a wrap or sandwich.
- A mortar and pestle can be used to mash the avocado, if desired.
- For a smoother consistency, combine all ingredients in a food processor and blend together.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 150 | Total Fat: 13 g | Saturated Fat: 2 g
Sodium: 155 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 8 g | Dietary Fiber: 6 g | Protein: 2 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Haupia (Coconut Pudding) with Mango

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Chill: 2 hours | Total: 2 hours 20 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 bowl or 1 (~4x4-inch square) with mango mixture and coconut

Region: North America | Country: United States (Hawaii)

Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh or frozen mango, diced (about 1 large mango)
- 1 lime, zested
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ cup water
- 6 tablespoons (¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons) cornstarch
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 (13.5-ounce) can lite coconut milk (not coconut milk from a carton)
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted, divided

Directions

1. In small mixing bowl, stir together the mango, lime zest, and honey. Cover and place in the refrigerator.
2. In a separate small bowl, use a fork to whisk together the water, cornstarch, and sugar. Set aside.
3. Add the coconut milk to a medium saucepan. Place over medium heat and bring to a simmer.
4. Add the cornstarch mixture and whisk to combine. Continue to cook, whisking often, until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 7-10 minutes.
5. Remove from the heat. Divide between four serving bowls, or pour into an 8x8-inch glass baking dish.
6. Cover and chill in refrigerator until firm, about 2 hours, then cut into four squares if using the baking dish.
7. Serve cold, topped with ¼ cup of the mango mixture and ½ tablespoon of toasted coconut.

Recipe Notes

- Another tropical fruit (e.g. papaya, pineapple) can be used in place of some or all of the mango.
- For a softer texture, reduce the cornstarch to 4-5 tablespoons.
- For a boost of flavor, add 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract after step 3.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 185 | Total Fat: 6 g | Saturated Fat: 5.5 g
Sodium: 25 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 35 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 1.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Turkey Sausage Jambalaya

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 35 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: ~1½ cups

Region: North America | Country: United States (Louisiana)

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 8 ounces turkey Andouille sausage, sliced
- 1 (12-ounce) bag frozen peppers and onions
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- ¾ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon smoked paprika
- ½ teaspoon chipotle chile pepper
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 3 cups (24 ounces) low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (10-ounce) can no-salt-added diced tomatoes with green chiles
- 2 cups uncooked quick-cooking brown rice
- ¼-½ teaspoon ground black pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Heat a large saucepan or stockpot over medium-high heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the sausage and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 7-10 minutes.
4. Add the pepper and onions, garlic powder, onion powder, thyme, oregano, paprika, chipotle chile pepper, and red pepper flakes. Cook and stir until fragrant and the vegetables are softened, about 2-3 minutes.
5. Add the broth and tomatoes with chiles. Stir to combine.
6. Bring to a boil over high heat, then add the rice and stir to combine. Reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
7. Cover the pot with a lid and cook for 10 minutes.
8. Remove from the heat and let sit, covered, for 5 minutes.
9. Remove the lid, fluff with a fork, and add the black pepper.
10. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- Feel free to substitute a different protein (e.g. chicken, chicken Andouille sausage, shrimp, canned beans).

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 375 | Total Fat: 7 g | Saturated Fat: 2.5 g
Sodium: 425 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 61.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 5 g | Protein: 20.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Maple-Glazed Roasted Salmon

Prep: 10 minutes | Chill: 25 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 50 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 fillet

Region: North America | Country: Canada

Ingredients

- ¼ cup maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon lite (reduced sodium) soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1½ teaspoons)
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 (4- to 6-ounce) salmon fillets (about 1 pound)

Directions

1. Add the maple syrup, soy sauce, balsamic vinegar, garlic, and black pepper to a gallon-size plastic zip-top bag. Seal tightly, then massage the bag to combine.
2. Add the salmon and seal the bag. Move the bag around to coat the salmon.
3. Open the bag a small amount and then seal again, squeezing out as much air as possible.
4. Set the bag in a bowl and refrigerate for 20-30 minutes. During the last 10 minutes, preheat the oven to 400°F.
5. Transfer the salmon and maple mixture to a 9x13-inch baking dish, spreading the salmon into an even layer.
6. Bake uncovered until cooked through (internal temperature of 145°F, flakes easily with a fork), about 18-22 minutes.
7. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- The nutrition facts for this recipe include information for the full amount of the marinade ingredients. The amount of the marinade actually consumed may vary.
- For a citrus flavor, add 1 teaspoon orange zest and/or use 2 tablespoons of orange juice in place of the vinegar.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 205 | Total Fat: 7 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 270 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 15 g | Protein: 23 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Yellow Split Pea Soup

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 2 hours | Total: 2 hours 10 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~1 cup

Region: North America | Country: Canada

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 medium carrot, peeled if desired, diced (about ½ cup)
- ½ medium onion, diced (about ½ cup)
- 1 stalk celery, diced (about ¼ cup)
- 1 cup uncooked yellow split peas, rinsed
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 4 cups (32 ounces) low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 8 ounces diced ham or Canadian bacon
- 1 bay leaf
- ¼-½ teaspoon ground black pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Add the butter to a large saucepan or stockpot and place over medium heat. Heat until melted.
2. Add the carrots, onion, and celery. Cook, stirring often, until softened, about 8-10 minutes.
3. Add the split peas and thyme. Cook and stir until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
4. Add the broth, ham or bacon, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer.
5. Cover with a lid and cook, stirring occasionally, until the peas are soft and the soup is thickened, about 1½-2 hours.
6. Remove and discard bay leaf. Puree the soup using an immersion (handheld) blender to the desired consistency.
7. Add the black pepper, then serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- If you don't have an immersion blender, add the soup to a stand blender, filling it no more than halfway. Remove the plastic piece from the lid, cover with a towel, blend, and then return to the pot.
- This soup will keep in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or in the freezer for up to 6 months.
- Split green peas or lentils may be substituted for some or all of the split yellow peas, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 315 | Total Fat: 8.5 g | Saturated Fat: 3.5 g
Sodium: 855 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 36 g | Dietary Fiber: 14.5 g | Protein: 24 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by South America



Baked Arepas

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 arepa without add-ins

Region: South America | Country: Venezuela

Ingredients

1 cup arepa flour (pre-cooked cornmeal; can substitute masa harina or finely-ground cornmeal)

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon baking powder

½ cup water

Nonstick cooking spray

Optional add-ins: Black beans, guacamole, cheese, cooked eggs

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and line baking sheet with parchment paper. Set aside.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder. Set aside.
3. Add the water to a microwave-safe liquid measuring cup. Microwave until hot, about 1 minute.
4. Slowly add hot water to the flour mixture, gently mixing to combine. Knead the mixture together to form a dough.
5. Let the dough rest for 5 minutes.
6. Divide the dough into four equal portions. Roll each portion into a ball, using the palms of clean hands, then flatten the ball into a disc about ½-inch-thick.
7. Place the dough discs on the prepared baking sheet. Spray with lightly with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Bake until golden-brown, about 20-30 minutes, flipping over halfway through the cooking time.
9. Let cool slightly, then cut in half horizontally, leaving one side attached (butterfly cut). Fill with add-ins, as desired.
10. Serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 165 | Total Fat: 3.5 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 150 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 31 g | Dietary Fiber: 1.5 g | Protein: 2.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Plantain Tostones with Mojo Sauce

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: 6 tostones with ~1 tablespoon of the sauce

Region: South America | Country: Columbia

Ingredients

- 3 ripe plantains, peeled and sliced 1-inch-thick
- ½ teaspoon olive oil
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper

Mojo Sauce

- 3 garlic cloves, peeled
- ⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- 2 scallions (green onions), sliced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1 lime, zested and juiced

Recipe Notes

- The tostones can be kept in an airtight dish in the refrigerator for up to a week but will soften slightly. The mojo sauce can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. It can also be served with meat, vegetables, or in soup.

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
- Make the mojo sauce by adding the garlic, cilantro or parsley, scallions, and 2 tablespoons of the oil to a food processor. Pulse to roughly chop and combine.
- Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil, along with the cumin, oregano, salt, black pepper, 1 tablespoon of the lime juice, and ½ teaspoon of the lime zest. Pulse to combine, being careful not to puree, then set aside.
- Add the plantains, oil, salt, and pepper to the prepared baking sheet. Toss to coat the plantains.
- Spread the plantain slices about 3 inches apart, then gently smash each slice using a flat-bottomed item such as a bowl or drinking glass.
- Bake for 10 minutes, then flip over and continue baking until golden-brown, about 5 minutes.
- Serve warm, with the mojo sauce as a dip.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 175 | Total Fat: 8 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 55 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 29.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 2.5 g | Protein: 1.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Roasted Pork Tenderloin with Chimichurri

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Chill: 20 minutes | Total: 55 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 4 ounces pork with ~¼ cup of the sauce

Region: South America | Country: Argentina

Ingredients

1 (1-pound) boneless pork tenderloin

Chimichurri Sauce

4 cloves garlic, peeled

½ bunch parsley, long stems removed

1 tablespoon lime juice or vinegar (e.g. apple cider vinegar, red wine vinegar)

¼ cup olive oil

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

Directions

1. Add the ingredients for the chimichurri sauce to a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth, about 2-3 minutes.
2. Transfer half of the sauce to a gallon-size zip-top plastic bag and the other half to a small bowl. Set the bowl aside.
3. Add the pork tenderloin to the bag with the sauce. Move the bag around to coat the pork with the sauce, then seal the bag, squeezing out as much air as possible.
4. Place the bag in a bowl and refrigerate for 20 minutes. During the last 10 minutes, preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
5. Place the pork on the baking sheet and bake until cooked through (internal temperature of 145°F), about 30 minutes.
6. Let rest for 10 minutes, then cut into four portions and serve warm with the reserved chimichurri sauce.

Recipe Notes

- Consider making a double batch of the chimichurri sauce to use the whole bunch of parsley. The extra sauce will keep in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or in the freezer for up to 3 months. The sauce also goes well with beef, chicken, beans, rice, pasta, and roasted vegetables.
- To cook the pork on a grill: Preheat the grill to medium (350-400°F), then cook the marinated pork loin until cooked through, about 15-20 minutes, turning every 5 minutes with tongs to ensure even cooking.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 280 | Total Fat: 16.5 g | Saturated Fat: 3 g
Sodium: 225 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g | Protein: 30.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Baked Heart of Palm Empanadas

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 50 minutes | Total: 1 hour 5 minutes

Yield: 5 servings | Serving Size: 2 empanadas

Region: South America | Country: Brazil

Ingredients

1½ cups all-purpose or white whole-wheat flour
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
1½ tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
Water, as needed (about 1-2 tablespoons)

Filling

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
½ tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, finely diced (about 1 cup)
½ tablespoon sugar
½ cup canned hearts of palm, drained and chopped
½ tablespoon all-purpose or white whole-wheat flour
½ cup lowfat (1%) milk
6 black olives, drained and chopped
¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
2 pieces cooked bacon, chopped (optional; about ¼ cup)

Directions

1. In a large mixing bowl, stir together the flour and salt.
2. Add the yogurt and melted butter. Stir to combine.
3. Add water, 1 tablespoon at a time, until a dough is formed.
4. Knead briefly until the dough is smooth. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap, then refrigerate for 30 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350°F and place a skillet or sauté pan over medium heat to make the filling.
6. Add the butter and oil to the pan. Heat until the butter is melted and the oil is shimmering.
7. Add the onion and sugar. Cook until softened and golden-brown, about 8-10 minutes, stirring often.
8. Add the hearts of palm and flour. Cook while stirring for 2-3 minutes.
9. Add the milk, whisking to combine. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook while stirring until thickened, about 4-6 minutes.
10. Remove from heat. Add the olives, feta cheese, and bacon (if using). Stir to combine then set aside.
11. Remove the dough from the refrigerator, then roll out flat to ¼-inch thickness. Cut ten circles out of the dough with the top of a drinking glass (about 3-4 inches wide).
12. Divide the filling between the dough circles, placing about 1-2 tablespoons in the middle of each. Fold each circle in half over the filling, then pinch the edges to seal.
13. Bake until golden-brown, about 25-30 minutes, then serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 300 | Total Fat: 13 g | Saturated Fat: 6.5 g
Sodium: 625 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 34.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 11.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Oceania



White Fish with Cucumber-Caper Sauce

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Total: 25 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1 (~5-ounce) fish fillet with half of the sauce

Region: Oceania | Country: Australia

Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 (4- to 6-ounce) white fish fillets (e.g. cod, mackerel, grouper, tilapia, bass, mahi mahi)
- 1 lemon, zested and juiced, divided
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 pinch paprika
- 2 pinches (about ⅛ teaspoon) salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- ½ cup diced cucumber (about ½ medium cucumber)
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon capers, drained

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Spray the inside of an 8x8-inch baking dish with cooking spray.
3. Place the fish in the dish, spacing them apart.
4. Sprinkle with half the lemon juice (about 2 tablespoons), along with the oregano, paprika, and 1 pinch of the salt.
5. Bake until the fish is cooked through (internal temperature of 145°F, flakes easily with a fork) about 9-11 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, in a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the oil, lemon zest, remaining half of lemon juice (about 2 tablespoons), and remaining 1 pinch of salt. Add the cucumber, parsley, and capers, then toss to combine.
7. Transfer the each cooked fish fillet to an individual serving plate, then divide the cucumber-caper mixture between the two plates, adding on top of the fish. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- This recipe is inspired by barramundi, a type of fish found in the South Pacific Oceania region near Australia. Barramundi is difficult to find in North America, so another white fish may be used in this recipe.
- The cucumber-caper sauce can be made ahead of time and be stored in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 185 | Total Fat: 4 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 400 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2 g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5 g | Protein: 33 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Lemon Curd Pavlova

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: 1 slice without toppings

Region: Oceania | Country: New Zealand

Ingredients

1 cup powdered sugar, divided
4 eggs, plus more if needed (see step 2)
⅛ teaspoon cream of tartar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup whipped cream (store-bought or homemade)
½ cup lemon curd (store-bought or homemade; can substitute another fruit curd)
Optional toppings: Fresh fruit, chopped if needed (e.g. pomegranate seeds, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries), mint leaves (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of the powdered sugar, then set aside.
2. Carefully crack one of the eggs and separate the white from the yolk into a small bowl. If any yolk gets into the white, discard and start with a new egg. If the white is free of yolk, transfer it to a large mixing bowl. Repeat until you have 4 egg whites in the bowl. Save the yolks for another use.
3. Add the cream of tartar. Using an electric mixer (or whisking by hand, if needed) beat until stiff peaks form.
4. In a separate bowl whisk together cornstarch and ¾ cup of the powdered sugar. Add to the whipped egg whites, gently folding to combine.
5. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking sheet and spread into an even layer. Bake on the middle rack until set and lightly golden-brown, about 12-15 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, place a second sheet of parchment paper on the counter and sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons of powdered sugar.
7. Quickly and carefully, flip the baked egg white mixture (meringue) onto the second sheet of parchment paper. Let cool, then carefully peel away the paper it was baked on.
8. Spread the lemon curd over the meringue, then spread the whipped cream on top. Carefully roll into a log, starting from one of the narrow end, then cut into 8 slices.
9. Serve right away or chill before serving. Top as desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 150 | Total Fat: 7.5 g | Saturated Fat: 4 g
Sodium: 75 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 21 g | Dietary Fiber: 0 g | Protein: 3 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Creamy Pumpkin Soup

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 25 minutes | Total: 40 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1½ cups

Region: Oceania | Country: Australia

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 leek, green top removed, white part thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 cups (16 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 medium tart apple (e.g. Granny Smith), peeled and chopped (about ¾ cup)
- 1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree
- ¼ cup half and half

Directions

1. Heat large saucepan or stockpot over medium heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the leek and cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes.
4. Add the garlic and nutmeg. Cook until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
5. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool slightly, about 3-5 minutes, then transfer the mixture to the pitcher of a blender. Set the pot back on the stovetop, off heat.
6. Add the broth, apple, and pumpkin to the blender. Blend until completely smooth, about 1-2 minutes.
7. Transfer the mixture to the pot and place over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, to allow soup to heat through and the flavors to blend, about 10-15 minutes.
8. Add the half and half and stir to combine.
9. Serve warm, or chill in the refrigerator and serve cold if desired.

Recipe Notes

- This soup will keep for up to 7 days in the refrigerator, or up to 6 months in the freezer.
- A 10-ounce bag of frozen butternut squash (thawed) can be used in place of the pumpkin, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 255 | Total Fat: 11.5 g | Saturated Fat: 3.5 g
Sodium: 170 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 38.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 9.5 g | Protein: 4 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Savory Meat Pie

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 50 minutes | Chill: 20 minutes | Total: 1 hour 20 minutes

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: 1 slice

Region: Oceania | Country: Tasmania

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ medium onion, finely diced (about ½ cup)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 pound (16 ounces) lean ground beef (90% lean or higher)
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose or white whole-wheat flour
- ¼ cup no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 cup (8 ounces) reduced-sodium beef broth
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 (14- to 15-ounce) box premade pie crusts (two 9-inch crusts), brought to room temperature as directed on the package

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium heat. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
2. Add the onion and salt. Cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes, then add the garlic and thyme. Continue cooking and stirring until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
3. Add the beef and cook until no longer pink, about 6-8 minutes, breaking it into crumbles as it cooks.
4. Add the flour and stir until no longer dry, about 1 minute, then add the tomato sauce, broth, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir to combine.
5. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
6. Cook until the liquid resembles gravy, about 4-6 minutes, then remove from the heat and set aside to cool.
7. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 425°F. Line a pie pan with one of the pie crusts and set aside.
8. Pour the cooled beef mixture into pie pan, then place the second pie crust on top. Pinch the edges to the bottom crust to seal, then cut several slits in the top for venting.
9. Bake until golden-brown, about 30-40 minutes, then let cool slightly. Cut into eight slices and serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 325 | Total Fat: 19 g | Saturated Fat: 4.5 g
Sodium: 430 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 19.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 18.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Eastern Europe

Roasted Beet Borscht

Prep: 20 minutes | Cook: 40 minutes | Total: 1 hour

Yield: 8 servings | Serving Size: ~1 cup

Region: East Europe | Serving Size: Russia

Ingredients

1 pound beets (about 3 medium beets), cut into 1-inch chunks
½ teaspoon salt, divided
½ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
2 large carrots, chopped (about 2 cups)
1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 cup)
2 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 teaspoon)
½ teaspoon dried thyme
6 cups (48 ounces) low-sodium vegetable broth
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar or honey
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill (about ½ ounce)
½ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
1 medium tart-flavored apple (e.g. Granny Smith), cored and finely chopped (about 1 cup)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. On a baking sheet, toss the beets with 2 tablespoons of the oil, ¼ teaspoon of the salt, and ¼ teaspoon of the black pepper. Roast until tender, about 30-40 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat a large pot over medium heat. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and heat until shimmering.
4. Add the carrots, onion, the remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and the remaining ¼ teaspoon black pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until beginning to soften, about 10 minutes.
5. Add the garlic and thyme. Cook until fragrant, ~1 minute.
6. Add the broth and bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
7. Cook until the carrots are tender, about 15-20 minutes.
8. Transfer the beets to a blender, along with the carrots, onion, and enough broth to fill the blender about halfway.
9. Remove the plastic piece from the center of the blender lid and place a towel over the hole. Blend until smooth, about 2-3 minutes.
10. Return the pureed mixture to the pot and stir in the vinegar and sugar or honey. Reheat over the stovetop if needed.
11. In a small mixing bowl, stir together the yogurt and dill.
12. Serve warm or chill before serving, topping each serving with 1 tablespoon of the yogurt-dill mixture and 2 tablespoons of the chopped apple.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 165 | Total Fat: 7.5 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 350 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 21.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 3.5 g | Protein: 6 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Marinated Cucumber Salad

Prep: 5 minutes | Chill: 30 minutes | Total: 35 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~½ cup

Region: Eastern Europe | Country: Denmark

Ingredients

1 English cucumber, halved lengthwise and sliced ¼-inch-thick (about 2 cups; can substitute 2 regular cucumbers, peeled and seeded)

1 lemon, juiced and zested, divided

1½ teaspoons salt

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill (or 1 teaspoon dried)

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley (or 1 teaspoon dried)

Optional garnish: Edible flowers (e.g. chive flowers, turnip flowers, forget-me-nots, cabbage flowers)

Directions

1. Add the cucumber, half of the lemon juice (about 2 tablespoons), and salt to a medium mixing bowl. Toss to combine, then set aside for 30 minutes to release excess liquid.
2. Drain and discard the released liquid, then pat the cucumber slices dry with paper towels.
3. Add the remaining half of the lemon juice along with the lemon zest, dill, and parsley. Toss to combine.
4. Serve right away, or chill before serving if desired. Garnish with the edible flowers (if using) just before serving.

Recipe Notes

- This cucumber salad will keep in the refrigerator for up to 7 days.
- If not using flowers for garnish, adding a vegetable with a different color can add visual appeal as well as flavor.
- The cucumbers will not retain all of the salt. Its primary purpose is to pull out the excess water from the cucumbers.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 25 | Total Fat: 0 g | Saturated Fat: 0 g
Sodium: 180 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 3 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 1 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Slow Cooker Poached Eggs and Salmon

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 1 hour 5 minutes | Total: 1 hour 15 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1 salmon fillet with an egg and half the spinach

Region: Eastern Europe | Country: Sweden

Ingredients

Water
Nonstick cooking spray
2 eggs
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives, divided
2 (4-ounce) salmon fillets
4 cups fresh spinach (about 4 ounces, or 1 cup frozen spinach)
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted, divided
2 teaspoons lemon juice, divided
2 pinches (about 1/8 teaspoon) salt, divided
2 pinches (about 1/8 teaspoon) ground black pepper, divided

Recipe Notes

- The salmon is done when it reaches an internal temperature of 145°F or flakes easily with a fork. The eggs are done when the whites and yolk do not jiggle when the dishes are shaken.
- For best results, serve right away. If needed, this recipe will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. To reheat, cook in the microwave at 50% power until warm, about 1½-3 minutes.

Directions

1. Fill a medium saucepan about halfway full with water and bring to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, coat the inside of two oven-safe ramekins or other small dishes with nonstick cooking spray. Crack an egg into each dish and top each with 1 tablespoon of the chives.
3. Set the egg dishes in the bottom of a slow cooker, then add the salmon fillets on either side.
4. Pour the boiling water into the slow cooker until it comes about halfway up the sides of the egg dishes – be careful not to get any water in the egg cups.
5. Cover the slow cooker with the lid and cook on high for 1 hour. Check for doneness (see Recipe Notes). If needed, cook for an additional 10-15 minutes.
6. Use oven mitts to carefully remove the egg dishes. Then, lift the salmon out with a slotted spatula or spoon. Set aside.
7. Add the spinach to the slow cooker and stir into the water until wilted, about 3-4 minutes. Drain or lift out of the slow cooker with tongs and divide between two plates.
8. Add ½ tablespoon of the melted butter to each portion of spinach. Toss to combine. Top each portion with one of the salmon fillets.
9. Use a butter knife to loosen the eggs from the dishes and place each on top of the salmon.
10. Sprinkle each plate with 1 teaspoon of the lemon juice, 1 pinch of the salt, and 1 pinch of the black pepper. Serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 280 | Total Fat: 17.5 g | Saturated Fat: 6 g
Sodium: 305 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 3 g | Dietary Fiber: 1.5 g | Protein: 29.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Sweet Potato Latkes (Potato Fritters)

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 2 latkes without toppings

Region: Eastern Europe | Country: Ukraine

Ingredients

- 1 large sweet potato or 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled (about 12-14 ounces total)
- ½ medium onion, peeled
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour or Matzah meal
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- 1 pinch ground cinnamon
- 1 pinch curry powder
- 1 pinch chipotle chile pepper
- 2-4 tablespoons canola oil, as needed
- Optional toppings: Applesauce, Greek yogurt

Directions

1. Grate the sweet potato(es) and onion using a cheese grater or pulsing in a food processor until shredded.
2. Place the grated sweet potato and onion in a strainer or colander. Let sit to drain any excess liquid, about 3-5 minutes, then pat dry with paper towels.
3. Transfer the sweet potato to a medium mixing bowl, along with the eggs, flour, salt, black pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, curry powder, and chipotle. Stir until well-combined.
4. Heat a medium to large skillet over medium heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil and heat until shimmering.
5. Working ¼ cup at a time, add the potato mixture to the pan and flatten it into a disc. Cook until golden-brown, about 4-5 minutes on each side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels or low oven (150-170°F), then repeat with any remaining potato mixture, adding oil to the pan if needed.
6. Serve warm, topped as desired.

Recipe Notes

- These latkes can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or in the freezer for up to 6 months. Reheat in an oven, toaster oven, griddle, or a pan on the stovetop to keep the crisp texture.
- Substitute ¼ teaspoon of a seasoning blend for the nutmeg, cinnamon, curry powder, and chipotle, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 165 | Total Fat: 9 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 195 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 17 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Piernik-Spiced Zucchini Bread

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 40 minutes | Total: 50 minutes

Yield: 12 servings | Serving Size: 1 slice or 1 muffin

Region: Eastern Europe | Country: Poland

Ingredients

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups regular or white whole-wheat flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground cloves
½ teaspoon ground allspice
½ teaspoon salt
¾ cup honey
½ cup unsweetened applesauce
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups grated zucchini (about 1 medium zucchini)

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray the inside of an 8.5x4.5-inch loaf pan or a 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside.
2. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and salt.
3. In a separate large mixing bowl, whisk together the honey, applesauce, egg, and vanilla. Add the zucchini and stir to combine.
4. Add the flour mixture to the zucchini mixture and gently stir until just combined with no dry flour.
5. Pour the mixture into the prepared loaf pan, or divide between the muffin tin cups.
6. Bake until a toothpick in the middle comes out clean, about 45-55 minutes for a loaf pan or 20-24 minutes for muffins.
7. Place on a cooling rack and let cool. Cut into 12 slices if using a loaf pan, or loosen and remove from the muffin tin. Serve room temperature, or reheat in the microwave.

Recipe Notes

- Consider adding melted chocolate and/or crystallized ginger on top after baking in step 7, or adding up to ½ cup of chopped nuts and/or dried fruit (chopped if large) before baking in step 4.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 155 | Total Fat: 1 g | Saturated Fat: 0 g
Sodium: 105 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 36 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 3 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Unstuffed Cabbage Rolls

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 45 minutes | Total: 55 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~2 cups

Region: Eastern Europe | Country: Hungary

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound lean ground beef (90% lean or higher)
- 1 large onion, diced (about 2 cups)
- 6 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans no-salt-added diced tomatoes
- 2 (8-ounce) cans no-salt-added tomato sauce
- ½ cup water
- 1 cup uncooked brown rice
- ½ medium (2-pound) head cabbage, shredded (about 4 cups)
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the ground beef, onion, and garlic.
4. Cook until the onion is softened and the beef is no longer pink, about 6-8 minutes, stirring often and breaking the beef into crumbles as it cooks.
5. Add the diced tomatoes with their juice, tomato sauce, water, rice, cabbage, and black pepper. Stir to combine.
6. Bring to a simmer over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
7. Cover the pan with a lid and cook until the rice and cabbage are tender, about 25-30 minutes.
8. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- If the mixture is too thick for your preference after cooking, add water until you reach the desired consistency.
- Store in the refrigerator for up to 4 days, or in the freezer for up to 3 months.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 555 | Total Fat: 19 g | Saturated Fat: 6 g
Sodium: 165 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 55 g | Dietary Fiber: 6 g | Protein: 39 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Western Europe



Sweet-and-Tangy Braised Red Cabbage

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 40 minutes | Total: 50 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: ~1 cup

Region: Western Europe | Country: Austria

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ medium onion, sliced thin (about 1 cup)
- ½ medium (2-pound) head red cabbage, shredded (about 4 cups, or two 8-ounce bags shredded red cabbage)
- 1 cup (8 ounces) apple cider or apple juice
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 pinch caraway seeds (optional)
- 1 pinch ground cloves (optional)
- Water, as needed

Directions

1. Heat a large saucepan or stockpot over medium-high heat.
2. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
3. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until it begins to soften, about 3-5 minutes.
4. Add the cabbage, apple cider or apple juice, vinegar, salt, caraway seeds (if using), and cloves (if using).
5. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer.
6. Cover with a lid and cook until the cabbage is tender, about 25-30 minutes, adding water as needed if the liquid evaporates during cooking.
7. Serve warm, or chill before serving if desired.

Recipe Notes

- Store in the refrigerator for up to 7 days, or in the freezer for up to 6 months.
- This recipe makes a quick and colorful alternative to sauerkraut.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 65 | Total Fat: 2.5 g | Saturated Fat: 0.5 g
Sodium: 205 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 9 g | Dietary Fiber: 1.5 g | Protein: 0.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Classic Crepes

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 2 crepes without filling

Region: Western Europe | Country: Belgium

Ingredients

- ½ cup lowfat (1%) milk
- ½ cup water
- 1 cup all-purpose or white whole-wheat flour
- 2 eggs
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled

Filling and/or Topping Ideas

Sweet: Fruit (fresh, preserves, or compote), whipped cream, cream cheese-yogurt mixture, chocolate-hazelnut spread, sliced or chopped nuts

Savory: Cheese, avocado, cooked vegetables, cooked animal protein (e.g. eggs, chicken, steak, pork, shrimp, salmon), hummus, canned or cooked beans or lentils, tofu, tempeh, fresh herbs

Recipe Notes

- Crepes can be stored in an airtight container, separated with sheets of wax paper or parchment paper, in the refrigerator for up to 4 days, or in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- Steps 1-3 can be completed in a blender or food processor, if desired. Simply add the ingredients and blend.

Directions

1. Measure the milk and water into a liquid measuring cup (1 cup total). Set aside.
2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, eggs, and salt. Gradually add the milk mixture, whisking to combine.
3. Add the butter, whisking to create a very smooth, thin batter with small air bubbles, about 2-4 minutes.
4. Spray a crepe pan or 8- to 9-inch nonstick skillet lightly with nonstick cooking spray and heat over medium-high heat.
5. When the pan is hot, add ¼ cup of the batter. Working quickly, tilt the pan with a swirling circular motion so it coats the entire bottom of the pan in a thin and even layer.
6. Cook until the bottom is light-brown, about 2 minutes, then gently loosen and flip with a thin spatula. Continue cooking until the second side is no longer wet, about 1 minute.
7. Fill as desired, then roll or fold. Serve warm, adding toppings as desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 210 | Total Fat: 9 g | Saturated Fat: 5 g
Sodium: 195 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 25 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 7 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Skillet Shepherd's Pie (Cottage Pie)

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 3 servings | Serving Size: 1½ cups

Region: Western Europe | Country: Ireland

Ingredients

½ pound yellow or red potatoes (about 2 medium potatoes or 4 small potatoes), cut into 1- to 2-inch chunks

½ teaspoon salt, divided

¼-½ teaspoon ground black pepper, to taste

¼-½ cup lowfat (1%) milk, based on desired consistency

1 tablespoon olive oil

½ cup diced onion (about ½ medium onion)

1 cup frozen mixed vegetables

½ pound (8 ounces) lean ground turkey (90% lean or higher)

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce

1 garlic clove, minced (about ½ teaspoon)

¼ teaspoon dried thyme

⅔ cup (6 ounces) reduced-sodium beef broth

Directions

1. Add the potatoes and ¼ teaspoon of the salt to a medium saucepan. Add enough water to cover the potatoes. Bring to a boil, then cook until tender, about 15 minutes.
2. Drain the water and return the potatoes to the pot. Add the remaining ¼ teaspoon of salt, black pepper, and ¼ cup of the milk. Mash with a potato masher, adding more milk as needed to adjust the consistency. Set aside.
3. Heat a broiler-safe medium skillet or sauté pan over medium heat. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
4. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes, then add the frozen vegetables and cook for another 5 minutes.
5. Add the ground turkey and cook until no longer pink, about 5-7 minutes, breaking it into crumbles as it cooks.
6. Add the flour, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, and thyme. Stir to combine and cook until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
7. Add the broth and stir to combine. Cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 3-4 minutes.
8. Add the mashed potatoes on the top and spread to cover.
9. Broil on high until golden-brown, about 4-5 minutes, then serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 270 | Total Fat: 10.5 g | Saturated Fat: 2.5 g
Sodium: 615 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 24.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 5.5 g | Protein: 20 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Honey-Glazed Baked Pears

Prep: 5 minutes | Cook: 1 hour | Total: 1 hour 5 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1 pear half

Region: Western Europe | Country: Switzerland

Ingredients

Nonstick cooking spray

2 firm ripe medium pears, peeled, halved and cored (e.g. Anjou, Bosc)

1 sprig fresh thyme, stem removed (about ½ teaspoon leaves)

1 pinch salt

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into four pieces, divided

2 tablespoons honey, divided

4 tablespoons (¼ cup) chilled heavy cream or whipped cream, divided

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Spray the inside of an 8x8-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Place the pears cut-side-up in the baking dish
3. Sprinkle the pears with the salt and thyme leaves.
4. Top each pear half with one of the butter pieces then drizzle each with ½ tablespoon of the honey.
5. Bake the pears until they are tender and caramelized, about 50-60 minutes, turning them over with tongs every 10-15 minutes.
6. Serve warm, topped with 1 tablespoon of the chilled heavy cream or whipped cream.

Recipe Notes

- Instead of a traditional peeler, you can use a spoon to scrape off the pear skin and scoop out the core.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 155 | Total Fat: 8.5 g | Saturated Fat: 5.5 g
Sodium: 45 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 22 g | Dietary Fiber: 2.5 g | Protein: 0.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Lemon Baked Fish and Chips

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Total: 25 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 1 (~5-ounce) fish fillet with half of the fries

Region: Western Europe | Country: United Kingdom

Ingredients

- 1 large (10- to 12-ounce) Russet potato, cut lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick planks, then cut lengthwise into ¼-inch-thick fries
- 2½ tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ¼ teaspoon salt, divided
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- ¼ cup all-purpose or white whole-wheat flour
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice (about ½ lemon)
- ½ tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
- 2 (4- to 6-ounce) white fish fillets (e.g. cod, haddock), pat dry with paper towels

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Place the potato fries on a baking sheet. Toss with ½ tablespoon of the oil, then sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon of the salt and ¼ teaspoon of the black pepper. Spread into a single layer, then bake until crispy, about 10-15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, coriander, paprika, cumin, remaining ¼ teaspoon of salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon of black pepper. Set aside.
4. In a separate medium mixing bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, butter, and 1 tablespoon of the oil.
5. Working one fillet at a time, dip the fish in the lemon mixture to coat, then in the flour mixture to cover both sides. Place on a clean plate near the stovetop.
6. Heat a nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and heat until shimmering.
7. Add the fish and cook until crisp, about 3 minutes per side, then transfer to the baking sheet with the potatoes.
8. Drizzle any leftover lemon mixture over the fish, then bake until cooked through (internal temperature of 145°F, flakes easily with a fork), about 8-10 minutes. Serve right away.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 565 | Total Fat: 22.5 g | Saturated Fat: 5 g
Sodium: 450 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 45 g | Dietary Fiber: 4.5 g | Protein: 44.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Spätzle (German Dumplings)

Prep: 10 minutes | Chill: 20 minutes | Cook: 15 minutes | Total: 45 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: ½ cup

Region: Western Europe | Country: Germany

Ingredients

½ cup reduced-fat (2%) milk
2 eggs
¾ cups regular or white whole-wheat flour
¾ cup all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon ground nutmeg
¾ teaspoon salt, divided
⅛ teaspoon ground white or black pepper
Water
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 medium onion, diced (about 1 cup)
½ cup shredded Swiss or Swiss blend cheese (e.g. Swiss-Gruyere)
1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

Directions

1. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the milk and eggs.
2. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the whole-wheat flour, all-purpose flour, nutmeg, ¼ teaspoon of the salt, and white or black pepper. Add the milk mixture and stir to create a batter.
3. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit on the counter for 20 minutes, or in the refrigerator for up to 4 hours.
4. Fill a large stockpot about halfway with water and add the remaining ½ teaspoon of salt. Bring to a boil over high heat.
5. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion, and cook until softened and browned, about 7-10 minutes.
6. Add the batter to the trough of a spätzle maker (or use a cheese grater; see Recipe Notes). When the onion is done cooking, push the batter through the holes and into the boiling water, making pieces ½-2 inches long.
7. When the pieces float to the top of the water, about 1-2 minutes, use a slotted spoon or strainer to transfer them to the pan with the onion.
8. Add the cheese and stir until melted, then remove from the heat and add the parsley. Stir to combine.
9. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- A spätzle maker is a plank with holes in it with a trough for the batter to sit in. The batter is pushed through the holes when the trough is moved back and forth, creating small dumplings. A cheese grater can be used in place of a spätzle maker by pressing the batter through the holes with a spatula.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 155 | Total Fat: 4 g | Saturated Fat: 2 g
Sodium: 320 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 24 g | Dietary Fiber: 2 g | Protein: 8 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Recipes Inspired by Mediterranean Europe



Chicken Couscous Paella

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 35 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1⅓ cups

Region: Mediterranean Europe | Country: Spain

Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- ½ medium onion, diced (about ½ cup)
- ½ cup diced celery (about 2 stalks)
- ½ cup diced bell pepper (about ½ medium bell pepper)
- ½ cup frozen peas
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1½ teaspoons)
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon fennel seed or dried dill
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 large tomatoes, diced (about 3 cups)
- ¾ cup (6 ounces) chicken broth
- ½ cup uncooked whole-wheat couscous
- ½ pound cooked chicken breast, cubed (about 1¼ cups)

Directions

1. Heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-low heat.
2. Coat the pan with nonstick cooking spray.
3. Add the onion, celery, and bell pepper. Cook until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
4. Add the peas, garlic, thyme, fennel seed or dill, black pepper, paprika, and turmeric.
5. Cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant.
6. Stir in the tomatoes and broth.
7. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat.
8. Add the couscous and stir to combine.
9. Cover the pan with a lid and remove from heat. Let stand until the couscous is tender, about 5 minutes.
10. Stir in the chicken and let sit until heated through, about 2-3 minutes.
11. Fluff with a fork, then serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 205 | Total Fat: 2 g | Saturated Fat: 0 g
Sodium: 185 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 27.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 4.5 g | Protein: 18 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Baked Eggplant Parmesan

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 45 minutes

Yield: 2 servings | Serving Size: 2 eggplant planks with half the sauce

Region: Mediterranean | Country: Italy

Ingredients

1 medium eggplant (about 1 pound), trimmed and cut lengthwise into four planks about ¾-inch in thickness, cut middle planks in half crosswise and chop outer planks into cubes, divided

¼ cup regular or white whole-wheat flour

1 egg, lightly beaten

½ cup panko or whole-wheat breadcrumbs

½ cup grated parmesan cheese, divided

½ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided

Nonstick cooking spray

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 pinch salt

4 garlic cloves, minced (about 2 teaspoons)

1 pinch-¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, to taste

1 (14.5-ounce) can no-salt-added diced tomatoes

¼ cup shredded Italian blend cheese

4 tablespoons (¼ cup) chopped fresh basil, divided

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450°F.
2. Add the flour to a shallow dish. Add the egg to a second dish. Add the breadcrumbs, ¼ cup of parmesan, and ¼ teaspoon of black pepper to a third dish.
3. Coat the halved eggplant planks lightly with the flour, then the egg, and then the breadcrumb mixture. Transfer the breaded eggplant planks to a wire cooling rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet and let sit for 5 minutes.
4. Spray the breaded eggplant lightly on both sides with nonstick spray and bake until tender and golden-brown, about 20-22 minutes, flipping them over after 10 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, heat a large skillet or sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the oil and heat until shimmering.
6. Add the eggplant cubes and salt. Cook, stirring often, until lightly-browned, about 3-4 minutes.
7. Add the garlic, red pepper, and the remaining ¼ teaspoon of black pepper. Cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then add the diced tomatoes with their juice.
8. Bring to a simmer and cook until the eggplant is tender and the sauce thickens, about 5-7 minutes. Set aside.
9. Combine the remaining ¼ cup parmesan and the Italian cheese in a small mixing bowl, then sprinkle onto the baked eggplant. Continue baking until melted, about 2-3 minutes.
10. Divide the baked eggplant planks between two plates, then top each with half the sauce and 2 tablespoons of the basil. Serve warm.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 370 | Total Fat: 13 g | Saturated Fat: 3 g
Sodium: 390 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 53 g | Dietary Fiber: 11 g | Protein: 13.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Lamb-Vegetable Kabobs with Tzatziki

Prep: 15 minutes | Chill: 20 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 55 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: 2 skewers

Region: Mediterranean | Country: Greece

Ingredients

- 1 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup peeled and finely chopped cucumber
- ½ tablespoon chopped fresh mint
- 1 lemon, juiced, divided (about 4 tablespoons)
- ½ cup (4 ounces) reduced-sodium beef broth
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1½ tablespoons olive oil
- 3-6 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 tablespoon)
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1 pound lamb, cut into 1- to 2-inch cubes
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into 1-inch-thick slices
- 1 medium bell pepper, cut into 1- to 2-inch cubes
- ½ medium onion, cut into 1- to 2-inch cubes

Directions

1. In a small bowl, stir together the Greek yogurt, cucumber, mint, and 1 teaspoon of the lemon juice. Set aside.
2. In a separate small mixing bowl, whisk together the broth, vinegar, oil, garlic, rosemary, salt, black pepper, and the remaining lemon juice to make a marinade.
3. Transfer the marinade mixture to a large plastic ziptop bag. Set the bag inside the bowl that held the marinade.
4. Add the cubed lamb to the marinade and toss to coat.
5. Seal the bag, squeezing out the excess air, and refrigerate in the bowl for at least 20 minutes, up to overnight.
6. Gather 12 skewers. If using wooden or bamboo skewers, soak them in warm water for at least 15 minutes to prevent the ends from burning and turning black.
7. While the skewers are soaking, heat up the grill to medium heat or the broiler to high heat. If the broiler is in the oven, set an oven rack to the middle position.
8. While the broiler or grill is heating, thread the marinated lamb cubes, zucchini, bell pepper, and onion onto the skewers.
9. Cook on the grill or under the broiler (on the middle rack if in the oven) for 15-20 minutes, turning every 4-5 minutes, until cooked through (internal temperature of 145°F).
10. Drizzle with yogurt mixture, then serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- Consider serving with whole-wheat pita or a cooked whole grain such as farro, barley, bulgur, or quinoa.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 220 | Total Fat: 9.5 g | Saturated Fat: 2.5 g
Sodium: 145 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 7 g | Dietary Fiber: 1 g | Protein: 26.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Vegetable-Loaded Potato Salad

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 20 minutes | Total: 30 minutes

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: ~1 cup

Region: Mediterranean Europe | Country: Portugal

Ingredients

Water

1 teaspoon plus 1 pinch salt, divided

2 medium (5- to 7-ounce) red or Yukon gold potatoes, cut into to ½-inch chunks

2 medium carrots, peeled, sliced ½-inch-thick

½ medium onion, sliced ½-inch-thick

2 eggs, in shell

1 cup chopped green beans, frozen or fresh

3 tablespoons red wine vinegar

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

¼ teaspoon paprika

1 pinch ground white or black pepper

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

1 clove garlic, minced (about ½ teaspoon)

1 tablespoon capers, drained

Directions

1. Fill a large saucepan or stockpot about two-thirds full with water. Add the potatoes, carrots, onion, and 1 teaspoon of the salt. (Potatoes absorb ~7-10% of salt from cooking water. The sodium per serving is adjusted to reflect this.)
2. Bring to a boil, then cook until the vegetables are just tender, about 10-15 minutes.
3. Add the eggs, still in shell, and green beans. Remove the pot from the heat, cover with a lid, and let sit for 12 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, mustard, paprika, remaining 1 pinch of salt, and the white or black pepper. Add the parsley, garlic, and capers. Set aside.
5. Remove the eggs from the pot, run under cold water or place in a bowl of ice water. Peel and cut lengthwise into quarters.
6. Drain the vegetables into a strainer or colander, then transfer to a large mixing bowl. Add the vinegar-oil mixture and eggs, then gently toss to combine.
7. Serve warm, or chill in the refrigerator before serving. Store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 200 | Total Fat: 9 g | Saturated Fat: 2 g
Sodium: 150 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 24 g | Dietary Fiber: 5 g | Protein: 6 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Summer Vegetable Ratatouille

Prep: 20 minutes | Cook: 40 minutes | Total: 1 hour

Yield: 4 servings | Serving Size: 1½ cups

Region: Mediterranean | Country: France

Ingredients

3 large tomatoes (or 6 medium Roma tomatoes)
1 medium bell pepper, cut into bite-sized pieces (about 1½ cups)
1 medium eggplant, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces (about 3 cups)
1 medium zucchini, cut into bite-sized pieces (about 2 cups)
1 medium yellow squash, cut into bite-sized pieces (about 2 cups)
1 medium onion, cut into bite-sized pieces (about 1½ cups)
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
¼ teaspoon salt
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
⅛-¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Using a box grater, grate the tomatoes over a medium mixing bowl. Pour off excess juice, as desired. Set aside.
3. Place the bell pepper, eggplant, zucchini, squash, and onion on a baking sheet. Add 1½ tablespoons of the oil and the salt. Toss to combine, then spread into a single layer.
4. Roast in the oven until well-browned and fork tender, about 20-25 minutes, tossing halfway through the cooking time.
5. While the vegetables are roasting, heat a large saucepan or stockpot over medium heat.
6. Add the remaining ½ tablespoon of oil and heat until shimmering.
7. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30-60 seconds.
8. Add the grated tomatoes, oregano, black pepper, and crushed red pepper.
9. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce the heat to maintain a low simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.
10. Add the roasted vegetables. Continue cooking for 7-10 minutes.
11. Remove from the heat and stir in the basil.
12. Serve warm.

Recipe Notes

- Serve over rice, pasta, or crusty bread.
- Top with a sprinkle of parmesan or feta cheese, if desired.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 145 | Total Fat: 7.5 g | Saturated Fat: 1 g
Sodium: 225 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 19 g | Dietary Fiber: 7.5 g | Protein: 4 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov



Plant-Based Tiramisu

Prep: 15 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes | Total: 45 minutes

Yield: 6 servings | Serving Size: 1 slice

Region: Mediterranean | Country: Italy

Ingredients

4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) brewed and cooled espresso, divided

1 tablespoon semisweet chocolate chips

$\frac{1}{2}$ (12- to 12.3-ounce) package silken tofu (about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup)

2 tablespoons powdered sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon juice

1 pinch salt

12 ladyfinger cookies (about half of a 7-ounce package)

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

2 tablespoons shaved chocolate (optional)

Directions

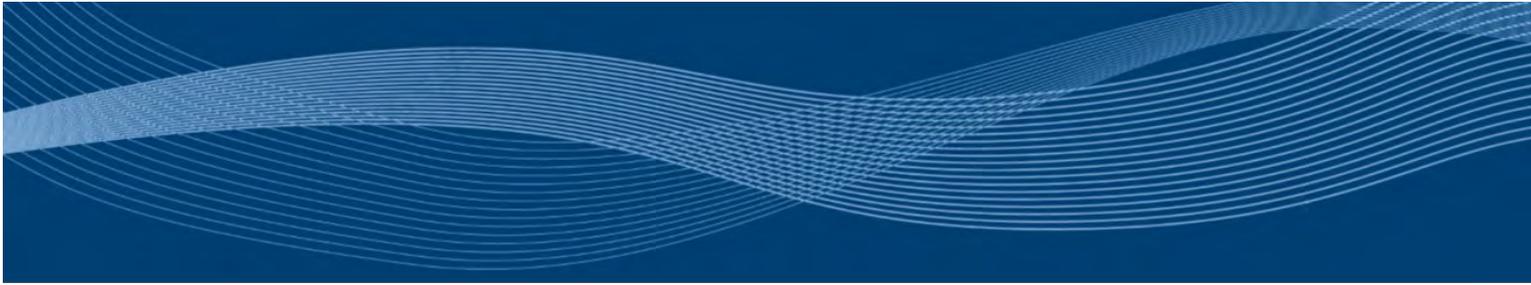
1. Add 2 tablespoons of the espresso and the chocolate chips to a small microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high power (default setting) for 30 seconds. Stir to combine. Continue microwaving if needed to melt the chocolate, 15 seconds at a time, stirring at the end of each cook time.
2. Add the tofu, powdered sugar, lemon juice, salt, and the espresso-chocolate mixture to a blender or food processor. Blend until completely smooth, about 2-3 minutes, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed.
3. Layer 6 of the ladyfinger cookies along the bottom of an 8.5x4.5-inch loaf pan. Pour the remaining 2 tablespoons of espresso evenly over the cookies.
4. Transfer about half of the tofu mixture into the pan, spreading it into an even layer. Layer with the remaining 6 cookies, then the remaining half of the tofu mixture.
5. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes, up to 24 hours.
6. Dust with the cocoa powder and sprinkle with the shaved chocolate (if using).
7. Cut into 6 slices, then serve cold.

**Nutrition Facts Per Serving: Calories: 275 | Total Fat: 6.5 g | Saturated Fat: 2 g
Sodium: 120 mg | Total Carbohydrate: 51.5 g | Dietary Fiber: 3 g | Protein: 6.5 g**

For more recipes, please visit www.nutrition.va.gov

Appendix





Healthy Teaching Kitchen Tools and Resources

The VA Healthy Teaching Kitchen (HTK) program offers a variety of online tools and resources to support you with healthy cooking.

Cookbooks

Visit: www.nutrition.va.gov/Recipes.asp

- One-Pot Meals
- Yummy Benefits Cookbooks (Volumes I and II)
- Low-Sodium Cookbook
- Cooking with Ease

Recipe and Cooking Demonstration Videos

- **YouTube** – Visit: www.youtube.com, then search “VHA Healthy Teaching Kitchen”
- **Chicago VA Facebook Live Healthy Teaching Kitchen** – Visit: www.facebook.com/VACHicago
 - * 2nd Thursday of the month at 11:00am-12:00pm EST
 - * Videos are saved on the Facebook page after the Live event for future viewing

Recipes and Other Healthy Cooking Tips

- **MyPlate Kitchen** – For recipes, videos, and healthy eating tips. Visit: www.choosemyplate.gov/myplatekitchen
- **Fruits and Veggies More Matters** – Meal planning resources and recipes, with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. Visit: www.fruitsandveggies.org
- If you need meal ideas, try using an Internet search tool. For example, if you have chicken and broccoli, search “Easy Healthy Chicken Broccoli recipe”.

Many VA facilities offer in-person Healthy Teaching Kitchen classes. To learn about local options, contact the nutrition department at your facility.



Cooking Equipment

Having the right tools on hand can help make cooking as easy and efficient as possible. Use the list below to make sure you will have what you need to make a variety of recipes.

- Large frying pan, 10+ inches across
- Small frying pan, 6 inches across
- Large sauté pan, 10+ inches across
- Large saucepan with lid, 6+ quarts
- Small saucepan with a lid, about 2.5 quarts
- Stockpot with a lid
- Roasting pan
- At least 2 mixing bowls, one large and one small
- Microwave- and oven-safe casserole dish with a lid, 2-3 quarts
- Large cutting board
- 2-3 smaller cutting boards
- Turning spatula
- Scraper/rubber spatula
- Wooden spoons
- 2 metal baking sheets
- 2 wire cooling racks
- Dry ingredient measuring cups
- Liquid/wet ingredient measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Box grater
- Chef knife
- Bread (serrated) knife
- Paring knife
- Honing steel
- Spring-loaded tongs
- Wire whisk
- Can opener
- Colander
- Strainer
- Ladle
- Vegetable peeler
- Pot holders and/or oven mitts
- Instant-read digital thermometer
- Potato masher
- Collapsible vegetable steamer
- Slow cooker
- Dutch oven
- Parchment paper
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic wrap
- Food storage containers



Herb and Spice Substitutions

When you are in a pinch and you don't have the right herb or spice for a recipe, use this guide to help you:

Allspice: 1 Part Cinnamon plus 1 Part Nutmeg plus 1 Part Cloves

Anise: Cardamom

Basil: Oregano or Thyme

Cardamom: Ginger

Cilantro: Parsley

Cinnamon: Nutmeg or Allspice (one-quarter of the amount)

Cloves: Allspice, Cinnamon, or Nutmeg

Coriander: Cumin

Cumin: Chili Powder or Coriander

Ginger: Allspice, Cinnamon, Mace, or Nutmeg

Mace: Allspice, Cinnamon, Ginger, or Nutmeg

Marjoram: Basil or Thyme

Nutmeg: Cinnamon, Ginger, or Mace

Oregano: Thyme or Basil

Rosemary: Thyme

Sage: Marjoram or Rosemary

Saffron: 1 Part Turmeric plus 2 Parts Paprika

Savory: Thyme, Marjoram, or Sage

Thyme: Basil, Marjoram, or Oregano



Adding Flavor with Spices

Spices typically come from the berries, seeds, roots, or bark of plants. When dried for packaging and cooking, their flavors intensify. Spices can be purchased whole or ground.

Using Whole Spices

Buying spices whole and then grinding them as needed keeps them fresher for longer, up to 2 years. Examples of whole spices are cardamom pods, whole cloves, cumin seeds, and peppercorns.

If using whole spices in a dish, make sure to remove and discard them before serving. Placing the whole spices in a sachet or a little pouch made from cheesecloth can make this process easier.

To grind spices from their whole form:

1. Place the whole spices in a coffee grinder (reserve this grinder for spices only).
2. Pulse the spices in the grinder until they are finely ground.
3. Sift the ground spices to remove any large or hard bits.
4. Use right away or store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place for up to 1 year.
5. (Optional) To fully clean the grinder between spices, place torn up pieces of bread in the grinder. Pulse to move the bread around in the grinder, which will allow it to pick up any leftover spice residue. Remove and discard the bread, or toast it to make breadcrumbs. (Note: If you cannot have bread for any reason, rice can be used to clean the grinder instead.)
6. Wipe out the grinder with a damp cloth and wipe it dry. Put it away or use it for another spice.

Toasting Spices

If using whole spices, they can be toasted in a dry skillet to bring out their flavors before grinding them.

Blooming Spices

Many of the flavors in spices can only come out when they are combined with a fat. Blooming spices is a technique that involves cooking whole or ground spices in a little oil over medium-low heat to bring out their best flavor.

If cooking aromatic vegetables, such as onions and garlic, the spices can be added at the same time.

Common Spices and How to Use Them

Spice	Description	Suggested Uses
Allspice	Small brown berry, flavor resembles a combination cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg.	Sausages, braised meats, poached fish, cooked fruits, winter squash, beans, puddings, pies, and relishes.
Anise	Licorice flavor.	Cookies, pastries, and bread.
Caraway	Dark brown curved seed.	Rye bread, cabbage, sauerkraut, and Eastern European Cuisine.
Cardamom	Tiny brown seeds, white or green pods. Sweet and aromatic.	Pickling, Danish pastries, and curries.
Cayenne	Very powerful, ground hot red pepper.	Soups, sauces, fish and other seafood, and eggs.
Celery Seed	Tiny brown seed with strong celery flavor. Too much can create a "hot" spice effect.	Salads, dressings, pickling, tomato dishes, and marinades.
Chili Powder	Blend of ground cumin, chili pepper, oregano, allspice. Can be mild or hot.	Chili, stews, sauces, and ground meats.
Cinnamon	Reddish brown aromatic bark from the cinnamon or cassia tree.	Preserves, stewed fruits, applesauce, oatmeal, breads, pastries, desserts, ham, and hot beverages.
Clove	Dried flower bud of the tropical clove tree. Pungent, sweet in flavor.	Marinades, stocks, sauces, braised meats, hams, pickling, fruits and cakes.
Coriander	Round light-brown seed of cilantro leaf with a slightly aromatic flavor.	Pickling, sausages, chili, beans, stocks, pork, curry, gingerbread, salsa, and dressings.
Cumin	Small seed resembling caraway, but lighter in color.	Sausages, salsa, egg dishes, hummus, curry dishes, vegetables, soups, sauces, fish, meat, and rice.
Curry	Mixture of up to 20 spices including turmeric, cumin, coriander, ginger, clove, and cinnamon. Peppery, yellow in color. Can be mild to very hot.	Curry dishes, vegetables, potatoes or sweet potatoes, soups, sauces, fish, meat, and rice.
Dill (seed)	Seed with "dill pickle" flavor. The seed is more pungent than the herb.	Pickling, soups, sauerkraut, marinade.
Fennel	Greenish brown seed, similar in flavor to anise.	Béarnaise sauce, vinegar, chicken, fish, salads, dressings, and eggs.
Garlic	Strong aromatic member of onion family.	Widely used.

Common Spices and How to Use Them (continued)

Spice	Description	Suggested Uses
Ginger	Light brown knobby root from a tropical plant.	Baked goods, desserts, fruits, curry dishes, sweet potatoes, cooked carrots, winter squash, pickling, and chutney. Chinese, Caribbean, and Japanese cuisine.
Juniper Berry	Slightly soft, purple berry. "Piney" flavor.	Marinades, game dishes, and sauerkraut.
Mace	Made from the orange-red outer covering of nutmeg. Aromatic, similar to nutmeg in flavor but milder.	Baked goods, desserts, fruit, sausages, fish, vegetables, and preserves.
Mustard Seed	Very pungent white, yellow or brown seed.	Prepared mustard, pickling, sauces, and salsa.
Nutmeg	Sweet, aromatic kernels of nutmeg fruit.	Baked goods, pies, quiche, sautéed spinach, cream sauces, soups, chicken, veal, vegetables, desserts, and breads.
Paprika	Ground from dried sweet, red pepper. Look for "smoked paprika," which has a pungent smoky, sometimes hot, flavor.	Fish, seafood, meats, salads, sauces, dressings, and garnish.
Pepper	Small hard berry. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black: Pungent, aromatic. • White: What is left when black outer casing is removed. Milder, with a sharp tang. • Green: Mild, packed in mild brine. • Pink: Sharp, fruity, somewhat sweet. 	Widely used in most cuisines
Poppy Seeds	Tiny blue black seeds with crunchy nut like flavor. It is a product of the opium poppy, but does not contain opium.	Breads, rolls, pastry, fillings, cookies, cakes, salsa, and dressings.
Saffron	Only the stigmas from the saffron crocus are used. Very expensive. Gives bright yellow color to foods with a mild distinctive flavor.	Baked goods, rice, potatoes, soups, sauces, curry, and meats.
Sesame	Small yellowish seed with high oil content and nutty taste.	Garnish for baked goods (e.g. breads, rolls), salads, and oriental candy.
Turmeric	Intense yellow root of ginger family. Mild but peppery flavor.	Curry powder, pickles, relish, salads, eggs, rice, and chow-chow.



Adding Flavor with Herbs

Adding herbs to the dishes you make is an excellent way to bring in a new world of flavor without adding extra salt. Herbs come in a variety of forms and varieties, and can be used to bring out the best in many types of recipes.

The most common forms of herbs available are fresh and dried. Fresh herbs can be used to bring in a bright or hearty flavor, depending on the variety used. Dried herbs lend deep, complex flavors to dishes and are certainly more convenient to use than fresh herbs.

Substituting Dried Herbs for Fresh Herbs

It is important to keep in mind that dried herbs do best in recipes with long cooking times (20 minutes or more). Dried herbs will not work in dishes that must use herbs raw (e.g. pesto) or when needed to finish a dish.

- 1 part whole dried herbs = 3 parts fresh herbs (example: use 1 teaspoon dried whole herb in place of 1 tablespoon fresh herb)
- 1 part ground/rubbed dried herbs = 4 parts fresh herbs (example: use ¼ teaspoon dried ground or rubbed herb in place of 1 teaspoon fresh herb)

Hardy Herbs (e.g. Rosemary, Oregano, Thyme, Sage, Marjoram)

Some herbs have a hardy, almost woody texture. The leaves are sturdy and the stems can be tough. They are potent and only a small amount of these herbs is needed to flavor a dish (usually fractions of teaspoons to a tablespoon). Dried versions of these herbs work well in cooking.

These herbs benefit from long cooking to release maximum flavor and ensure that their texture is not unpleasant. Add these herbs at the beginning of cooking.

Delicate Herbs (e.g. Basil, Cilantro, Dill, Chives, Mint, Parsley, Tarragon)

Other herbs have a delicate, leafy texture. The stems are tender, and can even be edible. Delicate herbs are prone to wilting and discoloration, and their flavor tends to quickly disappear when cooked. They tend to have a mild flavor so a larger amount is often needed to flavor a dish (usually tablespoons to fractions of a cup).

These herbs are best used to finish dishes or used raw in sauces. Add these herbs at the end of cooking, or use as a garnish.

How to Preserve Fresh Herbs

Sometimes we might harvest or purchase more fresh herbs than we can use right away. Rather than let them go to waste, here are three ways to save your fresh herbs for later:

Air Drying: Works best for hardy herbs.

1. Shake the fresh herbs to remove any dirt. You can gently wash the herbs, but be sure to dry them well afterward to prevent mold growth.
2. Secure the herb stems together using twine or a rubber band.
3. Hang the herbs upside down in a warm, dry, well-ventilated place away from sunlight. If you don't have a dark spot, or if dust is a concern, cover the bundle loosely with a paper bag.
4. Leave the herbs to dry until the leaves crumble, anywhere from 1-4 weeks. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 year.

Freezing: The best option for both delicate herbs and hardy fresh herbs.

- **Method A**

1. Wash and dry the fresh herbs.
2. Chop the fresh herbs.
3. Pack the chopped herbs into an ice cube tray.
4. Top the herbs off with oil, broth, or water. Oil is best for preventing freezer burn.
5. Freeze the herbs, then pop out the cubes.
6. Store the frozen herb cubes in an airtight container in the freezer for up to 3 months.

- **Method B**

1. Wash and dry the fresh herbs.
2. Blend the fresh herbs into a paste with a little oil, broth, or water. Oil is best for preventing freezer burn.
3. Pack the herb paste into an ice cube tray.
4. Freeze the herb paste, then pop out the cubes.
5. Store the frozen herb paste cubes in an airtight container in the freezer for up to 3 months.



Common Herbs and How to Use Them

Herb	Description	Suggested Uses
Basil	Aromatic green leaf. Member of the mint family.	Tomato dishes, pesto, egg dishes, salads, marinades, fish, and compound butters.
Bay Leaf	Stiff dark green, oblong leaf with a pungent aroma similar to sassafras.	Stocks, sauces, soup, stews, and braised meats.
Chervil	Small, delicate, green leaf. Mild flavor of parsley and tarragon.	Soups, salads, sauces, egg, dishes, chicken, fish, and dressing.
Chives	Fine, hollow, green top of a very small onion.	Salads, egg and cheese dishes, fish soups, and sauces.
Cilantro	Light green aromatic leaf. Shaped like flat parsley, but much more pungent flavor.	Salads, salsa, sauces, soup, eggs, and dressings.
Dill (herb)	Herb with "dill pickle" flavor.	Salads, soups, fish & shellfish, vegetables, sauces, and potatoes.
Marjoram	Gray green herb from mint family. Similar to oregano, but milder.	Beef, veal, lamb, sausage, pates, poultry, stews, soups, vegetables, salads, and sauces.
Mint	Aromatic herb with cool flavor. Spearmint and peppermint are most common.	Lamb, fruits, tea, fruit beverages, peas, carrots, potatoes, jellies, soups, and sauces.
Oregano	Pungent herb. Similar to marjoram, but stronger.	Italian and Mexican dishes, tomato sauces, soups, sauces, stews, meats, salads, and marinades.
Parsley	Green leaf, curly or flat, with a delicate sweet flavor. An excellent source of vitamin C.	Garnish, fries, stews, sauces, salads, vegetables, and potatoes.
Rosemary	Very aromatic light green leaf resembling pine needles. Plant stays healthy and strong, even in cold or very hot weather.	Lamb, fish, beef, sauces, soups, stews, salads, and marinades.
Sage	Pungent gray green herb with fuzzy oblong leaves.	Stuffing, meat, poultry, soups, stews, salads, and fish.
Savory	Fragrant herb of the mint family.	Salads, eggs, vegetables, stuffing, soups, meats, fish, and sauces.
Tarragon	Delicate green herb with small oblong leaves. Flavor is similar to mint and licorice.	Béarnaise sauce, vinegar, chicken, fish, salads, dressings, and eggs.
Thyme	Tiny brownish green leaf, very aromatic.	Soups, chowders, stocks, sauces, meats, poultry, and salad dressing.



Reading a Recipe

One of the biggest reasons why dishes prepared from written recipes go wrong is because the cook did not actually read the recipe.

We often scan recipes and make grocery lists from them, but we do not always gather all of the information we need. This is especially important when making something for the first time.

Following these simple steps, each time you read a recipe, can help you be more successful:

1. Sit Down

Sit down and simply read the recipe all the way through. Do not take notes or make lists. Just read.

2. Read It Again

Highlight any special steps that you might need to do in advance (e.g. bring cold ingredients to room temperature, soaking).

Pay attention to punctuation. For instance, “1 cup sifted flour” is not the same as “1 cup flour, sifted”.

Also take note of how the recipe writer wants you to measure; by weight or by volume. For example, 6 ounces of brown sugar is not the same as $\frac{3}{4}$ cup brown sugar.

3. Gather Equipment

Do this before you actually decide to cook the recipe, just in case you need to go out and purchase something that you do not have.

4. Gather Ingredients

Place all of the ingredients that you need in one area, whether it is in the pantry, freezer, or refrigerator. Anything that is missing will go on your grocery list. During this step, pay attention to ingredients that may need to be thawed or brought to room temperature.

5. Note the Order of Steps

Heat the oven and/or pans before you focus on anything else. This will save you time and ensure a better end result. Keep in mind that most recipe writers list the ingredients in the order that they will be used, typically from largest amount to smallest.

6. Triple Check Cooking Times and “Doneness Indicators”

Make sure to set a timer as a guideline. That being said, your senses can tell you more than a timer ever will. If the food should look or smell a certain way, use that to decide when it is done.

Typical Recipe Outline

The structure of a recipe is more like an instruction manual than a book. It is a set of steps that should be followed in a certain way to prepare a food or drink. Once you know how to read a recipe, you are well on your way to start cooking!

Most home cooking recipes look something like this:

Recipe Title

Yield or Number of servings (Will you need more than this or less than this?)

Prep time, Cook time, Total time (When do you need to start to have it done when you are ready to eat?)

(Sometimes) Difficulty level

Ingredients

Look here for the food ingredients you will need.

Pay attention to special instructions here that may not be mentioned in the directions (e.g. beans, drained and rinsed or carrots, chopped).

Some ingredients may be listed as optional or “to taste”.

(Sometimes) Equipment needed

Look here for any special kitchen utensils and cookware you might need to make the recipe.

Directions

Look here for the steps that should be completed, in a certain order, to make the recipe.

(Sometimes) Recipe Notes

Look here for tips, shortcuts, storage guidelines, and advice for making substitutions or modifications.

(Sometimes) Nutrition Information

Look here to find out the nutrition information of the recipe (usually per one serving).



Recipe Photo



Basic Knife Cuts

Try to cut food into pieces of the same (or very similar) shape and size. This helps the food cook evenly and makes the dish more enjoyable – both in appearance and in taste.

Standard Dice

What: To cut food into cubes, which can vary in size from small to large.

How:

1. Trim and peel the vegetables if needed.
2. Cut the slices to the thickness that you wish the finished dice to be.
3. Stack the slices on top of one another and make even parallel cuts, going lengthwise (long direction) to make sticks as thick as you want the dice to be.
4. Gather the sticks together and make cuts across the sticks (crosswise, or short direction). Try to make each slice about the same thickness.



Onion Dice

What: The result is the same as with dicing any other food – small or large cubes. The technique, however, is a little bit different.

How:

1. Cut off the “stem” end of the onion, keeping the “root” end intact.
2. Place the flat end that you just cut on the cutting board and cut the onion in half – going directly through the middle of the root – lengthwise.
3. Peel off the paper-like skin.
4. Take one half and make slices, going towards the “root” end. Do not cut all the way through the root end; about 80-90% of the way back.
5. Turn the onion 90° and make slices across the first slices.
6. Repeat Steps 4-5 with the other half if needed.



Slice

What: To cut flat, thin pieces.

How:

1. Trim and peel the vegetable if necessary. A slice can be removed from the bottom or side to make it sit flat on the cutting board.
2. Slowly cut down crosswise (short direction) or lengthwise (long direction) – from the top to bottom – to create pieces that are as thick or thin as you want them.



Rounds

What: This shape is made when you slice a vegetable that is naturally round, such as a carrot or potato.

How:

1. Trim and peel the vegetable if necessary. A slice can be removed from the bottom or side to make it sit flat on the cutting board.
2. Make parallel slicing cuts through the vegetable. Try to keep the thickness about the same with each cut.



Bias (Diagonal) Cut

What: To slice a food at an angle (usually about 45°). This cut is often used to prepare vegetables for stir-fries and other Asian-style dishes because the extra surface area allows the vegetable to cook more quickly. It can also be helpful to make raw foods, such as cucumbers, easier to dip.

How:

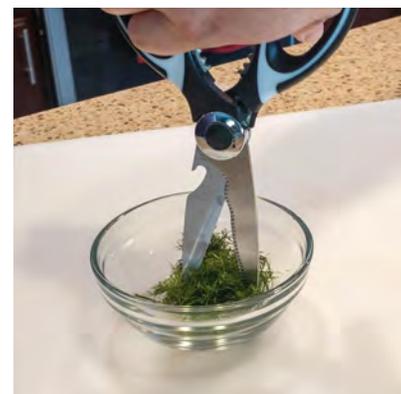
1. Trim and peel the vegetable if necessary
2. Hold the blade so that it is cutting through the food at an angle. The wider the angle the wider the cut surface will be.



Snip

What: To cut food (e.g. fresh herbs, green onions, dried fruit) into slices or small pieces with kitchen shears or food-only scissors.

How: Using short, quick strokes with your kitchen shears or food-only scissors, cut the item until it is as thin or as small as you want it to be.



Chop

What: To cut foods with into smaller pieces without a specific shape.

How:

1. Trim the root and stem ends and peel the vegetables if necessary.
2. Slice or cut through the vegetables at nearly regular intervals until the cuts are relatively uniform. This does not have to be a perfect cut, but all the pieces should be roughly the same size.



Mince (Fine Chop)

What: A very fine chop that works for many vegetables, especially garlic and herbs. When mincing herbs, rinse and dry well, and strip the leaves from the stems.

How:

1. Gather the food item(s) into a pile.
2. Coarsely chop the food into smaller pieces.
3. Place your guiding hand on the back of the knife to hold the tip of the knife in contact with the cutting board, over the pile of items.
4. Lower the knife firmly and rapidly, repeatedly cutting through the item. Continue cutting until the pieces are as small as you want.



Chiffonade (Ribbons)

What: To cut herbs, leafy greens, and other ingredients into very thin shreds.

How:

1. For large, loose leaves, roll individual leaves into tight cylinders before cutting. For smaller leaves, simply stack before cutting.
2. Make very thin slices to create fine shreds.



Julienne (Matchsticks) or Bâtonnet (Dipping Sticks)

What: To cut into long, rectangular strips. Julienne cuts are thin and short (left), while bâtonnet cuts are thick and long (right).

How:

1. Cut the item into a short or long rectangle – short for julienne, long for bâtonnet.
2. Slice lengthwise (long direction) as thin for or as thick as you want – thinner for julienne, thicker for bâtonnet.



