



2nd VIDEO edition

the **TIRED & HUNGRY**
Cook's Companion

DELICIOUS, HEALTHY FOOD FAST

JULES CLANCY

For GB, my love.

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2nd Edition.

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HOW TO USE THIS eCOOKBOOK

THANK YOU for supporting Stonesoup and picking up a copy of 'The Tired & Hungry Cook's Companion 2nd Edition'. Here are a few tips to make sure you make the most of your purchase.

1. Save it in multiple locations.

Work computer, home computer, smart phone and ipad. You will always have these recipes at your fingertips. Perfect for last minute planning or for when you find yourself in the supermarket stuck for what to cook for dinner.

2. Find exactly what you want with the search function.

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

3. Jump straight to your chosen page with the hyperlinks.

My favourite feature. Just click on the links and be taken instantly to your chosen page. The bookmarks help navigation as well.

4. Be inspired by browsing the interactive index(es).

There are indexes to browse by the seasons, your mood, different cuisines, and recipe type.

5. Make the most of the variations.

Each recipe has at least 4 suggestions for alternatives to suit different dietary requirements. So if you think a recipe might not be exactly right for you, make sure you check out the variation suggestions. The variations are also there to keep things interesting. If you enjoy a particular recipe, challenge yourself next time to try one of the different options.

6. Don't forget about the bonus section!

This second edition contains a special bonus section with the top 3 quick and easy ways to get out of your food rut. Includes an ingredient substitute 'cheat sheet', recipes for my 10 favourite 5-minute sauces and my 3 most used template recipes that are my 'secret weapon' for keeping my cooking interesting and fun.

THE STORY OF THE TIRED & HUNGRY COOKS COMPANION

2nd edition

One of the biggest challenges we all face when it comes to cooking is being tired at the end of a long day. And hungry. And having to turn around and get something on the table that is not only fast and healthy, but tastes good too.

Bit of a tall order. Right?

The Tired & Hungry Cooks Companion is designed to come to the rescue when the 'what to have for dinner' question crosses your mind. Whether that's as you're shutting down your computer for the day, wandering aimlessly around the supermarket, or staring into your fridge.

There are 5 minute recipes for when you need to have eaten, like an hour ago. There are pantry recipes for when you couldn't be bothered stopping to pick something up. And there are one pot wonders to keep cleaning up time to a minimum. Plus a whole host of other meals designed to be made in 15 minutes or less.

This second edition has 25 completely new recipes bringing the total to 120. Each recipe comes with at least 4 variations to make sure you'll be able to adapt them to suit what you have on hand. And more importantly, to give you ideas to add variety to your everyday cooking.

It also contains a new Bonus section specifically targeted towards keeping you from getting stuck in a food rut. With 3 quick and easy ways to keep your cooking fresh and interesting.

If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Email me: jules@thestonesoup.com.

With love,
Jules x

THE STONESOUP PHILOSOPHY

Stonesoup is about fresh, healthy, delicious food.

Food that tastes good and is also good for us.

The fact that most of the recipes in this book contain 5 ingredients and (with the exception of the 'do other things' chapter) can be made in minutes is a bonus.

As I am constantly discovering, when you strip food back to the essentials and let the ingredients speak for themselves, it can only mean good things from a flavour perspective.

Throw in a healthy dose of veggies and it's all good things when it comes to healthy eating.

Don't let anyone, especially those cheffy types, convince you that you need 'layers of flavour' and an ingredients list as long as your arm to create delicious food. That's one style of cooking that can taste great if someone else is preparing it and cleaning up.

For home cooking, I believe that keeping the number of ingredients and the steps involved to a minimum is where it's at.

But don't let the simplicity of these recipes fool you into thinking they aren't going to taste amazing. If they didn't make my taste buds sing, I wouldn't be here.



5-MINUTE *suppers*

5-MINUTE suppers

Sometimes you just need something, anything and you need it like 5 minutes ago.

This can be a dangerous time when a little 'snack' from a box of crackers can mysteriously turn into most of the packet being empty. So much for a healthy dinner.

That's where these 5-minute recipes come to the rescue.

- :: rice & greens
- :: warm butter bean salad
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rice & greens



RICE & GREENS

There's a classic Cuban dish of rice and beans which was everywhere when I visited. This is a 'fresher' healthier take. If you can get spinach frozen into little 'bricks' rather than one big block, it's much better because it defrosts much more quickly. If you're stuck with a big frozen chunk of spinach, it may need a little spin in the microwave to speed up the defrosting process.

serves 2

2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
1 can coconut milk (400mL / 1.5 cups)
1 packet frozen spinach (250g / 9oz), defrosted
1 packet par-cooked brown rice (250g / 9oz)

1. Heat a little oil in a medium saucepan. Cook garlic on a medium heat for about 30 seconds or until starting to brown.
2. Add coconut milk, spinach and rice. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 2 minutes or until everything is hot.
3. Taste. Season.

VARIATIONS

no coconut milk? – replace with almond or soy milk – they'll be a little more watery so be prepared to simmer longer to thicken up.

can't find par-cooked brown rice? – most supermarkets now have 'pouches' of cooked rice but feel free to cook your own brown rice, just boil in water until just tender. Drain.

rice alternatives – risoni (rice shaped pasta), cooked short pasta, canned beans, canned chickpeas + see below.

lower GI / slow carb – replace rice with cooked lentils, canned chickpeas, cooked split peas or quinoa.

carnivore - stir fry some sliced chicken breast or thigh fillets in the pan before adding the other ingredients & proceeding from step 1.

fresh greens – replace frozen spinach with sliced kale, cavolo nero spinach, chard or silverbeet. Add with the garlic and cook until wilted before adding the other ingredients.

video

warm butter bean salad



WARM BUTTER BEAN SALAD

Canned legumes are one of my favourite ingredients because they're packed with veggie protein AND they're pretty much ready to eat. All you need to do is warm them up and you've got a super satisfying and comforting dinner. These butter beans fried with garlic and rosemary also make a brilliant starter without the salad.

serves 2

1 can butter beans (400g / 14oz), drained
1 clove garlic, finely sliced
1 sprig rosemary, leaves picked
1 tablespoon sherry or wine vinegar
4 large handfuls washed salad leaves

1. Heat a little oil in a small pan. Fry beans, garlic and rosemary on a medium high heat, stirring every now and then.
2. Meanwhile combine vinegar with 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl. Season and toss in the leaves to coat.
3. When the beans are browned, scatter over the leaves and sprinkle with sea salt flakes.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – serve layered with finely sliced prosciutto.

different legumes – replace the butter beans with other white beans or chickpeas.

hot! – Replace the rosemary with a teaspoon of dried chilli or a few finely sliced fresh red chillies.

more substantial – serve as a side to grilled lamb cutlets or steak. Or with a soft poached egg on top.

video

A top-down view of a dark grey plate containing a meal. The meal consists of a sunny-side-up fried egg with a bright yellow yolk, a portion of brown rice, and fresh green herbs like basil. The plate is garnished with small, golden-brown fried bits. To the right of the plate, a silver fork with a light-colored handle rests on a brown paper napkin. The entire scene is set on a light-colored wooden surface.

tabbouleh fried egg

TABBOULEH FRIED EGG

It can be easy to forget about eggs as a dinner food given their association with breakfast. They're one of the cheapest and most complete sources of protein. And they're super quick to cook which makes them ideal for quick healthy dinners too!

serves 2

1 tablespoon lemon juice

250g (9oz) cooked brown rice (from a packet is great)

1 bunch mint, leaves picked

2-4 eggs

4-6 tablespoons natural yoghurt

1. Heat a small frying pan on a medium high heat. Meanwhile combine lemon juice with 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
2. Toss rice and mint into the dressing.
3. Add a generous glug of oil to the hot pan. Crack eggs into the oil.
4. Fry eggs for about 2 minutes or until the whites are no longer 'snotty'. Spooning a little hot oil over the top can help.
5. Serve eggs on a bed of the brown rice salad with yoghurt on top.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – fry some chopped bacon and toss through the tabbouleh. Then fry your eggs in the bacon fat. Yum!

low GI / slow carb – replace the rice with cooked quinoa or lentils.

vegan – Replace the yoghurt with hummus and replace the fried egg with a generous handful of brazil nuts or almonds.

dairy-free – Replace the yoghurt with hummus or a tahini lemon sauce (3 tablespoons each lemon juice, tahini, water).

different herbs – use any combo of mint, parsley, basil or coriander (cilantro).

video

Spiced couscous with broccoli



SPICED COUSCOUS WITH BROCCOLI

Couscous is brilliant for fast easy meals. And it's perfect for 'kettle cooking' because all you need is some boiling water and a little time. Feel free to play around with the accompaniments.

serves 1

1/2 head broccoli

50g-75g (1/4 - 1/3 cup) couscous

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1/2 teaspoon chilli flakes or powder, optional
handful almonds

1. Pop your kettle on to boil.
2. Chop broccoli into tiny trees about the size of a grape & place in a heatproof container.
3. Add couscous, cumin and chilli. Drizzle with olive oil. Season.
4. Cover with boiling water. Top with a lid or foil. Stand for about 5 minutes.
5. Top with almonds & fluff couscous with your fork.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free – replace the couscous with 1/2 can chickpeas or lentils. Or use a few handfuls of pre cooked quinoa.

different veg – replace the broccoli with frozen peas or finely sliced fresh veg. Snow peas, sugarsnap peas, celery & carrots are all good.

different spices – replace the cumin and chilli with curry powder or garam marsala for a more indian vibe.

tomato & basil – replace the broccoli with halved cherry tomatoes and serve topped with a handful of torn fresh basil leaves.

nut-free – just skip the almonds or replace them with a few tablespoons finely chopped red onion added at the same time as the broccoli.

higher protein - add in a handful of torn cooked chicken breast or a drained can of tuna.

richer – add in a generous knob of butter as well as or instead of the olive oil.

video



warm salmon salad

WARM SALMON SALAD

For me this is about as 'comforting' as food can get. It's also about as easy as well. The only downside is that it isn't the prettiest dish, but trust me, your taste buds don't care about superficial looks.

serves 2

1 medium can salmon (200g / 7oz), drained

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained

1 tablespoon rice vinegar or lemon juice

1. Heat a little olive oil in a frying pan / skillet.
2. Add chickpeas and stir fry for a minute or so to warm them. Add salmon and break up with a fork.
3. Meanwhile, combine vinegar or lemon juice in a bowl with 2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
4. Toss hot salmon and chickpeas into the dressing.

VARIATIONS

prettier – toss in a few handfuls of salad leaves or flat leaf parsley.

budget – replace salmon with tuna. And think about using home cooked chickpeas instead of canned.

vegetarian – skip the salmon and serve warm chickpeas with goats cheese or parmesan.

vegan – replace the salmon with grilled veg from the deli or a jar. Red peppers or eggplant are both great.

no canned chickpeas? – replace with other cooked or canned legumes, you'll need about 250g (9oz).

short on time – skip the cooking and toss the drained chickpeas and salmon into the dressing.



video

big-ass salad



BIG-ASS SALAD

The most frequent thing I make for dinner when the weather is warmer is what I like to call a 'big-ass salad' - a name I stole from Leo Babauta of Zen Habits fame. I love having something light and quick up my sleeve. There are literally thousands of variations of this salad so it's something you won't get bored with either.

serves 2

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
3-4 handfuls salad leaves, washed and dried
1 tub cottage cheese
large handful almonds

1. Combine vinegar or lemon juice and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl. Season.
2. Toss leaves gently in the dressing using clean hands.
3. Top salad with cottage cheese and almonds.

VARIATIONS

can't find sherry vinegar? – try rice wine vinegar, lemon juice, lime juice, red/white wine vinegar, champagne vinegar, or balsamic.

leaves – pretty much anything you like. Watercress, baby spinach, all lettuce, rocket (arugula), basil, parsley, mint, lovage, baby kale, baby cavolo nero, brussels sprouts leaves.

cottage cheese alternatives – avocado, smoked chicken, tuna, salmon, ricotta, sardines, smoked salmon, prosciutto, cooked bacon, boiled eggs, parmesan, goats cheese.

nut-free – replace almonds with diced red onion, halved cherry tomatoes, finely sliced ripe grapes, shaved pear or seeds.

video

A close-up photograph of a white ceramic plate containing a meal. The main component is a roasted chicken leg, which is dark brown and glistening. To the left of the chicken is a generous portion of mixed green salad, including various leafy greens and a prominent red leaf. A single, bright yellow slice of lemon is placed in the foreground, partially overlapping the salad. The plate is set on a light-colored, textured paper napkin, which is placed on a dark, rustic wooden table. In the background, a silver fork and a knife with a light-colored handle are visible, resting on the table. The overall lighting is bright and natural, highlighting the textures of the food.

takeaway chicken salad

TAKEAWAY CHICKEN SALAD

Sometimes convenience food is the only option. But that doesn't mean you necessarily have to settle for all junk. I've included this 'recipe' to give you ideas for putting a healthy spin on takeaway food. Something as small as skipping the chips and picking up some salad leaves can make all the difference.

serves 1

1/4 BBQ chicken

1 small bag washed salad leaves

1/2 lemon

1. Serve chicken with leaves. Squeeze over lemon as you like. Too easy.

VARIATIONS

home made chicken – Prefer to cook your chicken at home? Try the [simple roast chook](#) recipe.

pescetarian - get a lovely piece of fish from your favourite fish & chip joint and hold the chips. You may need more lemon with this.

vegan / vegetarian – buy a commercial 'veggie burger' and eat with salad instead of the burger bun.

decadent – serve with some good quality mayo as well.

veg – serve the chicken with raw veg instead of the leaves.

need a proper dressing? – either make your own by combining 1 tablespoon lemon juice with 1-2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a small jar. Or use a commercial salad dressing – just choose one that doesn't have added sugar and preferable using olive oil instead of cheap vegetable oil.

hot! – serve with your favourite chilli sauce or chilli oil.

video

hummus & veg



HUMMUS & VEG

Hummus is great for healthy lunches because chickpeas are high in protein and iron. And the good news is there are lots of good commercial hummus on the market so it's a really quick and easy lunch option.

serves 1

1/2 cup or more hummus

1 bunch baby bok choy, well washed

1. Serve hummus with bok choy for dipping.

VARIATIONS

different veg – feel free to go crazy here. Raw asparagus, red capsicum (bell peppers), broccoli, snow peas, lettuce leaves are all great.

warm lunch – serve hummus with warm roast or grilled veg (reheated in the microwave)/

carnivore – brown some minced beef (ground beef) or lamb in a hot pan until well cooked. And serve with hummus and veg.

more substantial – serve with a handful or two of roasted nuts. Pine nuts are particularly good with hummus.

home made hummus – just whizz a can of chickpeas with 3 tablespoons each canning liquid, lemon juice and tahini and 1-2 cloves garlic.

video

bachelorette eggs



BACHELORETTE EGGS

My dear friend, the lovely Mel, was a big fan of microwaved scrambled eggs as a quick single girl meal, especially after a big night out on the town. It's also a brilliant quick, healthy lunch. Eggs will keep in your work fridge for weeks so are a great backup lunch plan, especially in Winter when you're craving something warm and filling that won't leave you bloated.

serves 2

3 eggs

*small handful baby spinach or parsley leaves,
optional*

1. Break eggs into a small bowl. Season.
2. Microwave for about 90 seconds, stirring every 15-30 seconds until the eggs are almost cooked.
3. Serve with leaves on top.

VARIATIONS

cheesy eggs – toss in a handful of grated parmesan, ricotta or cheddar with the raw egg.

corny eggs – toss in a handful of drained canned corn kernels.

green eggs – serve with pesto on top.

vegan – warm a drained can of chickpeas in the microwave with a little extra virgin olive oil.

pescetarian – add a little smoked salmon in with the eggs.

carnivore – serve with finely sliced prosciutto.



video

pesto couscous



PESTO COUSCOUS

The beauty of couscous lies in how quickly and easily it cooks. Just pour over boiling water and stand for a few minutes - it doesn't get much easier than that! It also helps that it's super comforting and filling as well.

serves 2

1 punnet cherry tomatoes, halves
1 cup couscous
small bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves picked
large handful shaved parmesan
4-6 tablespoons pesto

1. Bring your kettle or some water to the boil.
2. Combine tomatoes and couscous in a heat-proof bowl. Season generously. Pour over 1 cup boiling water and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil.
3. Cover with cling film. Stand for 2-3 minutes.
4. Fluff couscous with a fork and toss in parsley. Serve with parmesan and pesto on top.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – serve as a side to BBQ or roast chicken.

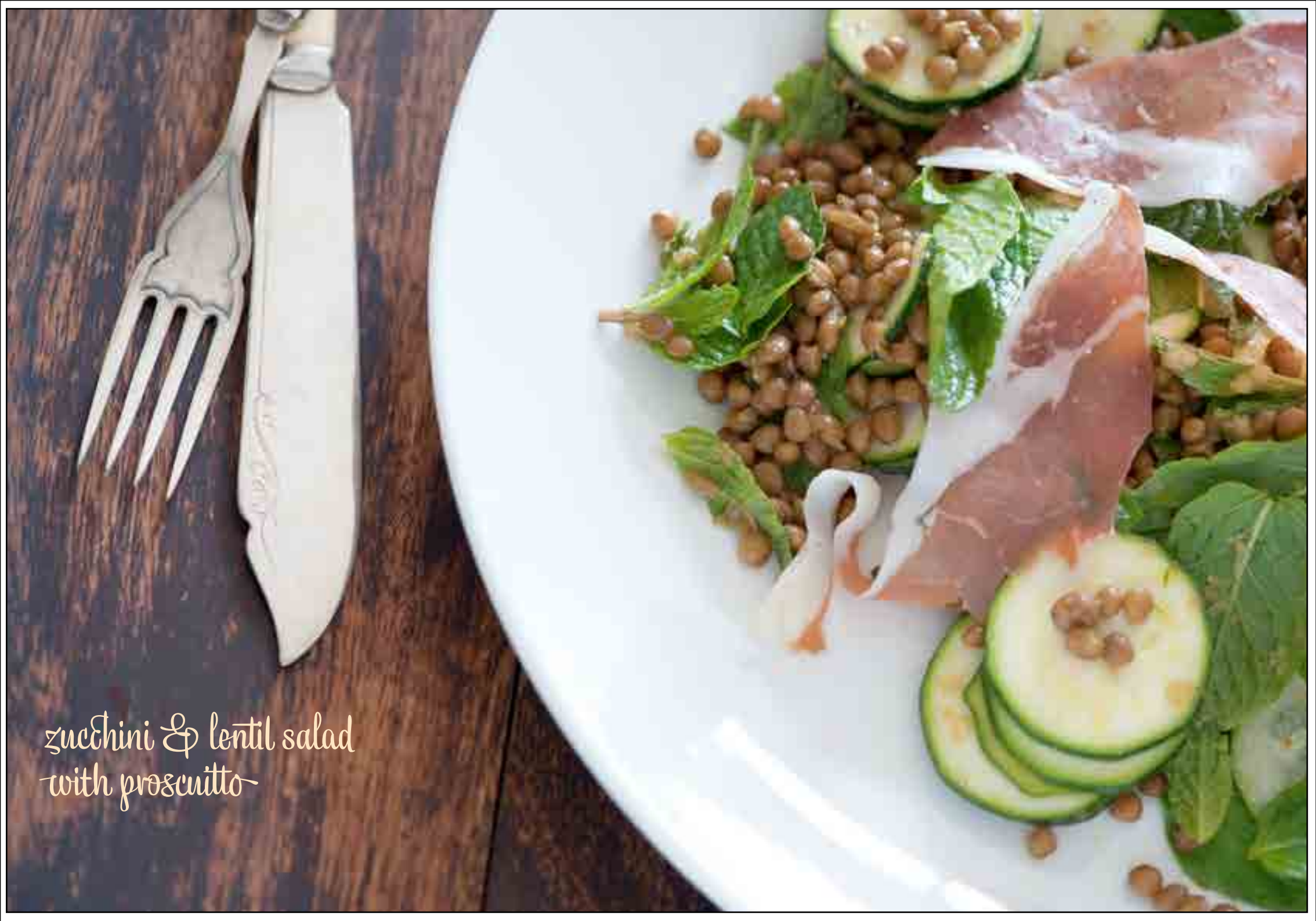
nut-free – replace pesto with basil oil.

vegan / dairy-free – Use a vegan pesto (whizz a bunch of basil, 1 clove garlic and 2 large handfuls of nuts until finely chopped then stir in 6-8 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil) and replace the parmesan with sliced almonds or brazil nuts.

different herbs – use mint or basil as well as or instead of the parsley. Baby spinach or other salad leaves could also be used.



video



*zucchini & lentil salad
with prosciutto*

ZUCCHINI & LENTIL SALAD WITH PROSCUITTO

If you haven't ever tried shaved raw zucchini (courgettes) in a salad you're in for a real treat. Fresh and crunchy, these little zucchini coins make a lovely contrast to the earthiness of the lentils.

Vegetarians, please don't be put off by the proscuitto, it really is an optional extra.

serves 2

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
1 can lentils (400g / 14oz), drained
1 zucchini, finely sliced into coins
1/2 bunch mint, leaves picked
3-4 slices proscuitto, torn, optional

1. Combine vinegar with 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in the bowl. Season with salt & pepper.
2. Stir drained lentils into the dressing and then add the zucchini and mint. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
3. Divide between two plates and drape proscuitto over artfully, if using.

VARIATIONS

vegan – skip the proscuitto or replace with some flaked or sliced toasted almonds or toasted pine nuts.

vegetarian – replace proscuitto with some torn fresh mozzarella or bocconcini OR shave over some good quality parmesan cheese.

lentil-free – replace the lentils with fresh peas.

warm salad – heat your lentils in a pan with a little olive oil and then proceed as per the recipe.

no canned lentils? – cook your own. Just simmer dried lentils in water like you would pasta. They'll take between 15-25 minutes depending on the lentils.

video



perfect poached eggs

PERFECT POACHED EGGS

Baby kale leaves, picked from the garden while I wait for my water to boil is my current favourite egg accompaniment but it changes all the time. Baby spinach or other greens would make a good substitute. Or if your kale is a little older and tougher, I find it's best to finely shred it or cook it quickly in a pan until just wilted.

serves 1

3-4 tablespoons white vinegar

2 eggs

handful baby kale or salad leaves

truffle oil, optional

1. Bring a small saucepan of water to the boil. Add a big splash (3-4 tablespoons) of white vinegar and reduce the heat until it is at a rapid simmer.
2. Break eggs into a small bowl and slide each into the water.
3. Simmer gently for 3 minutes or until cooked to your liking. Meanwhile place kale on a serving plate and make your tea.
4. Remove eggs from the water with a slotted spoon and pat dry with a clean tea towel.
5. Serve eggs on top of the kale seasoned generously with salt and fresh pepper. Drizzle with truffle oil if you're in the mood for a little breakfast luxury.

VARIATIONS

decadent - skip the truffle oil and serve eggs with a generous dollop or two of hollandaise sauce.

florentine - wilt a few handfuls of baby spinach in a small frying pan while your eggs poach. Serve eggs on top of wilted greens with shaved parmesan on top.

carnivore - serve eggs with some super fine slices of prosciutto or jamon draped over the top.

egg-free / vegan - no where near the same, but try serving half an avocado on top of some baby kale or other salad greens. It will need lots of salt & pepper and a splash of lemon juice.



video



white bean & tomato soup

WHITE BEAN & TOMATO SOUP

This soup began life when I was trying to think up quick lunches that could be prepared at work using a sink and a microwave. And while it sounds so simple to be almost boring, don't let the simplicity fool you. There's enough flavour to keep even the fussiest food lover happy. Even better, you can play around with it in so many ways. See the list below for some suggestions to get your imagination started.

serves 1-2

*1 can white beans (400g / 14oz)
1 jar tomato pasta sauce
parmesan cheese shavings, to serve*

1. Combine beans, the bean canning liquid and the tomato in a heat proof bowl (or 2 bowls).
2. Microwave for 3 – 4 minutes or until very hot. Alternatively heat in a saucepan on the stove until hot.
3. Taste. Season.
4. Serve with parmesan shaved over the top, if using.

video

VARIATIONS

herby - a few fresh basil leaves, chopped chives or flat leaf parsley sprinkled over the top will add lovely fragrance and freshness.

hot soup! - a teaspoon or two of your favourite chilli powder or dried chilli will keep the hot heads happy.

carnivore - if you're making this at home, you could brown some crumbled pork sausages in a pan before adding the remaining ingredients and bringing to a simmer. If at work, you could stir in some cooked shredded BBQ chicken.

dairy-free / vegan - skip the parmesan and serve with a very generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil instead. Or serve with finely grated brazil nuts (using a microplane grater).

can't find white beans? - any canned legumes will work such as chickpeas, butter beans, red kidney beans or even lentils.

bean-free - replace the canned beans with 2-3 sliced zucchinis and a cup of water. Simmer for 7-8 minutes or until the zucchini is tender.



mixed bean & avocado salad

MIXED BEAN & AVOCADO SALAD

Avocados are heaven sent for vegans. Rich in vitamins and oils, they're a great way to make a filling meat-free meal in a flash. I usually buy at least one avocado during my weekly shop and make a salad like this for lunch at least once a week.

serves 2

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
1 can mixed beans (400g / 14oz), drained
1 avocado
small handful raw almonds
small bunch chives, chopped

1. Combine vinegar with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
2. Toss in the drained beans.
3. Scoop the avocado into bite sized chunks and add to the bean mixture.
4. Toss in the almonds and sprinkle over the chopped chives.

VARIATIONS

different beans - mixed beans aren't the most attractive beans, feel free to replace with canned chickpeas or black beans.

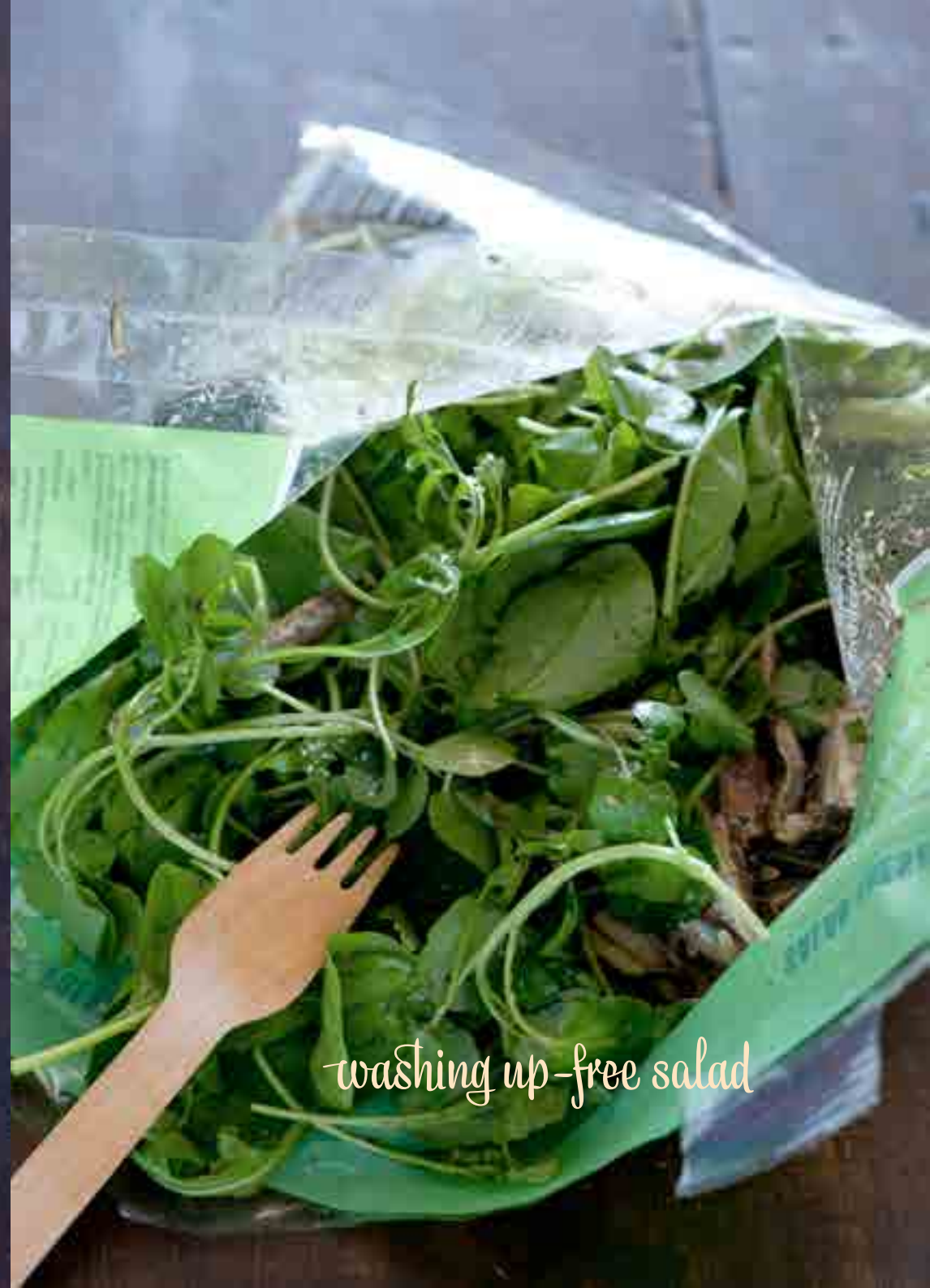
bean-free - skip the beans and replace with 2 large handfuls of washed baby spinach or other salad leaves.

carnivore - some finely chopped crisp bacon would be lovely in place of the nuts.

nut-free - just leave the almonds out or replace with some chopped celery for crunch.

mexican - there's something about avocado that makes me think of Mexican food. To keep in tune with that vibe, replace the chives with fresh coriander leaves (cilantro) and use lime juice instead of the vinegar. A little chilli would work as well.

video



washing up-free salad

WASHING UP-FREE SALAD

This is my go-to lunch when I can't think of what to eat. Tuna in chilli oil is easily my most commonly used fish. But sometimes I like to mix it up with a bit of canned salmon or even cute little sardines canned in olive oil, like I did here.

When I'm in the mood for a vegetarian version I swap the fish for drained canned chickpeas. Delish!

serves 1

1 can sardines, preferably in olive oil
1 bag washed salad leaves
1 lemon
small handful pinenuts, optional

1. Drain some of the oil from the fish, leaving a little to help dress the leaves.
2. Open salad bag, add fish and a generous squeeze of lemon to the bag.
3. Toss in pinenuts, if using. Season with a little pepper if you have any. Eat from the bag.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan - replace the fish with a handful of drained canned chickpeas.

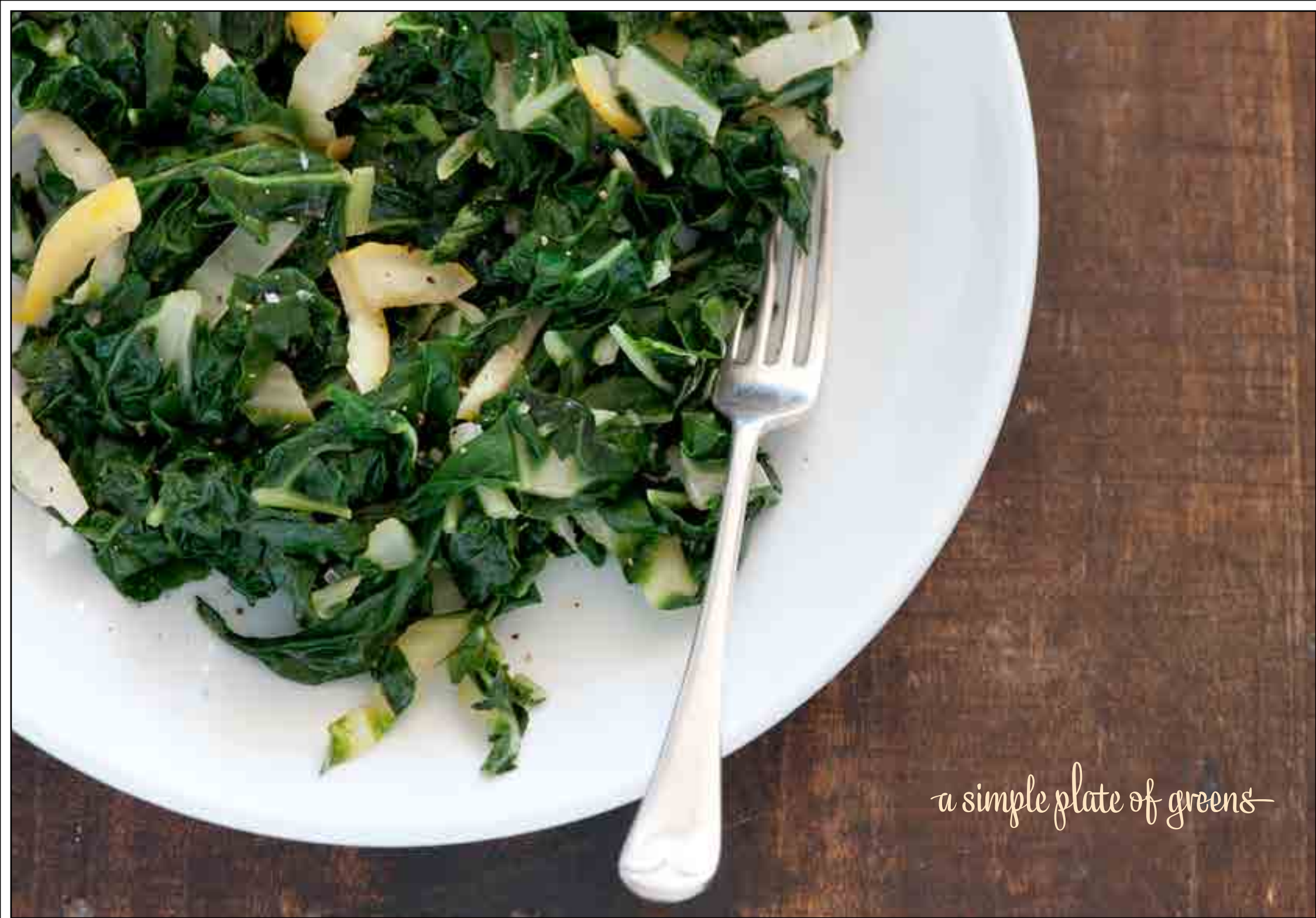
different fish - pretty much all canned fish work well in a salad like this. So feel free to play around with tuna or salmon. I've also been known to make it with smoked canned oysters or mussels - not for everyone, I know.

carnivore - shred some shop-bought BBQ chicken instead of the fish. Or try it with sliced roast beef from the deli.

fancy - replace the sardines with some sliced smoked salmon.

nut-free - just skip the pinenuts. You won't miss them.

video



a simple plate of greens

A SIMPLE PLATE OF GREENS

There's a Grant Lee Buffalo song called Dixie Drug Store with a lyric that goes something like, 'I wouldn't be the least surprised if you were hungry for a plate of greens...' I love the song and often sing it to myself when I'm cooking up some 'greens'. It's one of my go-to meals when I'm home alone. Sometimes I add some protein in the form of a fried egg or some cheese, but mostly it's just the greens.

serves 1

knob of butter, optional

*1 bunch greens such as spinach, kale,
cavalo nero, collard greens or silverbeet*

1-2 cloves garlic, finely sliced

squeeze lemon

1. Heat a large frying pan on a medium high heat.
2. Wash greens, leaving water on the leaves and slice finely crosswise.
3. Add a drizzle of olive oil and the butter, if using to the pan then add the greens and garlic.
4. Cook, stirring occasionally for 3-4 minutes or until the greens have wilted and are tender.
5. Remove from the heat and stir in the preserved lemon and squeeze over lemon juice. Taste and season.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – skip the butter and up the olive oil. Or for something different try macadamia oil.

higher protein – serve with a softly poached egg or crumble over some goats cheese or ricotta.

beets & greens - stir in some roast or drained canned beets to warm up at the end.

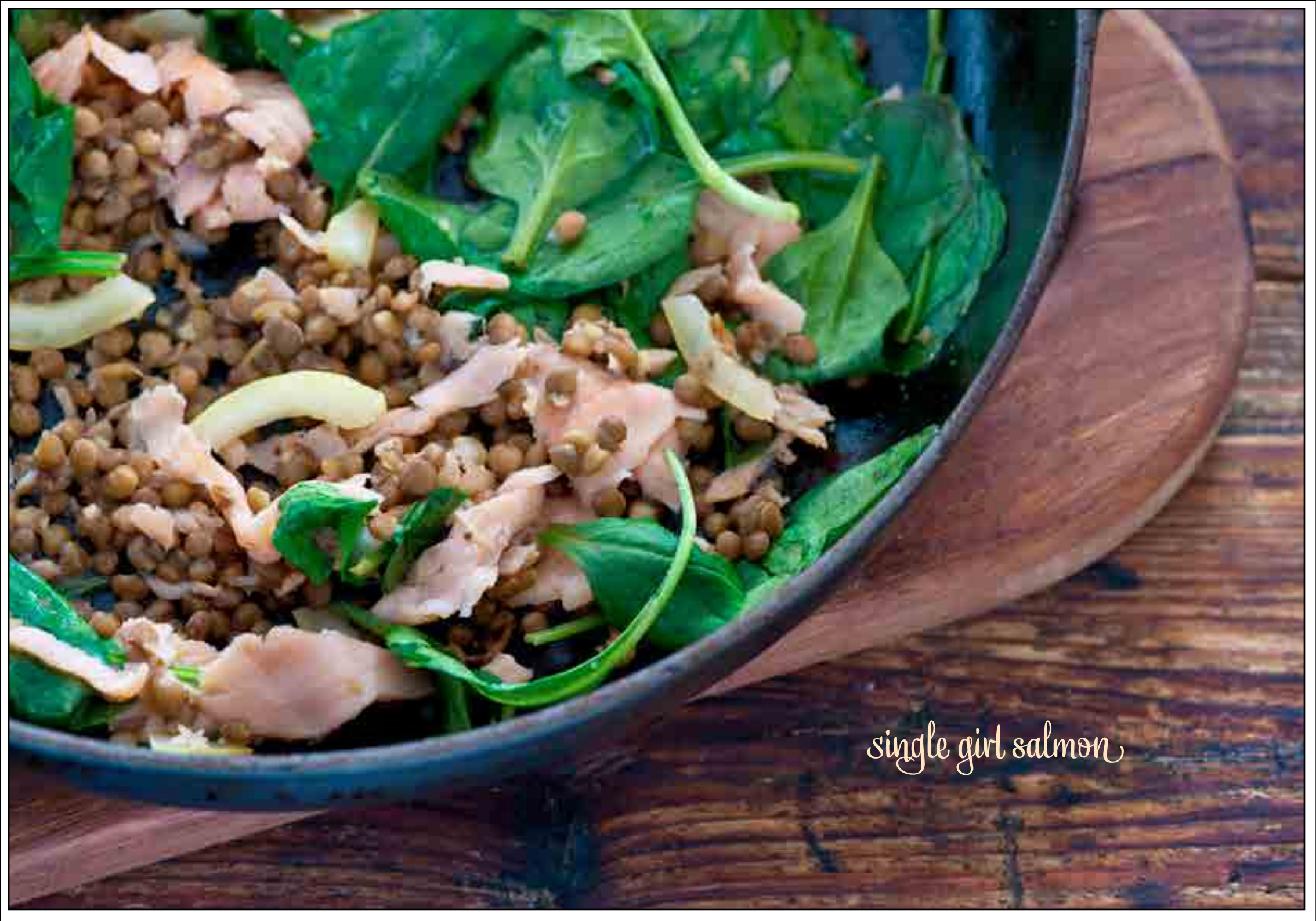
green on greens – serve with chunks of avocado on top.

chilli greens – add in a little fresh or dried chilli with the garlic.

asian greens – use boy choy or other asian greens and instead of the preserved lemon, drizzle with a little soy sauce. Chilli and garlic wouldn't go astray here either.

carnivore – serve as a side dish to a hearty steak OR crumble some sausages into the pan and brown before adding the greens.

video



single girl salmon

SINGLE GIRL SALMON

Inspired by Amanda Hesser and Ginia Bellafante

You don't need to be single, eating alone, or even a girl to enjoy this simple supper. So please don't be put off if you don't fall into those categories. If you'd prefer to use fresh salmon, that's fine too. Or turn it into a real pantry meal and use canned salmon or tuna.

serves 1

90g (3oz) smoked salmon, torn
1/2 can lentils, drained
1/4 preserved lemon, finely sliced
handfuls baby spinach
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

1. Heat a frying pan or skillet on a medium high heat.
2. Add a little olive oil and add salmon chunks. Cook for a minutes or until salmon starts to colour.
3. Add drained lentils and continue to cook and stir until lentils are hot.
4. Add spinach and half the preserved lemon and turn off the heat.
5. When the spinach starts to wilt, stir in the vinegar. Taste and season, adding more preserved lemon if you like.

video

VARIATIONS

fresh fish - skip the smoked salmon and pan fry some fresh salmon, instead.

pantry meal - replace the smoked salmon with canned salmon or tuna.

carnivore - single girl sausage may sound a little dubious, but that's no reason not to try. Pan fry some sliced chorizo to replace the fish.

vegan - try single girl mushrooms. Pan fry a generous handful of slice mushrooms instead of using the salmon.

vegetarian - I like the sound of 'single girl goats cheese'. Just serve the lentils with some lovely fresh goats cheese crumbled over the top.

no preserved lemon? - just replace it with the zest of 1/2 lemon. Or try making your own using [this recipe](#).

no canned lentils? - Feel free to substitute in home cooked lentils. Just simmer green or brown lentils in water like pasta until al dente (15-25 mins) drain, and you're good to go.



cabbage with blue cheese

CABBAGE WITH BLUE CHEESE

Cabbage is such an unassuming vegetable, but I've come to love it more and more over the last few months. First I became addicted to shaved cabbage salads but now I've moved on to a quick saute in a hot pan. To make it more of a main course dish, I've scattered a little blue cheese over the hot cabbage so it melts to form a lovely cheesy sauce. Just the thing for a cold winter night.

serves 1-2

*1/4 cabbage, shredded
squeeze of lemon juice
75g (3oz) creamy blue cheese
small handful walnuts*

1. Heat a large fry pan over a medium high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons of olive oil and stir fry cabbage for about 5 minutes or until cabbage is just tender but still a little crunchy. Reduce the heat if the cabbage starts to burn or brown too quickly.
3. Remove from the heat. Squeeze over a little lemon and then crumble over chunks of cheese. Scatter with walnuts and serve in the pan so the cheese melts down with the residual heat and forms an oozy sauce.

VARIATIONS

nut-free – just skip the walnuts and increase the cheese a little.

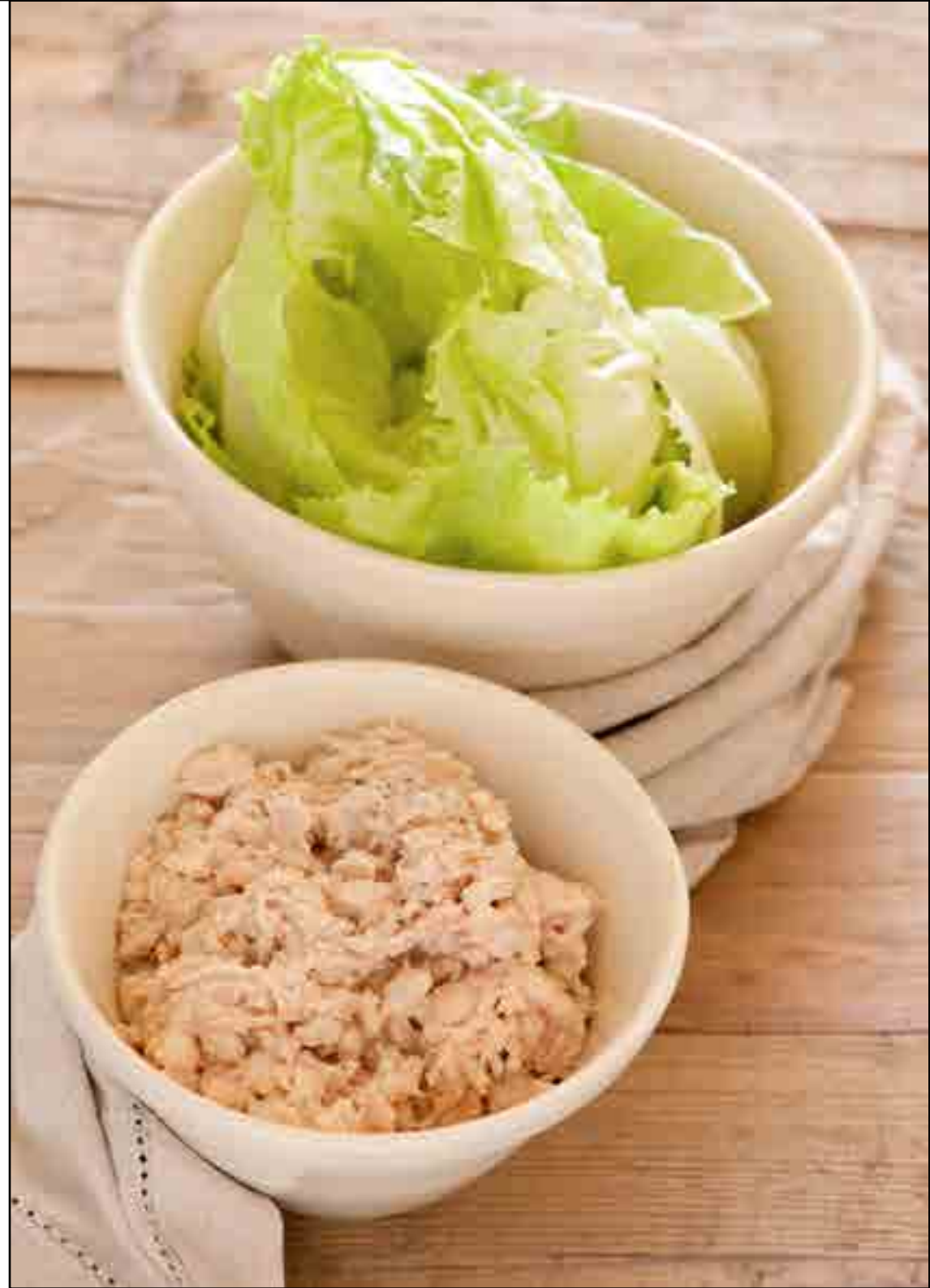
goats cheese – replace the blue cheese with a lovely soft goats cheese or even some ricotta.

carnivore – serve as a side dish to roast lamb.

dairy-free – skip the cheese and replace with a drained can of white beans.

video

white bean & tuna wraps



WHITE BEAN & TUNA WRAPS

These are a great grain-free alternative to the ubiquitous sandwich for lunch.

serves 1-2

1 can tuna in oil (185g / 5oz)

1 can white beans (400g / 14oz), drained

4 tablespoons lemon juice

4 - 6 leaves iceberg lettuce, washed

1. Mash tuna and oil from the can with a fork. Add drained beans and mash until you have a chunky puree.
2. Stir in lemon juice and season well.
3. To serve, scoop some white bean mixture into the lettuce leaf, wrap it up and enjoy.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – brown some ground (minced) beef or pork in a frying pan and use that in place of the tuna.

vegan – Replace the tuna with a small avocado and spice it up with a pinch or two of chilli powder.

vegetarian – Replace the tuna with some sharp creamy goats cheese or some finely grated parmesan and a little extra virgin olive oil.

bean-free – Replace the white beans with some finely grated raw cauliflower OR broccoli.

chinese – Replace the tuna with shredded crispy duck from a good Chinese BBQ shop and serve with some hoisin sauce for dipping.

chicken – Skip the tuna and use shredded BBQ chicken from your favourite take away instead.

video



SUPER EASY *salads*

SUPER EASY *salads*

For fast, healthy meals, it's hard to go past a good salad.

Just whip up a simple dressing, toss in some leaves or veg and add a little protein and you're ready to eat.

- :: [warm mushroom & goats cheese salad](#)
- :: [chickpea & yohgurt salad](#)
- :: [warm chicken salad](#)
- :: [pea & ham salad](#)
- :: [big vegan salad](#)
- :: [BBQ chook & butter bean salad](#)
- :: [ham & tomato salad](#)
- :: [raw broccoli & bacon salad](#)
- :: [beef & balsamic salad with ricotta](#)
- :: [brocco-slaw](#)
- :: [fast roast tomato salad](#)

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warm mushroom & goats cheese salad



WARM MUSHROOM & GOATS CHEESE SALAD

When the weather is cooler - and even when it isn't - I love a warm salad like this. It's light and fresh but the warm ingredients ensure it feels substantial enough for dinner. This is one of those recipes with endless possibilities for variations. I've listed a few ideas to get you started but feel free to use your imagination.

serves 2

3-4 large field mushrooms, sliced
1 tablespoon sherry or wine vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce, optional
3-4 handfuls salad leaves, washed and dried
100g (3.5oz) soft goats cheese

1. Heat a little oil in a pan and cook mushrooms over a medium heat until golden brown and tender.
2. Meanwhile, combine vinegar, soy and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl. Taste and season.
3. Toss leaves gently in the dressing. Place leaves on a serving plate.
4. Top dressed leaves with the warm mushrooms and scatter over the goats cheese.

VARIATIONS

mushroom alternatives – chicken breasts, chicken thighs, steak, lamb fillet, roast veg, eggplant (aubergine), halloumi, tofu, cooked or canned lentils, cooked quinoa, canned chickpeas, canned beans.

vinegar – Sherry vinegar, rice wine vinegar, lemon juice, lime juice, red/white wine vinegar, champagne vinegar, balsamic.

soy-free – skip the soy sauce and be more generous with the salt. Or try a dash of fish sauce instead.

leaves – pretty much anything you like. Watercress, baby spinach, all lettuce, rocket (arugula), basil, parsley, mint, lovage, baby kale, baby cavolo nero, brussels sprouts leaves.

goats cheese alternatives – shaved parmesan, marinated feta, ricotta.

dairy-free – replace goats cheese with finely sliced ripe grapes, shaved pear, roast almonds or other nuts, seeds, toasted breadcrumbs.

video

Chickpea & yoghurt salad



CHICKPEA & YOGHURT SALAD

I love using yoghurt as an ingredient. It adds lovely creaminess without being too rich and heavy. Make sure you use a good quality full-fat yoghurt.

serves 2

3 tablespoons natural yoghurt

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained

4-6 slices prosciutto, torn

1 small bunch mint, leaves picked

1. Combine yoghurt and lemon juice in a bowl. Season.
2. Toss in chickpeas, prosciutto and mint. Serve.

VARIATIONS

dairy-free – replace yoghurt with extra virgin olive oil.

vegan – replace prosciutto with grilled red peppers or semi-dried tomatoes and replace yoghurt with extra virgin olive oil.

vegetarian – replace prosciutto with grilled veg or chopped hard boiled eggs (2 should do it) or a handful of roasted hazelnuts or almonds.

warm salad – warm chickpeas in the microwave or a small saucepan before tossing in the salad. The prosciutto can be pan fried until crispy as well if you like.

different greens – baby spinach or salad leaves or basil can substitute for the mint.

budget – replace prosciutto with chopped bacon that has been pan fried until crisp.

video



warm chicken salad

WARM CHICKEN SALAD

I'm not normally a big fan of poached meat because I worry about losing all the flavour to the poaching liquid. But there's something so lovely about the moist, melting texture of poached chicken that I'm happy to make an exception here.

If you have more time, the chicken will be even more lovely if you simmer for 5 minutes and then remove from the heat to stand for 20 minutes or super gentle poaching.

serves 2

2 chicken breasts

1 bunch broccolini, halved crosswise

1 lemon

2 handfuls baby spinach leaves, washed

handful roasted almonds

1. Bring 4 cups water to the boil in a medium saucepan.
2. Add chicken and place broccolini in a strainer over the chicken so the broccolini will steam. Cover with a lid and simmer gently for 10 minutes or until chicken is just cooked.
3. Meanwhile whisk 1 tablespoon lemon juice, zest of the lemon and 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl.
4. Pat broccolini dry with paper towel and toss in the dressing. Slice or shred chicken and add to the dressing along with spinach. Toss and serve with almonds scattered over.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – skip the chicken poaching. Steam the broccolini for about 8 minutes or until tender. Serve salad with generous spoonfuls of soft goats cheese or ricotta.

vegan – replace chicken with a drained can of butter beans OR some pan fried tofu cubes – season very generously.

nut-free – replace the almonds with finely diced red onion for colour and crunch.

broccoli – substitute regular broccoli or fancy purple sprouting broccoli for the broccolini.

herby – fresh herbs would make a lovely change from the baby spinach. Feel free to play around with leafy herbs such as flat leaf parsley, mint, coriander (cilantro), basil or a mixture of any of these.

video



pea & ham salad

PEA & HAM SALAD

You've had the soup. So why not try its Summer cousin? Frozen peas are such a wonderful thing to keep in the freezer for when you need some emergency veg. Don't feel like you're cheating by not spending hours podding fresh peas. Unless you happen to have fresh peas in your veggie patch, frozen peas will have a much sweeter flavour than anything you buy from your green grocer.

serves 2

250g (9oz) frozen peas
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
2 handfuls washed leaves
200g (7oz) shaved ham

1. Place frozen peas in a medium saucepan and heat over a high heat stirring for a minute or until the peas are bright green and defrosted.
2. Combine lemon juice, mustard and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl. Season with salt & pepper.
3. Toss hot peas in the dressing. Then add the leaves and ham.
4. Taste and season again if needed.

VARIATIONS

carnivore fun – replace ham with a little crispy bacon or prosciutto or even some finely sliced salami.

vegetarian – replace ham with some soft goats cheese or ricotta.

vegan – replace ham with a drained can of lentils.

mixed pea - replace the frozen peas with a few handfuls of snow peas (mange tout) and sugar snap peas. Steam peas for a few minutes then drain and proceed from step 2.

Spanish style - take things up a notch by replacing the shaved ham with 100g (3.5oz) finely sliced jamon or prosciutto. A little of this intensely flavoured porky goodness goes a long way.

video



big vegan salad

BIG VEGAN SALAD

This salad was inspired by the vegan master himself, Leo Babauta from Zen Habits. It's still my go-to salad when I'm looking for something quick to have for meat-free monday.

Carnivores, don't be put off by the name. If you love avocado, you'll be surprised just how substantial a meat-free salad can be.

serves 1

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
3 handfuls washed mixed salad leaves
1/2 large avocado
large handful roasted almonds

1. Combine vinegar, soy and 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl. Season with salt & pepper.
2. Toss leaves in the dressing.
3. Scoop bight sized chunks of avocado with a spoon and scatter over the leaves.
4. Season generously and sprinkle over the almonds.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – toss in a little crispy bacon or prosciutto. Or some shredded BBQ chicken.

nut-free – replace the almonds with torn chunks of good quality rustic bread or some black olives.

wheat-free – use a wheat free soy sauce such as tamari.

more substantial - increase the cashew content or replace the nuts with shredded BBQ chicken or hard boiled eggs.



video



BBQ chook & butter bean salad

BBQ CHOOK & BUTTER BEAN SALAD

In Australia we don't have 'take-out' we 'take-away'. And our chickens tend to be affectionately known as 'chooks'... it's the little differences.

Perfect for when all you can be bothered with is picking up a BBQ chook on the way home from work.

serves 2

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

1/2 BBQ chicken

*1 can butter beans (400g / 14oz),
drained*

handful flat leaf parsley leaves

1. Combine vinegar with 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
2. Remove the chicken from the bones and tear into bite sized pieces. Keep the skin in – it's the best bit!
3. Toss in the drained beans and parsley.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace chicken with 2 – 3 hard boiled eggs, halved lengthwise.

vegan – replace the chicken with 2 -3 roast portabello or field mushrooms and a generous handful of roasted almonds.

crunchy – toss a small handful or toasted pinenuts, almonds or a few sticks of celery, finely sliced crosswise.

bean-free - replace the canned beans with a small handful of shredded crusty sourdough bread

smoked chicken - replace the standard BBQ chook with some succulent cold smoked chicken.

home made - on days when you aren't feeling tired, feel free to make this from scratch. Just use your favourite roast chook or BBQ chook recipe.

video



ham & tomato salad

HAM & TOMATO SALAD

Ham and tomato are such good friends when it comes to sandwiches, I thought I'd see how they get along in a salad. I'm happy to report that both parties played very nicely together.

I still feel a little funny about red kidney beans. Probably because they remind me of the lambs kidneys my mum used to cook for my dad. Feel free to use another bean or even lentils.

serves 2

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
pinch chilli flakes, optional
1 can red kidney beans (400g / 14oz)
1 punnet cherry tomatoes, halved
200g (1/2lb) ham, torn or finely sliced

1. Combine vinegar and chilli with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
2. Toss in the drained beans.
3. Add the tomato and ham and toss to combine.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - replace ham with 2 - 3 hard boiled eggs, halved lengthwise.

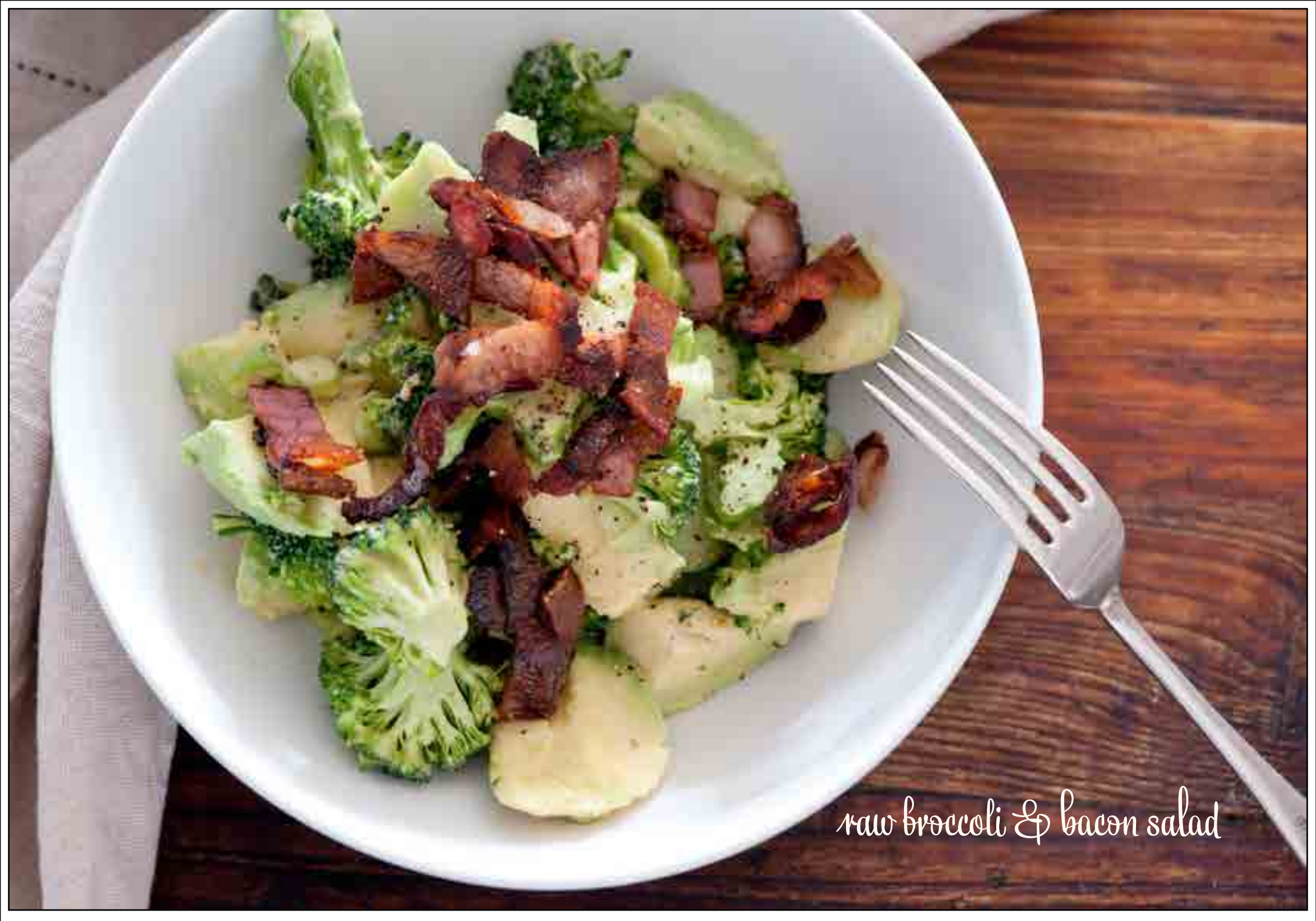
vegan - replace the ham with an avocado or a couple of handfuls of almonds or brazil nuts

smoky - replace chilli with 1 teaspoon smoked paprika.

bean-free - replace the beans with a handful of torn bocconcini or fresh mozzarella.

basil - a handful of torn fresh basil leaves would really freshen things up.

video



raw broccoli & bacon salad

RAW BROCCOLI & BACON SALAD

One of my favourite ways to save time in the kitchen is to ditch the cooking all together. In this tasty little example we're chopping up broccoli and serving it in all its raw crunchy freshness. Soo good. And so good for you!

serves 2

2 rashers bacon, chopped into matchsticks
2 tablespoons dijon mustard
2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
1 head broccoli
1 avocado

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

VARIATIONS

vegan - replace bacon with roasted almonds or diced red pepper (capsicum).

vegetarian - replace bacon with 1-2 chopped hard boiled eggs using the [recipe over here](#).

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

side salad - to serve as a side salad to something like a roast chicken or BBQ steak, skip the avocado and bacon and serve the simply dressed raw broccoli.

herby - sometimes I mix this up with a few torn flat leaf parsley leaves or some chopped chives.

video

A top-down view of a white ceramic plate resting on a piece of brown parchment paper atop a dark wooden table. The plate contains a dish consisting of a base of white ricotta cheese, topped with sliced pieces of cooked beef, and garnished with fresh green arugula leaves. The text 'beef & balsamic salad with ricotta' is written in a white, cursive font in the lower-left corner of the image.

beef & balsamic salad with ricotta

BEEF & BALSAMIC SALAD WITH RICOTTA

This main course salad has been a favourite for years. I just love how the cold creamy ricotta contrasts with the hot crisp meat.

serves 2

400g (14oz) steak, finely sliced into strips
2 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 large handfuls rocket (arugula)
6 tablespoons ricotta

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

VARIATIONS

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

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

vegan – replace the steak with mushrooms as above and replace the ricotta with a drizzle of vegan mayonnaise.

gluten-free - replace the flour with corn flour (corn starch), other gluten-free flour or ground almond meal.

different greens - in Autumn I love to serve this with shaved red radicchio instead of the rocket.



video



brocco-staw

BROCCO-SLAW

My new favourite salad, brocco-slaw is a fresher, greener, more crunchy version of coleslaw. The broccoli adds colour and crunch to keep you coming back for more.

The lemon juice helps to lighten the mayo. So while you still get a lovely, creamy sauce it is in no way too heavy or rich.

serves 2-3 as a side

2 tablespoons lemon juice

4 tablespoons whole egg mayonnaise

1 head broccoli

1/4 cabbage

1. Combine lemon juice and mayonnaise in a large bowl. Season.
2. Finely slice broccoli into tiny trees and also smaller pieces. It's good to have a mixture of sizes.
3. Trim outer leaves and core from the cabbage then shave as finely as possible into ribbons with a sharp knife or mandoline.
4. Toss broccoli and cabbage in the dressing. Taste and season, adding a little more lemon juice if you think it's a bit heavy.

VARIATIONS

vegan / egg-free – replace the mayonnaise with vegan mayo or extra virgin olive oil.

pure broccoli - feel free to skip the cabbage and replace with another head of broccoli.

brocco-cauli slaw? – Replace cabbage with half a head of cauliflower. Finely chop cauli as per the broccoli.

spiced slaw - toss in a few teaspoons of caraway seeds.

more substantial - serve topped with a fried or poached egg or toss in some shredded cooked chicken.

carnivore - serve as a side salad to your favourite BBQ meats or just a well cooked steak. Also delicious with a good quality pork sausage or two.

video



fast roast tomato salad

FAST ROAST TOMATO SALAD

While it can be lovely to spend a few leisurely hours slow roasting tomatoes to concentrate their flavors, we don't always have the time. If your tomatoes aren't quite good enough to serve naked and raw but you're in a hurry, this is a great alternative.

By starting the cooking process on the stove, we give the oven a chance to heat up to finish things off.

serves 2

1 red bell pepper (capsicum)
1 punnet cherry tomatoes (250g / 9oz)
1-2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
4 small balls bocconcini
small handful basil leaves

1. Preheat your oven on the highest setting.
2. Place a medium oven-proof fry pan on a high heat. Meanwhile, chop pepper into bight sized strips and add to the pan with a generous drizzle of olive oil.
3. Add tomatoes to the pan and fry for about 3 minutes.
4. Transfer the whole pan to the hot oven and cook for about 10 minutes or until everything is sizzling and the tomatoes have started to shrivel a little.
5. Remove from the oven and drizzle over balsamic. Tear bocconcini and add to the pan and finish with basil leaves. Serve warm, preferably eating out of the pan.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – replace the cheese with chunks of silken tofu or a drained can of cannellini or other white beans.

higher protein / more substantial – add in a can of drained chickpeas just before popping the pan in the oven.

carnivore – skip the cheese and crumble a couple of good quality pork sausages into the pan at the beginning with the peppers.

fresh – if you have access to super sweet and lovely tomatoes, there's no need to roast them. Just halve and toss into the dressing. Raw peppers will give lovely crunch.



video



A LIFE-SAVING *pantry*



A LIFE-SAVING pantry

Having a well stocked pantry (which includes your fridge and your freezer) gives you peace of mind.

Knowing that no matter how late you get home there are the fixings of a delicious, healthy meal that you can throw together in a few minutes makes all the difference.

And this will save you from the take-out trap of expensive, not-so-healthy 'convenience'.

- :: [pantry cauliflower cheese](#)
- :: [broccoli pantry curry](#)
- :: [creamy coconut lentils](#)
- :: [quinoa & grilled veg salad](#)
- :: [udon noodle soup with white beans](#)
- :: [soba noodle pantry soup](#)
- :: [beet & tomato soup](#)
- :: [salmon & butter bean salad](#)
- :: [spaghetti with chilli & garlic](#)
- :: [tuna & lentil salad](#)
- :: [egg fried lentils](#)
- :: [tuna burgers with snow peas](#)
- :: [chickpea & vegetable salad](#)

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pantry cauliflower cheese



PANTRY CAULIFLOWER CHEESE

I love this method for cooking a whole range of veg from fresh broccoli and broccolini to asparagus to even things like bok choy. It's super quick and with the combination of charring and steaming give lovely complex veggie flavours. Frozen veg can be a little on the 'watery' side. This cooking method is brilliant because it cooks off all the extra water, leaving you with concentrated tasty veg.

serves 2

1 bag frozen cauliflower (500g / 1lb)
2 large handfuls grated parmesan cheese
100g (3.5oz) goats cheese

1. Heat a frying pan on a super high heat for 3-4 minutes. You want it charring hot to instantly defrost the frozen cauli.
2. Add a little oil and the cauli. Cover and cook for 3 minutes, still on a super high heat.
3. Turn the heat down to medium and stir the cauli. Cook for another 3-4 minutes until the cauli is browned in places and hot all over.
4. Stir and return lid. Cook for another 1-2 minutes or until the cauli is browned in places and hot all over.
5. Divide hot cauli between 2 plates. Top with cheeses. Season.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – serve the hot cauli drizzled with tahini and lemon juice. Or try it on a bed of hummus.

fresh – chop cauli into tiny trees. And cook as per the recipe. May take a little longer for the cauli to be tender.

different veg – replace cauli with broccoli.

different cheeses – ricotta, gruyere, cheddar or whatever you have in the fridge. This is a great dish to use up odds and ends of cheese. Just grate harder cheeses and crumble or slice softer ones.

carnivore – serve as a side to a BBQ chicken.

more substantial - add a drained can of white beans such as cannellini to the pan and stir to heat through or serve with a fried egg per person.

budget - replace the goats cheese with ricotta.

video

broccoli pantry curry



BROCCOLI PANTRY CURRY

I once asked a nutritionist friend of mine whether fresh or frozen veg were better nutritionally. I was surprised that she said unless the fresh veg are super-fresh, that frozen actually tend to have higher vitamin levels. A good reason not to feel guilty about the convenience of frozen veg as part of your repertoire of 'pantry meals'.

serves 2

1 can coconut milk (400mL / 1.5 cups)

1 bag frozen broccoli (500g / 1lb)

2-3 teaspoons curry powder

1. Add coconut milk, frozen broccoli and curry powder to a medium saucepan.
2. Cover and place on a high heat. Bring to a boil then cook for about 5 minutes or until the broccoli is hot and cooked.
3. Taste and season generously, it will need quite a bit of salt. You may like to add a little more curry powder too.

VARIATIONS

fresh broccoli – replace frozen with 2 heads broccoli chopped into little trees and stems finely sliced. May need to simmer a little longer for the broccoli to cook.

different veg – try cauliflower or peas.

more substantial – serve on a bed of steamed rice or finely grated raw cauliflower (aka 'cauliflower rice').

no curry powder? – replace with 2-3 tablespoons thai style curry paste.

richer – stir in 2-3 tablespoon peanut butter.

carnivore – add some finely sliced chicken breast or thigh fillets with the broccoli. Make sure chicken is cooked through before serving.

video



creamy coconut lentils

CREAMY COCONUT LENTILS

Red lentils are one of my favourite pantry staples because they're cheap, packed with protein, are really quick to cook and taste super delicious. This dish is 'comfort central' in a similar way to a good risotto. I also think that coconut milk is an underutilized ingredient apart from Asian cooking. This recipe really showcases how versatile coconut milk can be.

serves 2

1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)

1 can coconut milk (400mL / 1.5 cups)

200g (7oz) red lentils

1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes or 1/2 teaspoon chilli powder, optional

1. Place all ingredients in a saucepan. Bring to the boil.
2. Simmer for about 8 minutes or until lentils are tender or 'al dente'. Taste. Season.

VARIATIONS

no canned tomatoes? – replace with 1.5 cups commercial tomato based pasta sauce, 4 tablespoons tomato paste + 1.5 cups water or 1.5 cups tomato puree.

no coconut milk – coconut cream is fine or replace with water or stock and add in a few tablespoons of butter or olive oil at the end.

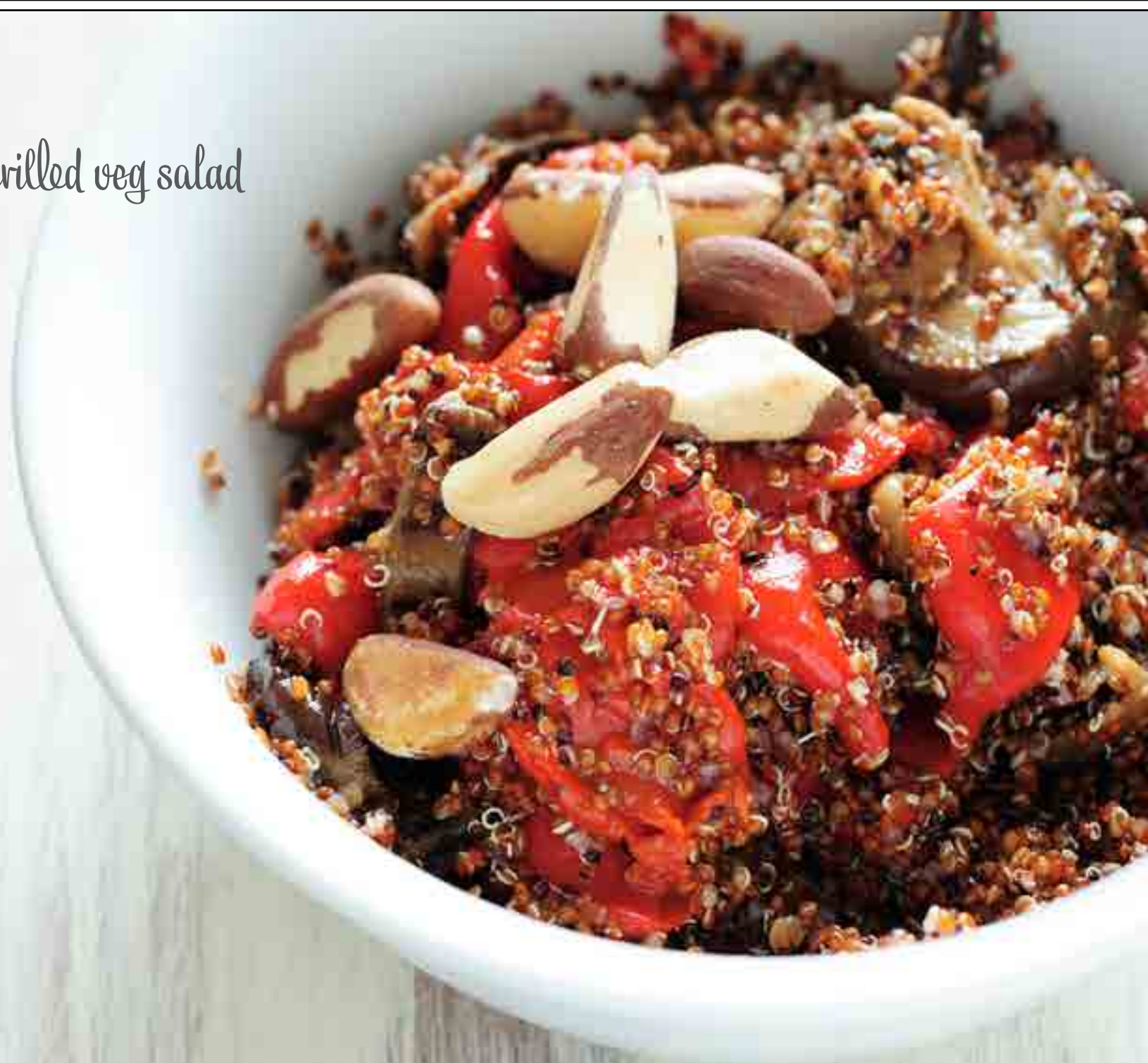
can't find red lentils? – replace with green or brown lentils or even quinoa or brown rice. You'll need to cook these for much longer and may also need to add water.

greener – stir in some defrosted spinach or fresh baby spinach leaves at the end.

more veg – feel free to add zucchini, red capsicum (bell peppers) or finely chopped cauliflower. Again you may need to cook a little longer and add water so the veg soften.

video

quinoa & grilled veg salad



QUINOA & GRILLED VEG SALAD

I just love quinoa in salads as it has the most wonderful chewy texture.

serves 2

100g (3.5oz) dried quinoa, (or 250g cooked)

2 tablespoons lemon juice

large handful roast eggplant, sliced & drained

large hand grilled red capsicum (bell peppers),

sliced handful brazil nuts or almonds, to serve

1. Bring a medium pot of water to the boil. Rinse quinoa well then simmer for 10-12 minutes or until al dente like pasta. Drain. If using cooked quinoa skip this step.
2. Combine lemon juice with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
3. Toss warm quinoa in the dressing. Add eggplant and red capsicum and serve with nuts sprinkled over.

VARIATIONS

roast veg – let your imagination run wild here, roast pumpkin or sweet potato, roast beets, roast parsnip are all lovely.

other grilled veg – feel free to use home grilled veg. In summer zucchini are a favourite. Fennel or grilled asparagus are good too.

carnivore – replace nuts with finely sliced salami or cooked chicken.

nut-free – skip the nuts and use a soft goats cheese or blue cheese instead.

warm salad – either serve while still warm or reheat in the microwave or a saucepan.

leafy – toss in some flat leaf parsley leaves or a handful of baby spinach.

video



udon noodle soup with white beans

UDON NOODLE SOUP + WHITE BEANS

Udon noodles are wonderful fat, slippery little suckers made from wheat. They come from Japan and are usually available in shelf stable form so will keep in the pantry until you need them. They only take a few minutes to cook which makes them really useful to have on hand. Feel free to use different beans here. Canned soy beans, black beans, or even pinto beans would all be great.

serves 2

1 can white beans (400g / 14oz)
2 packets soft udon noodles (200g / 7oz each)
5 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 bunch coriander (cilantro)

1. Place beans and the liquid from the can in a large saucepan over a medium heat.
2. Add 3 cups water, noodles and soy sauce.
3. Finely chop the stems of the coriander (cilantro) and add to the soup.
4. Bring to a simmer, stirring to break up the noodles. Cook for a few minutes or until everything is hot.
5. Add half the remaining coriander (cilantro) leaves. Taste and season with lime juice, salt and/or more soy.
6. Divide between 2 bowls and serve with remaining coriander (cilantro) leaves sprinkled on top.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free – Replace the udon (wheat) noodles with rice noodles or mung bean noodles or even gluten-free spaghetti. And make sure you're using GF soy sauce or tamari.

hot – Add a dash of chilli powder or chilli flakes. Or serve with your favourite hot sauce.

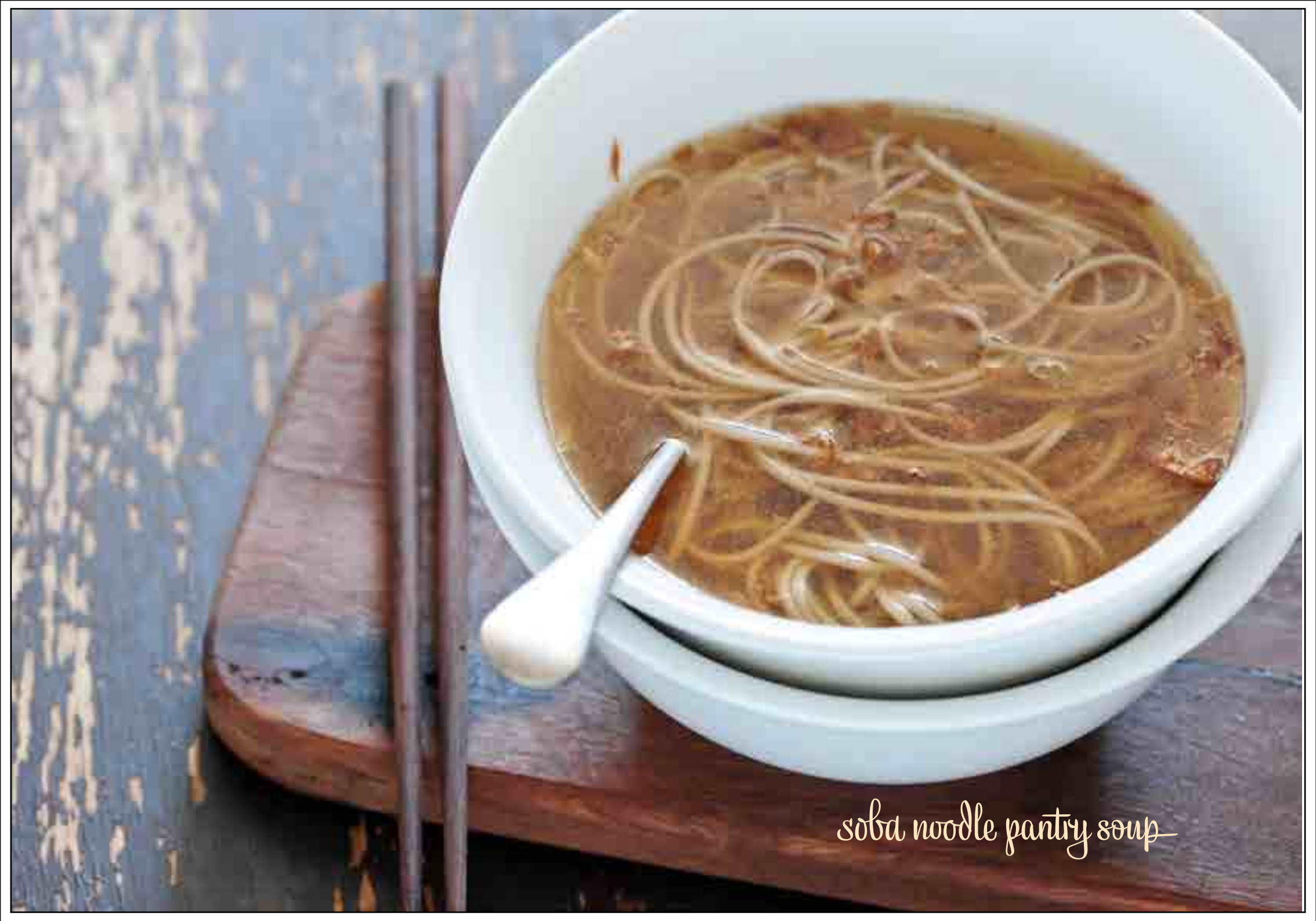
don't have any noodles- No problem. Cook some spaghetti or bucatini until not quite done then drain and add as above. Or do the same with dried wheat noodles.

no fresh cilantro – Substitute in other greens. Basil would take it down a different part (skip the part about chopping the stems and adding). Spinach added at the end would be another lovely addition.

bean-free – Replace with chopped tofu or cooked chicken.

more veg – Replace the noodles with finely shaved ribbons of zucchini or carrot or both. Allow to simmer in the broth until the veg are tender.

video



soba noodle pantry soup

SOBA NOODLE PANTRY SOUP

When it comes to satisfying, meals in minutes, it's hard to go past a good Japanese noodle soup. Soba noodles are made from buckwheat and have a wonderful nutty flavour. If you can't find them, ramen or regular 2-minute noodles will suffice. I highly recommend taking the time to track down instant dashi powder. It's a wonderful ingredient to have on hand. The other option is to use a good quality vegetable or chicken stock.

serves 2

1 tablespoon instant dashi powder

100g (3oz) dried soba noodles

1 tablespoon soy sauce

small handful fried shallots, optional

1. Bring 3 cups water to boil in a medium saucepan.
2. Stir in dashi powder and add noodles. Simmer for 3 minutes or until noodles are al dente (tender but still with a little bite).
3. Season with soy and serve in soup bowls scattered with fried shallots, if using.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – adding a handful of very finely sliced beef at the end so it cooks from the residual heat of the soup would be lovely.

egg – when the noodles are cooked, stir in a lightly beaten egg or two and allow it to cook in the residual heat.

gluten-free / slow carb – replace the noodles with ribbons of zucchini or carrot shaved with a vegetable peeler. The veg may take longer to cook, you want them to not be crunchy.

veggies – add some baby spinach at the end to cook with the residual heat OR try chopped bok choy added at the same time as the noodles. Kale would also be lovely in the soup.

more filling – super hungry people might like to double the amount of noodles.

vegetarian / vegan – use vegetable stock in place of the dashi.



A top-down photograph of a white ceramic bowl filled with a thick, vibrant red soup. The soup has a slightly textured appearance with some darker red swirls on the surface. A silver spoon is placed on a light-colored wooden surface to the left of the bowl. The bowl is lined with a white cloth that has some frayed edges. The overall scene is set on a wooden table.

beet & tomato soup

BEET & TOMATO SOUP

This soup almost deserves the name 'Pretty in pink' but I didn't want to put anyone off by associating it with an 80s teen movie. Beetroot soup, known as 'borscht' is common in Eastern Europe and is served both hot and cold. Feel free to do likewise with this version. It's worthwhile seeking out beets that have been canned in beet juice rather than vinegar as the flavour is much closer to roast beets. Vacuum packed cooked beets would work really well.

serves 2

1 jar tomato pasta sauce (400g / 14oz)
1 can baby beets (440g / 15oz), drained
2 teaspoons ground cumin or coriander
6-8 tablespoons almond butter

1. Place tomato sauce (marinara sauce), half a jar of water, beets and cumin or coriander in a medium saucepan and bring to a simmer.
2. Remove from the heat and puree with a stick blender or food processor.
3. Return to the heat and stir in almond butter. Bring back to a simmer. Taste and season. If it is too tart, add more almond butter or a little sugar to soften the acidity.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – serve with some finely sliced salami.

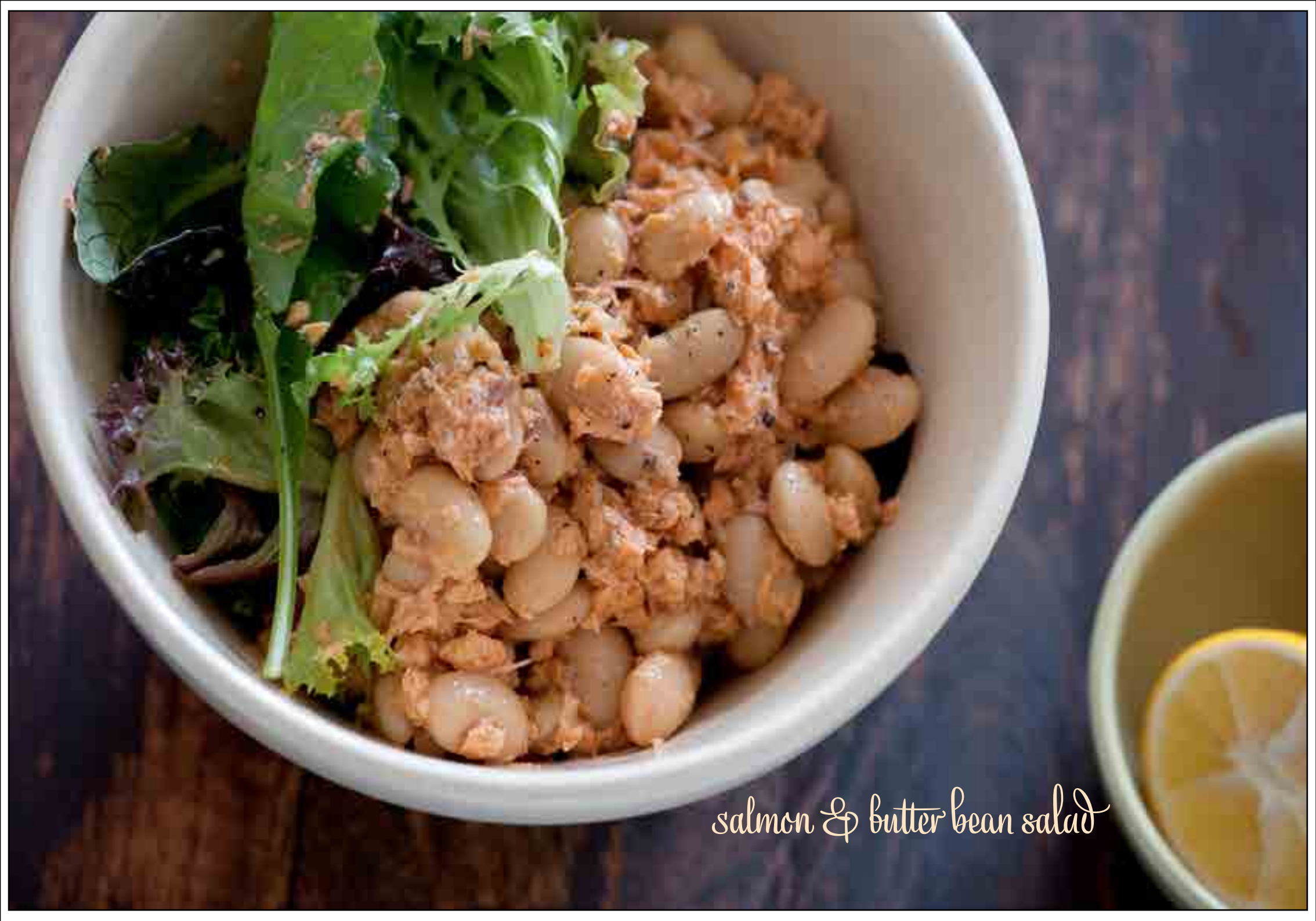
no cumin? - Use ground coriander or leave it unspiced.

fresh – to make from scratch roast a large bunch of beets until tender then allow them to cool and use as per the recipe. You may need to season the soup with a little wine vinegar or balsamic to make up for the fact that fresh beets don't have the added acid of canned beets.

nut-free - Replace almond butter with fresh cream or soured cream.



video



salmon & butter bean salad

SALMON & BUTTER BEAN SALAD

For a long time, my go-to pantry lunch salad was tuna and butter bean. But every now and then I like to mix things up a little with some canned red salmon instead. The salmon always feels a bit more 'fancy' and has the bonus of looking prettier, but feel free to use tuna.

serves 2

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 medium can salmon, drained

1 can butter beans (400g/14oz), drained

small handful mixed washed leaves

1. Combine lemon juice with 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a large bowl. Season with salt & pepper.
2. Toss salmon and beans in the dressing. Then add the leaves.
3. Taste and season again if needed.

video

VARIATIONS

carnivore – replace the salmon with smoked chicken or shredded BBQ chicken from the store.

vegetarian – replace salmon with crumbled feta or goats cheese and be careful not to over season the dressing.

vegan – replace the salmon with an avocado chopped into chunks or some torn roast mushrooms.

different beans - if butter beans (aka lima beans) aren't your thing, try other canned beans such as cannellini, red kidney or black eye beans. Chickpeas are good here too.

bean-free - an avocado would make a lovely alternative to the beans or try a handful or two of finely grated raw cauliflower.

different fish - canned tuna is an obvious one, but pretty much any cooked fish could be chilled and flaked into this salad.



Spaghetti with Chilli & garlic

SPAGHETTI WITH CHILLI & GARLIC

I remember the first time I came across this super simple pasta dish in an Italian restaurant. I was so intrigued that I just had to order it to find out how you could actually have a pasta dish with so little sauce. Safe to say I've been hooked ever since.

As long as you have pasta in the pantry, you have the makings for a delicious comforting meal.

serves 1

100g (3.5oz) spaghetti or other pasta

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1/2 - 1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes

1 clove garlic, finely sliced

1. Bring a pot of salted water to the boil. Add pasta and set the timer for 1 minute less than the duration recommended on the packet.
2. Stir pasta every few minutes, but meanwhile make your sauce.
3. Gently heat oil in a small saucepan. Add chilli and garlic and fry for a minute or until garlic is starting to go a little brown. Remove from the heat.
4. When the pasta timer rings, taste pasta and give it a little longer if it is still too crunchy. When the pasta is al dente, scoop out a cup of cooking liquid and drain.
5. Return pasta to the hot pan and toss in the oil. Taste and season and add a little cooking water if it looks too dry.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – fry some pancetta, bacon or guanciale in the oil. Or serve with some finely sliced jamon or prosciutto.

lemon & garlic – skip the chilli and proceed as per the recipe, add in the zest of half a lemon at the end and serve with a squeeze of lemon.

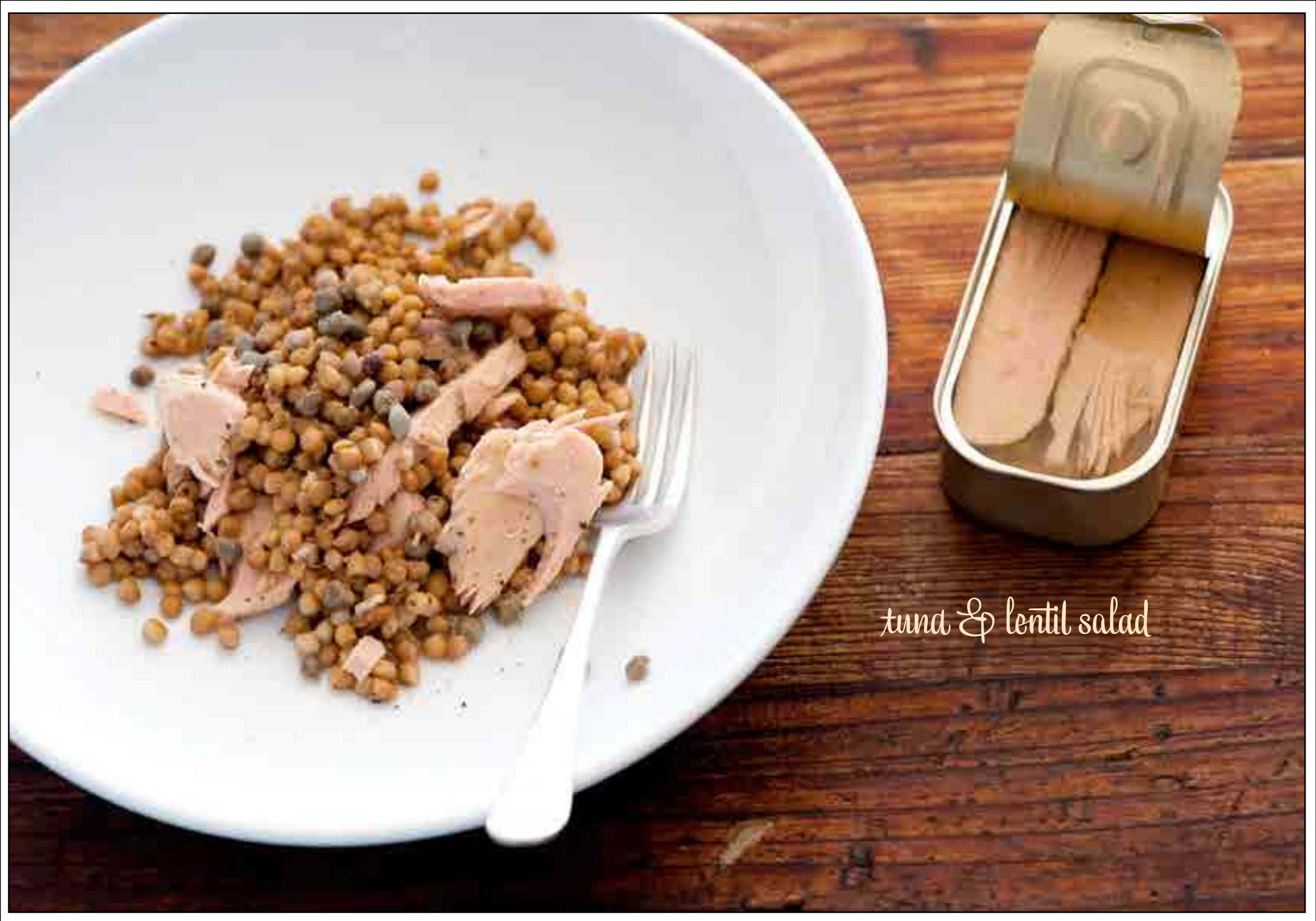
rosemary – ditch either the chilli, garlic or both and replace with the leaves from a sprig of rosemary.

greens – to make it into more of a complete meal, toss in a large handful of washed salad green or rocket (arugula) leaves and finish with a squeeze of lemon.

cheesy – serve with freshly grated parmesan if you like, but to be honest I like it better with the simplicity of just the chilli and garlic.

gluten-free / slow carb -because this dish is really relying on the quality of the pasta, don't be tempted to try it with GF pasta. Instead, drain a can of chickpeas or white beans and gently fry in the oil with the garlic and chilli.

video



tuna & lentil salad

TUNA & LENTIL SALAD

For years tuna and white bean or butter bean salad has been on high rotation in our house as a quick lunch or dinner. Then I had the bright idea to try it with canned lentils and capers instead. Don't tell the butter beans but I think I've found my new favourite tuna salad. As with most things in life and cooking, this salad is only as good as the quality of your ingredients. So try and track down some tuna canned in olive oil.

serves 2

1 tablespoon sherry or white wine vinegar

1 can lentils (400g / 14oz), drained & rinsed

2 tablespoons capers

2 cans tuna in oil (125g / 5oz each)

1. If your tuna is in good quality olive oil, place 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large salad bowl. Drain and discard the rest of the oil or keep it for another use.
2. Toss vinegar in with the oil. Add drained lentils and toss to combine.
3. If the capers are salted, place them in a little bowl of water then remove and squeeze dry. Toss in with the salad.
4. Flake tuna into the salad and toss lightly. Taste and season.



VARIATIONS

carnivore - crumble and pan fry a few good quality pork sausages and use them to replace the tuna. Or use drained canned chicken.

vegetarian - replace tuna with a couple of halved boiled eggs and/or soft goats cheese or feta crumbled over.

vegan - replace tuna with a large handful of brazil nuts or walnuts or an avocado cut into chunks.

fresh - to freshen things up, toss in a handful of chopped flat leaf parsley or torn mint leaves or a handful of washed baby spinach leaves.

tomato - toss in a large handful of halved cherry tomatoes and maybe a little fresh basil if you have it.

fancy - I generally use regular tuna in oil which is really great but to take it up a level, seek out some good quality tuna slices in oil. Seared tuna steaks would also be a great alternative.

A black frying pan is filled with a mixture of brown lentils, scrambled eggs, and sliced green onions. A silver spoon is resting in the pan, partially submerged in the food. The pan is placed on a dark wooden surface. The text "egg fried lentils" is written in a cursive font in the bottom left corner.

egg fried lentils

EGG FRIED LENTILS

Inspired by one of my Irishman's favourite "Chinese" dishes - egg fried rice. I was looking for a more Slow-Carb option and came up with the idea to 'fry' lentils. The results are really lovely. My Irishman agrees, it's even better than boring old rice.

Feel free to cook your own lentils and stir fry them if you aren't into canned lentils.

serves 2 as a side

2 eggs

1 can lentils (400g / 14oz), drained

small handful green onions, chopped

1-2 tablespoons soy sauce

1. Place a medium frying pan (skillet) or wok on a medium heat. Crack eggs into a bowl and lightly whisk.
2. Add a few tablespoons neutral flavoured oil to the pan and add eggs.
3. Cook for about 30 seconds then stir the eggs to scrape the cooked egg away from the bottom of the pan and allow the raw egg to cook.
4. Add lentils and continue to stir fry until lentils are warm and the egg is cooked through.
5. Remove from the heat, add green onions and soy sauce. Taste and season with a little more soy if you think it needs it.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - fry some diced bacon in the pan before you add the eggs or toss in some cooked chicken at the end.

vegan / egg-free - skip the eggs and serve with a generous handful of sliced almonds instead.

rice - for a more classic dish. Use 2 cups fluffy cooked basmati rice that has been allowed to cool.

chickpeas - replace canned lentils with a can of chickpeas.



video



tuna burgers with snow peas

TUNA BURGERS WITH SNOW PEAS

The idea for these burgers came from a stonessoup reader via a comment on my blog. I love when that happens.

I prefer tuna canned in oil because it tends to have better flavour and a more moist texture. The better the quality of your tuna, the more tasty these burgers will be.

serves 2-3

1 large tin tuna in oil (425g / 15oz), drained

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained

1 egg

2-3 handfuls snow peas (mange tout)

mayonnaise or lemon juice, to serve

1. Bring the kettle to the boil and place a large frying pan on a medium high heat.
2. Mash tuna and chickpeas together in a bowl using a fork or your hands. It's OK to leave a few chickpeas whole.
3. Stir in egg and form mixture into 3 burger patties.
4. Add a few tablespoons of oil to the pan and fry burgers for 4-5 minutes each side. Being very careful when turning because they do like to fall apart.
5. Meanwhile, trim the tops from the snow peas. Place in a strainer and pour over the boiling water from the kettle to blanch. Drain.
6. Serve burgers topped with mayo and snow peas on the side.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - replace the tuna with 450g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken and skip the egg and chickpeas.

vegan - try some lentil burgers instead (whizz a can of drained lentils with 2 handfuls bread crumbs) and serve with veggie mayonnaise.

salmon burgers - replace the tuna with canned pink or red salmon.

mermaid cakes - keep the recipe exactly as is but get more creative with the name!

egg-free - don't be tempted to use egg replacer instead of fresh egg with these burgers. We're really relying on the egg to hold the burgers together. Just make a little chickpea and tuna stir fry instead.



video

A top-down view of a white, heart-shaped plate filled with a chickpea and vegetable salad. The salad consists of numerous light-colored chickpeas, sliced mushrooms, and pieces of yellow and red bell peppers. A silver spoon and fork are placed on the left side of the plate. The plate is set on a dark wooden surface.

Chickpea & vegetable salad

CHICKPEA & VEGETABLE SALAD

Anyone who has been following my blog for a while will know that chickpeas are one of my alltime favourite ingredients. So I couldn't have a class on pantry recipes without a chickpea dish.

Grilled marinated veg are great to have on hand in case you need a quick antipasto or something more substantial like this vegetable salad. I've served it warm here but it would be equally as good at room temperature.

serves 2

1 jar grilled red peppers (280g / 10oz), drained
1 jar grilled eggplant (280g / 10oz), drained
1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained
1 tablespoon sherry or red wine vinegar
handful almonds, optional

1. Place a medium frying pan or skillet over a medium heat. Add drained peppers, eggplant (aubergine) and chickpeas. Stir fry for a few minutes or until the veg are warm and the chickpeas have browned slightly.
2. Meanwhile, combine vinegar with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Wait and season later as there is probably enough salt in the veg and chickpeas already.
3. Toss warm veg in with the salad. Taste and season. Serve with almonds scattered over the top.

video

VARIATIONS

carnivore - fry some sliced chorizo or other sausage in the pan and add to the salad. Or serve with some finely sliced salami or prosciutto scattered over.

more protein - shed the meat from half a BBQ chicken and toss in at the end. Or serve with a couple of halved boiled eggs.

greens - to freshen things up, toss in a handful of chopped flat leaf parsley or torn mint leaves or a handful of washed baby spinach leaves.

cheesey - serve with soft goats cheese or feta crumbled over the top.

nut-free - skip the almonds completely or substitute in some cheese or protein as per the suggestions above.

chickpea-free - replace the canned chickpeas with some bocconcini or ricotta cheese or try with shredded BBQ chicken.



ONE POT *wonders*

ONE POT wonders

If your household budget extends to a live-in scullery maid, you might like to skip this chapter.

For the rest of us, one pot cooking is where it's at from a washing up minimisation strategy.

If you're cooking for one or two, there's no harm in eating straight from said pot as well. It's up to you.

Doing dishes is definitely over-rated.

- :: red pepper & tomato soup
- :: simple chicken laksa
- :: broccoli & parmesan soup
- :: pesto cauliflower
- :: beans with tuna & cherry tomato sauce
- :: home baked beans
- :: chicken tajine
- :: thai green chicken curry
- :: sausages with summer veg
- :: hot beef curry

:: interactive index - click on the item to be taken to that page



red pepper & tomato soup

RED PEPPER & TOMATO SOUP

One of the tricks to a great veggie soup is to resist the urge to use stock or bullion. The key is letting the vegetables speak for themselves. I hate to admit it but I picked up this trick from Gordon Ramsay. I know, people always surprise you.

serves 2

3 cups tomato passata (puree), not concentrated
500g (1lb) red peppers, chopped
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon red chilli flakes, optional

1. Bring the tomato passata or puree to the boil in a saucepan.
2. Add peppers and simmer for 10-12 minutes, covered until the peppers are tender.
3. Add butter. Puree with a stick blender until you have a lovely smooth soup.
4. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with chilli, if using.

VARIATIONS

broccoli soup – use 2 head broccoli and replace the tomato passata with water. Serve straight up OR top with fresh goats cheese.

mushroom soup – roast 500g (1lb) mushies (200C/400F) until brown and soft, about 30 minutes. Replace passata with vegetable stock. Simmer as per the recipe.

other veg – replace peppers with carrots, peas (frozen or podded) or zucchini.

dairy-free – replace the butter with extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil.



video

simple chicken laksa



SIMPLE CHICKEN LAKSA

Laksa is a Malaysian noodle soup that's so flavoursome it's hard to resist. I included a minimalist laksa recipe in my first free eCookbook which got plenty of compliments. But I also had a lot of people contacting me to say they couldn't find any commercial laksa pastes in their area. So I've included a laksa paste recipe below.

serves 2

1 - 2 chicken breasts, very finely sliced
3-4 tablespoons laksa paste (recipe below)
1 can coconut cream (400g / 14oz)
220g (8oz) fresh laksa noodles or singapore noodles
handful fresh basil leaves, to serve

1. Heat a few tablespoons peanut oil (or other neutral flavoured oil) in a large saucepan over a very high heat.
2. Add chicken and stir fry quickly for 1 -2 minutes or until chicken is white and no longer pink. Remove from the pan and place in a bowl.
3. Add a little more oil to the pan and add laksa paste. Stir fry for a few minutes until it smells lovely and fragrant.
4. Add coconut cream and 2 cups water. Bring to a simmer. Add noodles and bring back to a simmer, stirring to break up the noodles.
5. Return chicken to the pan. Taste and season with salt and possibly a pinch or two of sugar.
6. Serve with basil leaves on top.

video

VARIATIONS

vegan – Replace the chicken with cubes of tofu.

vegetarian - Skip the chicken and use mixed vegetables, either frozen or fresh. Add the veg with the coconut milk and water and simmer for a few minutes until cooked. Red peppers (capsicum) are lovely as are green beans, carrots, bean sprouts, zucchini (courgettes). Cauliflower would have to be my favourite veg in laksa because it soaks up all the lovely sauce flavours.

gluten-free – Replace the wheat noodles with rice noodles or mung bean noodles or even gluten-free spaghetti.

red curry noodle soup – Replace the laksa paste with a commercial Thai red curry paste.

5 ingredient laksa paste recipe

1 onion, peeled & chopped
1 thumb-sized piece ginger, chopped
1 tablespoon turmeric
1 teaspoon chilli powder
1 lime, zest and juice

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and whizz until you have a smooth paste.

broccoli & parmesan soup



BROCCOLI & PARMESAN SOUP

It's hard not to love broccoli. All its greenness just screams good for you. And in soup form, it feels even more nurturing. This would also work well with frozen broccoli. For a vegan version, skip the cheese and serve with a sprinkling of lightly toasted pinenuts or almonds.

If you don't have a stick blender, feel free to serve as a chunky soup. Or use a regular blender or food processor - just be very careful when pureeing the hot soup.

serves 2

*2 heads broccoli, chopped including tender stalks
1 small piece of parmesan rind, optional,
+ shaved parmesan to serve
1 tablespoon lemon juice*

1. Bring 2 cups water to boil in a medium saucepan.
2. Add broccoli, parmesan rind, if using.
3. Cover and simmer rapidly for about 8 minutes or until broccoli is tender.
4. Puree in the saucepan with a stick blender until smoothish.
5. Taste and season with salt, pepper and lemon juice. Serve with extra parmesan sprinkled over the top.

VARIATIONS

dairy-free / vegan – go for a pure broccoli soup and leave the cheese out all together. It's lovely cheese-free or you could add in a few tablespoons of almond butter for a bit of creaminess.

goats cheese – skip the parmesan and serve soup scattered with chunks of fresh goats cheese.

carnivore – try a broccoli and chicken soup. Replace the water with chicken stock and simmer some finely sliced chicken breast or thigh until just cooked in the pureed soup.

cauliflower & parmesan soup – for a white, creamy soup replace the broccoli with cauliflower. It may not need as much lemon juice and will probably be greedy for more cheese, given how cauli loves dairy products.

video



pesto cauliflower

PESTO CAULIFLOWER

You've gotta love a quick veggie one pot meal. Especially this super speedy one made with frozen cauli and store bought pesto. The lemon juice really brings commercial pesto to life. A little freshly shaved parmesan cheese would also help bolster the flavours.

Feel free to make your own pesto and use fresh cauliflower if you have the time.

serves 2-3

500g frozen cauliflower
1 can cannellini or white beans (400g /14oz), drained
4-6 tablespoons pesto
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2-3 handfuls baby spinach, washed

1. Bring the kettle to the boil. Fill a medium saucepan about 2cm (1in) deep with boiling water and place on a very high heat.
2. Add cauli and cook covered, for 7-8 minutes or until cauliflower is tender.
3. Drain cauli and return to the pan. Add the beans, pesto and lemon juice. Stir and season.
4. Add spinach and allow to wilt slightly before serving.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - replace the beans with some poached or leftover cooked shredded chicken. OR toss in a little crispy bacon.

vegan / dairy-free - use a dairy-free pesto such as my sicilian nut pesto. Just make regular pesto but replace the parmesan with extra nuts such as almonds, pistachios and/or hazelnuts.

super green - replace the cauli with broccoli. A good dish for St Patrick's day!

fresh cauli - by all means use fresh cauliflower if you prefer. One head of fresh cauli, trimmed and chopped into florettes will do the trick. Fresh will probably take a few more minutes to cook as well.

video

*beans with tuna
& cherry tomato sauce*



BEANS WITH TUNA & CHERRY TOMATO SAUCE

I've often made this dish happily with canned butter beans or red kidney beans. So feel free to mix it up. Even chickpeas would be a winner.

If you can't find tuna with chilli, just use plain tuna and add in your own chilli if you feel like some heat. Oh, and this is equally good served cold.

serves 2

1 can tuna in oil with chilli (185g / 6oz)
1 punnet cherry tomatoes (250g / 9oz), halved
2 teaspoons smoked paprika
1 can soy beans (400g / 14oz), drained
2 sprigs flat leaf parsley, chopped

1. Heat a frying pan or skillet on a medium high heat.
2. Add the whole contents of the tuna can, tomatoes and paprika.
3. Cook, stirring occasionally for about 5 minutes or until the tomatoes are starting to break down into a sauce.
4. Add beans and cook until warm.
5. Taste, season and toss in parsley.

VARIATIONS

vegan – Skip the tuna and replace with a few tablespoons extra virgin olive oil and a couple of chillies and double the tomato.

vegetarian - replace tuna with a jar of grilled eggplant (or grill your own) and serve with shaved parmesan.

carnivore – Replace tuna with 250g (1/2lb) ground (minced) pork or beef.

can't find smoked paprika? – Regular paprika will be OK, although to my mind not as delicious. Or you could skip the spices all together.

bean free – Replace the soy beans with finely shaved zucchini or grated cauliflower.

different beans – Other canned beans such as cannellini, black beans or butter beans would all work well. As would canned chickpeas.

video

home baked beans



HOME BAKED BEANS

Commercial baked beans can be OK if you're stuck but I find they tend to be quite sweet and contain added sugar which you really don't need. These beans aren't really baked because we're cooking them on the stove but you get the drift.

The smoked paprika isn't critical but if you can get your hands on some I encourage you to try it. It adds the most wonderfully complex smokey flavours.

serves 1-2

1 can white beans (400g / 14oz), drained

2 - 3 tablespoons tomato paste

1 tablespoon soy sauce

2 teaspoons smoked paprika, optional

1. Empty beans into a medium saucepan and place on a medium high heat.
2. Add tomato paste, soy sauce and paprika if using and bring to a simmer.
3. Taste and season, although the tomato paste and soy will probably make it salty enough. Serve with a few tablespoons extra virgin olive oil for richness.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - Great with some chopped bacon or chorizo browned in the saucepan first.

home baked chickpeas - replace canned beans with my favourite legume.

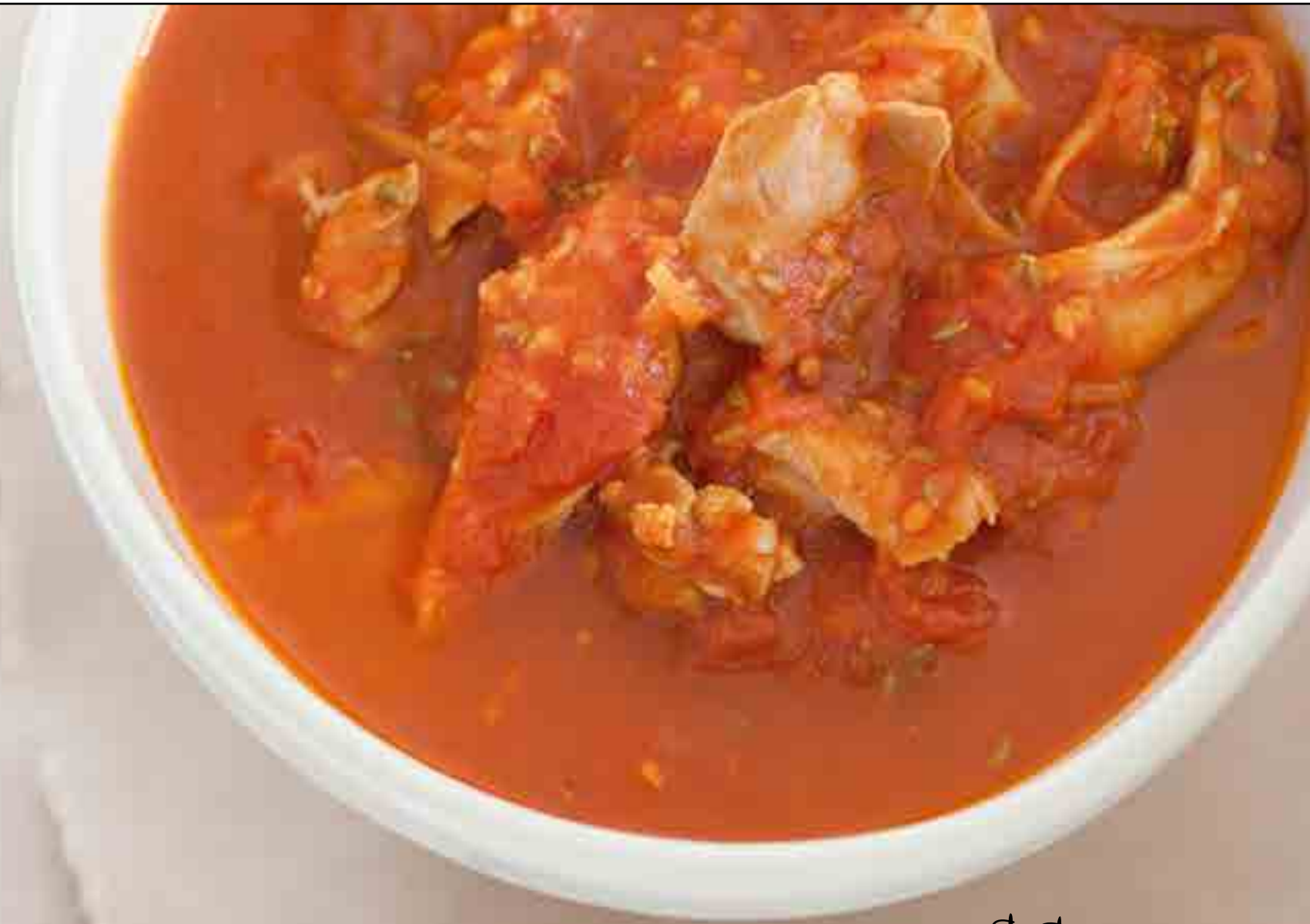
fresh - replace the canned beans with shelled fresh broad beans or borlotti beans. They will need to simmer for 5-10 minutes and you may need to add a little water if it's drying out too much.

hot - replace the paprika with a dash of dried chilli powder or cayenne.

more substantial - serve along side poached or fried eggs.

gluten-free - make sure you're using a GF soy sauce or tamari.

video



Chicken tajine

CHICKEN TAJINE

Tajine is just the Moroccan name for a stew, but it sounds so much more exotic and fun. Chicken tajines are one of the most popular dishes in Morocco and are generally based on tomato and preserved lemon.

Traditionally tajines are served with couscous, which is lovely. For a healthier alternative try it on a bed of cauliflower 'rice' made by grating raw fresh cauliflower.

serves 2-3

2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz each)

1 tablespoon fennel seeds, optional

1 tablespoon ground coriander

zest & juice of a lemon

500g (1lb) chicken thighs

1. Place tomatoes, fennel seeds (if using), ground coriander, lemon zest and 1 tablespoon lemon juice in a large saucepan and place over a high heat.
2. While the sauce is coming up to a simmer, slice the chicken into bite sized pieces, trimming any excess fat.
3. Add chicken to the sauce and simmer gently over a medium heat for about 5 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through when you test a piece.
4. Taste and season with a little extra lemon if you think it needs it.

video

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan - try turning this into a chickpea & vegetable tajine. Replace the chicken with 2 cans of chickpeas and stir in a few handfuls of baby spinach to wilt just before serving.

no fennel seeds? - Just give them a miss or replace with some ground cumin.

chicken & veg - feel free to add in any veg you have on hand. Cooked pumpkin or sweet potato are often used in Morocco. Cauliflower will soak up the sauce and add to the texture. Wilting some baby spinach is another option,

no ground coriander? - Replace with coriander seeds or ground cumin.

no canned tomato - replace with pureed tomatoes or tomato passata or even some tomato pasta sauce (marinara).

more authentic - replace the fennel seeds with the Moroccan spice blend, ras el hanout.



thai green chicken curry

THAI GREEN CHICKEN CURRY

I still remember the first time I had a green Thai chicken curry. It blew me away with the fragrance and freshness all rolled into one. I've included a recipe for making your own cheaty curry paste, but feel free to use one from the shop.

serves 2

2 small chicken breasts

3-4 tablespoons green curry paste

1 can coconut milk (400g / 14oz)

2 tablespoons fish sauce

small handful basil leaves, optional

1. Heat a few tablespoons peanut oil in a large frying pan and stir-fry the chicken for a few minutes or until starting to brown. Remove from the pan and keep warm.
2. Add the spice paste to the pan and cook, stirring for about a minute or until the spice paste smells fragrant.
3. Add the coconut milk and fish sauce and bring to a simmer. Cook gently for about 5 minutes or until the sauce has thickened slightly.
4. Return the chicken and any juices to the pan and bring back to a simmer. Taste, season and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

vegan or vegetarian – replace chicken with tofu or the same weight of cooked lentils or even some mixed vegetables or a combination of these. And use sea salt to season the curry instead of the fish sauce.

beef – the other famous Thai green curry – just replace the chicken with diced beef fillet.

more authentic – add in a handful of tiny Thai eggplant in to simmer in the sauce and use Thai basil to finish it off.

red or yellow curry – replace the green curry paste with 3-4 tablespoons commercial red or yellow curry paste.



video



sausages with summer veg

SAUSAGES WITH SUMMER VEG

Tomato and red capsicum (bell peppers) are just bursting with Summeriness. It's hard not to feel sunny just looking at their bright colours.

I've kept this quite light with the sausages and veg. Feel free to serve with some mash, pasta, white beans or crusty bread.

serves 2

4-6 good quality pork sausages
1 red capsicum (bell pepper)
1 punnet cherry tomatoes (250g/10oz)
1 teaspoon dried chilli
1 handful baby spinach leaves

1. Heat a medium pan on a high heat. Add a few tablespoons olive oil.
2. Remove sausage skins and crumble the meat into chunks in the pan. Discard the skins. Fry, stirring occasionally for a few minutes, or until the sausages are starting to brown on the outside.
3. Meanwhile chop capsicum (pepper) into long chunks and add to the pan. Halve tomatoes and add them as well.
4. Continue to stir fry for another few minutes or until the sausages are browned and cooked through and the tomatoes have started to break down and go a little squishy.
5. Season with salt, pepper and chilli and serve with baby spinach leaves scattered over the top.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - try tofu with summer veg. Replace sausages with about 350g (12oz) crumbled firm tofu. Add in a tablespoon smoked paprika to help give the tofu some colour and flavour.

vegan - Replace sausages with diced eggplant. No need to salt the eggplant first but the eggplant will take quite a bit longer to cook than the sausages and be prepared to be very generous with the olive oil. Super important to make sure the eggplant is cooked - there are few things worse than crunchy eggplant.

different sausages - I've used good Italian style pork and fennel sausages here but feel free to play around with different types. Chorizo would work really well with the tomato and peppers.

gluten-free - be sure and ask your butcher to make sure your sausages are GF.

video



hot beef curry

HOT BEEF CURRY

Vindaloo is something that every hot curry lover should be able to cook. Serve with steamed rice or finely grated raw cauliflower (cauliflower rice).

serves 2-3

450g (1lb) beef fillet

2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz each)

6-8 green chillies

2 tablespoons red wine vinegar

for the spice paste:

4-6 cloves garlic

thumb sized piece ginger

1 bunch coriander (cilantro)

2 tablespoons curry powder

2 tablespoons ground cumin

1. Whizz the spice paste ingredients with 2 tablespoons oil in a food processor until you have a chunky puree.
2. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a large frying pan and stir-fry beef for a few minutes or until well browned all over. Remove from the pan and keep warm.
3. Add the spice paste to the pan and cook, stirring for about a minute or until the spice paste smells fragrant.
4. Add tomato, chilli and vinegar and bring to a simmer. Cook gently for about 5 minutes or until the sauce has thickened slightly.
5. Return the beef and any juices to the pan and bring back to a simmer. Taste, season and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

vegan – replace beef with tofu or the same weight of cooked lentils or even some mixed vegetables or a combination of these.

chicken – the other famous vindaloo – just replace the beef with diced chicken breast

cheaper – beef fillet is expensive, but because we're only cooking it briefly, we need a tender cut. If you'd prefer you could use cheaper stewing beef or even beef shank (osso buco) diced. You'll just need to simmer the cheaper cuts in the sauce for about an hour to tenderise.

milder curry - the good news is you can easily reduce the heat by decreasing the amount of chilli.



video



STIR FRY

Specials

STIR FRY *Specials*

When it comes to cooking things as quickly as possible, it's hard to beat a good stir fry. Just chop while you heat the pan, cook quickly and add a little sauce and that's it. Too simple.

The good news is you don't have to be limited to Asian ingredients and flavourings to make the most of this brilliant technique. Nor do you need an authentic wok.

Just some sort of skillet or fry pan and your imagination is all you need.... well except for the recipes in this chapter :)

- :: [stir fried eggplant with pesto](#)
- :: [green bean stir fry](#)
- :: [black pepper cauliflower with tofu](#)
- :: [super simple bok choy with miso dressing](#)
- :: [chicken stir fry with seasonal veg](#)
- :: [chicken & broccoli stir fry](#)
- :: [chicken & basil stir fry](#)
- :: [beef & black bean stir fry](#)
- :: [beef & broccoli stir fry](#)

:: [interactive index](#) - click on the item to be taken to that page



stir fried eggplant with pesto

STIR FRIED EGGPLANT WITH PESTO

Along with mushrooms, eggplant (aubergine) are up there as the more 'meaty' textured vegetables. I love halving an eggplant and roasting until tender but sometimes that just takes too long. Here's where this dish comes in handy. By dicing the eggplant and sauteing it in a hot pan, it cooks much quicker.

Just make sure you cook it until it is squishy and tender, there are few things worse than hard, under-cooked eggplant.

serves 2
2 medium eggplant
large handful pinenuts
small bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves
picked
4 tablespoons pesto

1. Heat a large frying pan on a high heat.
2. Cut eggplant into cubes no more than 2cm (in) in size but preferably smaller. Add a very generous glug of olive oil to the pan and add eggplant.
3. Cook, stirring every few minutes for 10-15 minutes or until eggplant is very soft. If it starts to burn, reduce the heat to medium or even lower.
4. Season generously, toss in the pinenuts and parsley.
5. Serve with pesto on top.

VARIATIONS

vegan – make sure you use a dairy free pesto, like my Sicilian Nut Pesto which replaces the parmesan with almonds and hazelnuts.

higher protein – beef it up by tossing in a drained can of white beans to warm through at the end.

tomato – toss in a handful of halved cherry tomatoes at the end for some colour and freshness.

tapenade – replace the pesto with a good quality olive tapenade.

carnivore – chop a generous handful of hot salami and add at the end instead of the pine nuts.

video



green bean stir fry

GREEN BEAN STIR FRY

I think green beans are such an underrated vegetable. Compared with the glamorous asparagus, beans seem to get forgotten about. While I usually cook with dried chilli because it tends to be what I have on hand, sometimes it's nice to get some fresh heat. Splitting the chillies lengthwise like this not only looks pretty, it makes it easy to remove the chilli if you find the dish too hot.

serves 2

450g (1lb) green beans

3 cloves garlic, finely sliced

4 red chillies, split lengthwise

3 tablespoons vegetarian oyster sauce

2 large handfuls roasted cashews

1. Place a large fry pan or wok on a very high heat.
2. Remove stalks from beans but leave the pretty tails.
3. Add a few tablespoons macadamia or other neutral flavoured oil to the pan. Stir fry the beans keeping them moving around the pan for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add chilli and garlic and continue to stir fry until the beans are cooked to your liking. I prefer them to have a little crunch still.
5. Stir in sauce and cashews until everything is hot. Taste and season.

VARIATIONS

nut-free – replace the cashews with torn bocconcini or fresh mozzarella.

higher protein – add in a can of drained cannellini beans or stir fry some tempeh or seitan and add that to the beans.

carnivore – skip the cashews and stir in some cooked shredded chicken at the end.

spring stir fry – when it is asparagus season, don't be afraid to replace some or all the beans with fresh green asparagus.

video



black pepper cauliflower with tofu

BLACK PEPPER CAULIFLOWER WITH TOFU

Black pepper is one of the most versatile spices. Like a little black dress, it pretty much goes with anything. Yet it's not often it gets to play the lead role in flavouring a dish. Inspired by Yotam Ottolenghi, it's time for a change!

The secret to getting cauliflower cooked quickly is to chop it into tiny trees, about the size of a grape.

serves 2

300g (10oz) firm tofu

1/2 head cauliflower

4-5 red chillies

3-4 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat a large frying pan on a high heat.
2. Cut tofu into cubes no more than 2cm (in) in size and pat dry with paper towel.
3. Add a generous glug of neutral flavoured oil to the pan and start cooking tofu.
4. While the tofu is cooking, cut cauli into tiny trees and add to the pan. Slit chilli down the side and add to the pan.
5. Continue to stir fry until the tofu is golden and the cauli is tender. Reduce the heat if it starts to burn.
6. Remove from the heat and season with soy and pepper.

VARIATIONS

tofu-free – skip the tofu and replace with the other half a cauliflower.

black pepper cauli & beans – replace the tofu with a drained can of white beans.

carnivore – replace the tofu with finely sliced chicken breasts. Cook them first until just cooked through then remove from the heat while you cook the cauliflower and return to the pan when you add the soy.

herby – freshen this dish up by serving with a few handfuls of coriander (cilantro) leaves.



video

super simple bok choy with miso dressing



SUPER SIMPLE BOK CHOY WITH MISO DRESSING

I have served this as a side with roast chicken. But you could also make a meal out of it by tossing in some roast nuts or a few chunks of avocado. Leftover chicken is also lovely.

Feel free to take this method and apply to other veg. I can't wait to get some decent asparagus to try. And you must give it a go with broccoli. So good.

serves 2 as a side

1 bunch bok choy

1 scant tablespoon white miso paste

1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

1. Heat a large frying pan (preferably with a lid) on your highest heat for 3-4 minutes.
2. Rinse bok choy well and slice the stems about 2cm (1inch) across.
3. Add a little oil to the hot pan, drop in your bok choy and jam the lid on (or cover with a baking tray). Cook for 2 minutes.
4. Stir, add a splash more water. Cook for a further 2 minutes with the lid on. Taste veg, if it needs more time, leave it for another minute or so.
5. While the bok choy is cooking whisk together miso, balsamic, 1 tablespoon water and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Taste and season if needed, but usually the miso is salty enough.
6. When the bok choy is done place on a serving plate and drizzle with the dressing.

VARIATIONS

no miso paste? – just substitute in a little soy sauce instead.

different veg – pretty much most Asian leafy veg will be good here as will broccoli or broccolini.

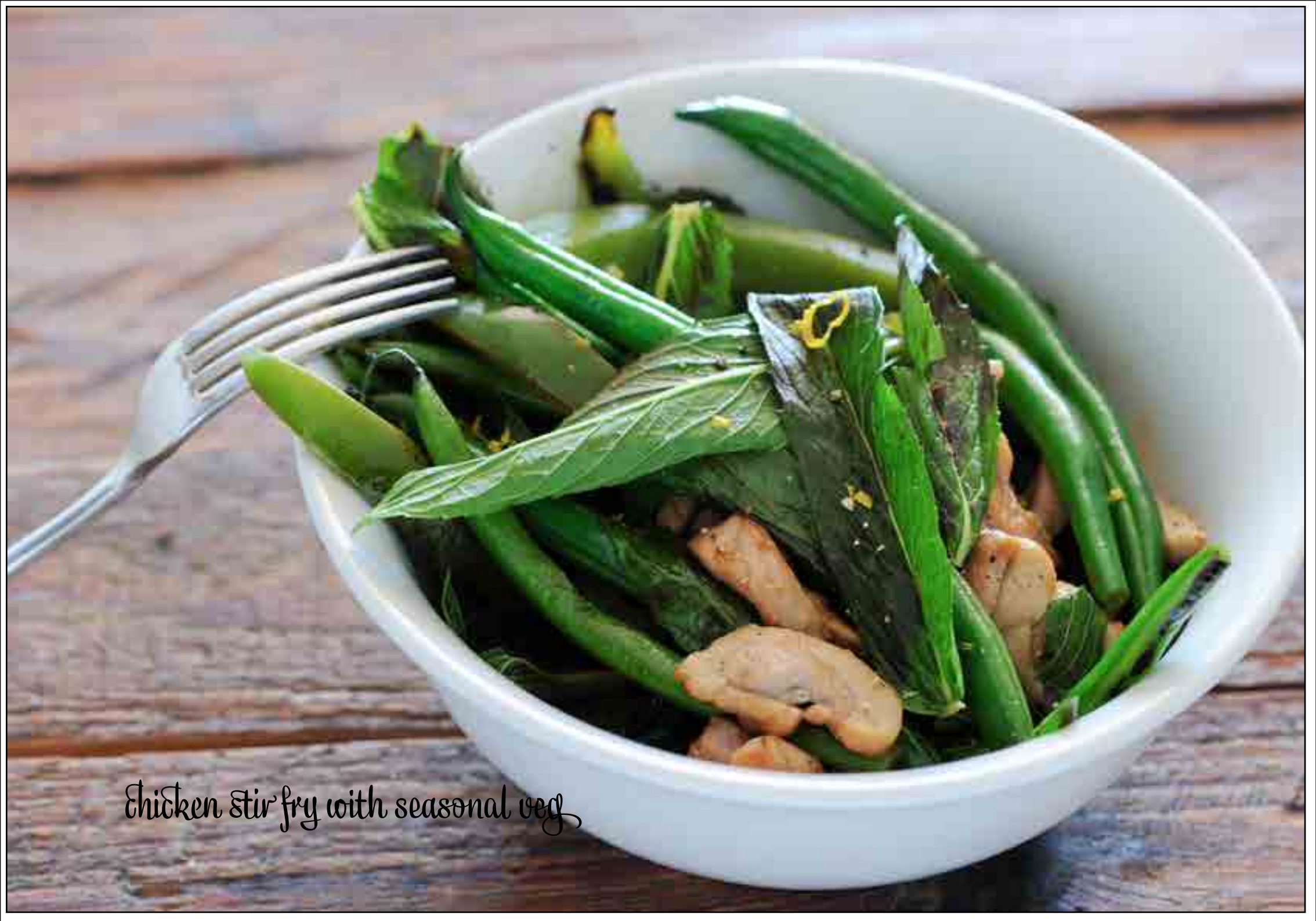
carnivore – serve as a side dish to roast chicken.

no balsamic? – lemon juice is a lovely fresh alternative.

other uses for the dressing? – toss with mixed salad leaves for a new take on the classic green salad.



video



Chicken stir fry with seasonal veg

CHICKEN STIR FRY WITH SEASONAL VEG

The thing with stir frying is that it is one of the best methods for cooking food quickly. We tend to associate it only with Asian flavourings and seasonings. However, it can be just as delicious with only a splash of lemon juice to freshen things up.

serves 2

*3-4 chicken thigh fillets, thinly sliced
2 handfuls green beans, tops trimmed
1 green bell pepper (capsicum), sliced
1 bunch mint, leaves picked & torn
2 lemons*

1. Heat a large frying pan (skillet) or wok on a high heat. Add a few tablespoons oil to the pan and stir fry the chicken for about 2 minutes or until starting to brown and just cooked. Remove from the pan and place in a clean bowl.
2. Add the beans and peppers to the pan and cover with a lid or tray. Cook for 2 minutes.
3. After 2 minutes, give the beans a stir, add a splash of water, cover and cook for another 2 minutes.
4. Test the beans to make sure they are tender with still a little crunch. Return the chicken and any juices to the pan with 3-4 tablespoons lemon juice and zest of 1 lemon. Stir fry for a few seconds to warm up the chicken.
5. Remove from the heat. Season and toss in the mint.

video

VARIATIONS

vegan - replace the chicken with sliced tofu. OR skip all together and serve with a very generous handful of roasted cashews or almonds.

vegetarian - skip the chicken and serve the stir fried veg and herbs with a good goats cheese or ricotta crumbled over the top.

more substantial - serve with steamed rice or cauliflower 'rice' (finely grated cauliflower)

different veg - don't feel like you need to stick to beans and peppers. Asparagus, zucchini, red peppers, broccoli, broccolini, cauliflower or carrots would all work.

prefer chicken breast? - no problem. I find that breast tends to dry out more easily so be super careful not to over cook.

other meat? - lamb fillet or backstraps would be lovely with the mint. Finely sliced beef fillet or tenderloin would also work.

asian vibe - if your stir fry must have an asian sauce, add a splash of soy or oyster sauce in with the lemon juice. And a little chilli if that's your thing.



Chicken & broccoli stir fry

CHICKEN & BROCCOLI STIR FRY

Stir fries make the perfect quick Slow Carb dinner. Feel free to play around with this recipe - mixing up the veggies. Or you could easily change the protein to beef, pork, tofu or even eggs!

I've used frozen broccoli for convenience, but fresh broccoli will be just as lovely, if not more so.

serves 2

2 chicken breasts, finely sliced
1 bag frozen broccoli (500g / 1lb) or fresh
3 tablespoons oyster sauce
1 tablespoon lime juice
1 cup cashew nuts (150g / 5oz)

1. Heat a large frying pan or wok on a very high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons peanut or macadamia oil to the pan and add chicken immediately.
3. Stir fry for a few minutes or until the chicken is no longer pink. Remove chicken from the pan.
4. Add broccoli and cook stirring occasionally until the broccoli is tender and hot.
5. Return the chicken to the pan with the oyster sauce, lime juice & nuts. Stir until hot. Taste and season.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - Feel free to try different types of meat such as beef or pork. Tender cuts are the best. Minced chicken (ground) would also be lovely.

fish free - Some oyster sauce actually contains oysters (who knew?) replace the oyster sauce with hoisin sauce or soy sauce or track down a vegetarian 'oyster' sauce.

gluten free - Some oyster sauce brands contain gluten thickeners. Replace with gluten-free soy sauce (tamari) or find an oyster sauce that is gluten-free.

vegetarian / vegan - replace the chicken with tofu or a can of drained beans and replace oyster sauce with vegetarian 'oyster sauce' or soy.

nut-free - replace cashews with 1/2 can drained white or black beans.

video



Chicken & basil stir fry

CHICKEN & BASIL STIR FRY

This is my super simple version of the Thai dish 'gai larb'. I love this quick simple rendition, but feel free to add in a few more ingredients such as a little garlic and ginger. Lime juice is the traditional citrus used in Thailand, but if you're having problems sourcing limes, like I was the other day, lemon juice makes a great substitute.

Serve with finely grated raw cauliflower or steamed rice (for the non-slow-carbers).

serves 1-2

500g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken

3 -4 large red chillies

2 tablespoons fish sauce

4 tablespoons lime juice

small bunch basil, leaves picked.

1. Place a wok or large frying pan (skillet) over a very high heat for a few minutes.
2. When the pan is hot, add a little peanut or other neutral flavoured oil and stir fry the chicken and chillies for a few minutes or until chicken is cooked through.
3. Add fish sauce and lime juice and remove from the heat. Taste and add a little more of the sauces if you think it needs it.
4. Toss in basil leaves and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

fish-free – replace the fish sauce with soy sauce or hoisin sauce.

vegetarian / vegan – try stir frying firm tofu instead and replace the fish sauce with soy sauce.

herbs – feel free to play around with the fresh herbs. Basil is hard to beat, but mint and/or coriander will also add the burst of freshness you're looking for.

chicken & veg – chopped fresh veg such as carrots, zucchini, green onions (scallions) or red capsicum (peppers) will add colour and interesting texture.

video



beef & black bean stir fry

BEEF & BLACK BEAN STIR FRY

My Irishman is a big fan of the black bean sauce. One of his specialties is a chicken and black bean stir fry which is just lovely.

If you can't get your hands on dried salted black beans, you could substitute in a commercial black bean sauce. Or just skip the black beans and increase the amount of soy sauce.

serves 2

450g (1lb) minced (ground) beef
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 tablespoons dried black beans
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 bunch bok choy

1. Heat a large wok or fry pan on a high heat. Add a few tablespoons of oil and beef.
2. Stir fry beef for a few minutes. Chop garlic and add to the beef.
3. Meanwhile, combine black beans, soy sauce and 2 tablespoons water. Wash bok choy and roughly chop.
4. When the beef is well browned, add the sauce mix and stir fry for another minute.
5. Add bok choy and cook, covered, stirring occasionally for a few minutes or until bok choy is wilted. Taste & season.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - try different cuts of beef or even chicken.

vegan / vegetarian - replace beef with crumbled firm tofu.

different veg - feel free to play around with different Asian greens or add in other vegetables. Sliced red capsicum (peppers), carrots, green onions, zucchini, broccoli are all good.

can't find black beans? - replace with a commercial black bean sauce or skip all together and use a little more soy sauce

hot! - add in 1-2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes or 1-2 chopped fresh red chillies with the garlic.



video



beef & broccoli stir fry

BEEF & BROCCOLI STIR FRY

This is one of my all time favourite simple suppers inspired by my favourite food writer Nigel Slater. My Irishman loves it so much that he made it for dinner 4 nights in a row when I was away in New York.

serves 2-3

500g (1lb) ground (minced) beef

2 cloves garlic, finely sliced

2 heads broccoli

4 tablespoons oyster sauce

1 bunch coriander (cilantro), chopped

1. Preheat a large wok or frying pan on a very high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons peanut or other neutral flavoured oil and stir fry the beef.
3. While the beef is browning, finely slice the broccoli stems and chop the head into bite sized trees. Add garlic to the beef and continue to cook until well browned.
4. Add broccoli and a few tablespoons water and cover the pan.
5. Continue to cook on a high heat with the lid on, stirring every 2 minutes until the broccoli is bright green and tender but still a tiny bit crunchy. If it starts to burn, add a little more water.
6. Stir in oyster sauce. Taste and season and serve with chopped coriander on top.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan - replace the ground beef with crumbled firm tofu or 2 drained cans of lentils. It won't brown up as much as the beef but will still be lovely. And make sure you use a 'vegetarian' oyster sauce - they are available.

no oyster sauce? - Replace with hoisin sauce or even sweet soy sauce. Although to be honest - oyster sauce has the best flavour here - even the vegetarian oyster sauces taste delicious.

chilli beef - add in some fresh or dried chilli.

ginger - My Irishman likes to add a few tablespoons of finely shredded fresh ginger in with the garlic.

coriander-free - Some people aren't keen on coriander (cilantro). If you're not sure, serve it on the side so everyone can add their own. Otherwise replace the coriander with fresh mint or parsley leaves.

nutty - a handful of roasted cashews adds a different dimension and some crunch. Especially good in the lentil vegetarian option.

video



MEAT-FREE *mondays*

MEAT-FREE

mondays

Whether you choose to eat meat or not, I think you'll agree that eating more vegetables is definitely a step in the right direction when it comes to healthy eating.

And we won't even go into the sustainability aspect.

For about the last year, I've been making my Mondays meat-free and really loving the results.

Here are a selection of my favourite veggie recipes. Please don't feel like you need to limit them to just once a week.

- :: [parmesan peas with noodles](#)
- :: [quick veggie satay](#)
- :: [miso soup with bok choy & tofu](#)
- :: [veggie sang choi bau](#)
- :: [warm beets with goats cheese](#)
- :: [broccoli with hummus](#)
- :: [veggie gumbo with a poached egg](#)
- :: [zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce](#)
- :: [veggie burritos](#)
- :: [thai red veggie curry](#)
- :: [baked eggs with green pea salad](#)
- :: [curried scrambled eggs](#)
- :: [carotti tofunaise](#)
- :: [veggie kiev](#)
- :: [15 minute falafels](#)

parmesan peas with noodles



PARMESAN PEAS WITH NOODLES

I love using noodles instead of pasta in more Italian style dishes because there are so many noodles which cook more quickly. It might sound a little weird, but if you give it a try you'll see that the noodles take on the flavours of the 'sauce' and it's actually really lovely.

serves 2

2-3 tablespoons butter

1/2 packet frozen peas (250g / 9oz)

1 packet soft noodles (200g / 7oz), see note above

2-3 handfuls grated parmesan cheese

1. Heat a frying pan or skillet on a medium high heat. Add a little oil, the butter and peas and cook for a few minutes to start the peas defrosting.
2. Break the noodles apart a little with your fingers and add to the pan. Stir fry until the peas are hot and the noodles softened. Season.
3. Serve with parmesan on top.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free - use olive oil instead of the butter and serve with finely grated brazil nuts or almond meal instead of the parmesan.

low GI / slow carb / gluten-free - replace noodles with a drained can of chickpeas or white beans.

different noodles - replace with cooked pasta or dried wheat or soba noodles cooked according to the packet directions.

carnivore - brown some bacon or chorizo in the pan before starting at step 1.

pea-free - replace peas with frozen broccoli or cauliflower. Will need longer cooking before the noodles are added.



video



quick veggie satay

QUICK VEGGIE SATAY

There's a big peanut butter fan in our house. So anything satay tends to be an instant winner. This isn't the best looking dish, but please don't let that put you off!

serves 2

300g (11oz) firm tofu, crumbled
1/2 bag frozen peas (250g / 9oz)
1-2 tablespoons Thai red curry paste
3-4 tablespoons peanut butter
1-2 tablespoon soy sauce

1. Heat a generous glug of oil in a large frying pan or skillet. Stir fry the tofu for 2-3 minutes or until starting to brown.
2. Add peas and continue to cook for another few minutes.
3. Add curry paste, peanut butter and soy and stir until combined. Taste and add extra of the 3 flavourings as you think it needs it.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – replace tofu with pork sausage meat or minced (ground) chicken or even beef.

soy-free – use fish sauce or salt instead of the soy sauce. And see the carnivore section for tofu replacement ideas.

no Thai curry paste? – replace with 2-3 teaspoons of good quality curry powder instead.

different veg - replace peas with spinach.

video

miso soup with bok choy & tofu



MISO SOUP WITH BOK CHOY & TOFU

It's taken me a while to figure out the secret to great miso soup. It's all about not letting it get too hot and boil away like crazy - miso is sensitive, kinda like tea.

The paler colour your miso, the more mild the flavour. I prefer white miso. This is the only time I use silken tofu. Firm tofu would make a fine substitute if that's all you had.

serves 2

300g silken tofu

3 - 4 tablespoons white miso paste

1 bunch bok choy, washed

2 - 3 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Bring 2 1/2 cups water to boil in a medium saucepan.
2. Add tofu, miso paste and bok choy.
3. Bring back to a simmer then remove from the heat.
4. Add lemon juice. Taste and season, adding extra lemon and / or miso if you think it needs it.

VARIATIONS

carnivores - Replace the tofu with an equal quantity of finely sliced raw chicken breast. Add to the water and allow to simmer until the chicken is just white before proceeding to step 2.

mushroom miso - Replace the tofu with a similar quantity of button or shiitake mushrooms. Allow the mushrooms to simmer until tender - between 5 & 10 minutes.

soy-free - Replace the tofu with mushrooms or chicken as above and use vegetable stock or chicken stock in place of the water.

different veg - While the bok choy is lovely, baby spinach, different Asian greens, chard or collard greens would all be happy in this soup.



veggie sang choi bau



VEGGIE SANG CHOI BAU

This is a great example of tofu stepping in to a traditionally meat-based dish for a super veggie treat. This recipe yields two moderately sized servings. If you're feeding a particularly hungry vegetarian, it might be a good idea to double the recipe.

serves 2

350g (3/4lb) firm tofu, drained & crumbled
1 can water chestnuts (225g / 8oz), drained
4 – 6 tablespoons hoisin sauce
1 – 2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes
6 leaves iceberg lettuce, washed

1. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a large frying pan or skillet.
2. Cook the tofu and water chestnuts, stirring frequently until browned and cooked through.
3. Add chilli and hoisin sauce. Cook until everything is hot.
4. Taste and season.
5. Serve hot tofu in a bowl with lettuce leaves for wrapping on the side.

VARIATIONS

carnivores – Replace tofu with ground (minced) beef, pork or chicken. And you could replace the hoisin with oyster sauce, either is fine.

trouble finding water chestnuts? – Replace with a generous handful of nuts. Roasted cashews work really well.

green onions – A handful of sliced green onions (scallions) will add some complexity.

mushroom – Soak a handful of dried shiitake mushrooms and slice before adding to the pan with the tofu.

video



warm beets with goats cheese

WARM BEETS WITH GOATS CHEESE

Beets, or beetroot as we call them in Australia are one of my favourite veg. If you have time to roast your own beets that's great, just scrub and cut them into chunks. Drizzle with a little balsamic and olive oil and roast at 200C covered for 45mins to 1hour or until tender.

This salad is equally delicious with pre-cooked or canned beets from the store, so feel free to use that option if you're short on time.

serves 2

1 bunch beets, roasted or 1 can beets, drained
4 handfuls baby spinach
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
100g (3oz) soft goats cheese
handful sunflower seeds, roasted

1. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a large frying pan. Add spinach and cook, stirring over a medium high heat until the spinach is starting to wilt.
2. Add beets and continue to cook and stir until beets are warm. Another minute or so.
3. Remove from heat and drizzle with vinegar. Taste & season.
4. Divide between two dinner plates. Top with crumbled cheese and scatter over the sunflower seeds.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – replace the cheese with roast cauliflower florettes or roast field mushrooms.

seed-free – either skip the sunflower seeds or replace with very finely diced red onion for crunch and sharpness.

higher protein – sunflower seeds are quite rich in protein, so feel free to double or triple the seed addition. Otherwise a can of drained lentils added with the beets will make for a more substantial meal.

carnivore – brown a few sliced chorizo sausages in the pan before wilting the spinach.

can't find sherry vinegar? – No problem. Replace with red wine vinegar or balsamic.

video

broccoli with hummus



BROCCOLI WITH HUMMUS

This super simple broccoli is one of my all-time favourite ways to cook this unique vegetable.

It's important to cover the broccoli when cooking so it chars as well as steams. If you don't have a lid, use a baking tray or even some foil.

serves 2

2 heads broccoli

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz)

3 tablespoons lemon juice

3 tablespoons tahini

2 small cloves garlic, peeled

1. Heat a large frying pan on a very high heat. Chop your broccoli into mini trees.
2. Add a few tablespoons olive oil to the pan and add broccoli immediately. Cover and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Stir broccoli, recover and cook for another 2 minutes or until how you like it.
4. For hummus, combine chickpeas, tahini, garlic, lemon juice and 3 tablespoons canning liquid from the chickpeas in a food processor.
5. Whizz until smooth. Taste & season.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - For a more substantial meal, brown some ground beef until really well cooked. Season and sprinkle over the broccoli.

sesame free - Make a chickpea dip by omitting the tahini. Or replace the tahini with almond or other nut butter.

chickpea free - If you're trying to minimise chickpeas in your diet because of their relatively high carb content, feel free to make a white bean hummus or even lentil hummus (I haven't tried this because I thought of it only now but I think it's going to be a winner)

can't find tahini? - Tahini is ground up sesame seeds and is usually found in the 'health food' section of the supermarket. You might need to go to a dedicated health food store to get it. In Australia it's readily available in supermarkets or middle eastern grocery stores.

still can't find tahini - just skip it and make a simple chickpea, lemon & garlic dip OR replace with almond or other nut butter.

video



veggie gumbo

VEGGIE GUMBO

There's a bit of a disclaimer attached to this recipe. I haven't actually been to Louisiana and certainly haven't ever eaten an authentic gumbo, vegetarian or otherwise. I've skipped the rouille usually used to thicken and flavour gumbos. File powder which is usually used to flavour gumbos, is hard to find where I live. Cajun spice mix, however does do a wonderful job of bringing this bastardised gumbo to life. In the picture I've served with poached eggs - see variations.

serves 2

1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)
4 summer squash or 2 zucchini, chopped
1 red bell pepper (capsicum), chopped
1/4 cauliflower, grated
2-3 teaspoons cajun spice mix

1. Heat a large pot on a high heat. Add the tomatoes and 1 cup of water. Bring to a simmer.
2. Add veg to the pot along with the spice mix. Cover and simmer for about 5 minutes.
3. Taste and season the gumbo, adding more spice mix if you think it needs it.
4. Divide gumbo between two bowls and top with a little more spice mix.

VARIATIONS

vegan - replace the poached egg with a generous handful of toasted pine nuts or almonds.

carnivore - replace the veg or add some diced chicken thighs and simmer until just cooked.

carb-lovers - replace the cauli with cooked rice. Add it at the end and allow to warm through before serving.

different veg - okra would be more authentic but (thankfully) it isn't available here. Most veg would work well here. A few greens wouldn't go astray.

to serve with poached eggs - bring a small saucepan of salted water to the boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and add vinegar. Break egg into a small cup and slip it into the water. Repeat with another egg. Simmer gently for 3 minutes or until cooked to your liking.

video



zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce

ZUCCHINI BURGERS WITH YOGHURT SAUCE

I'm super excited about these burgers. At last a vegetarian burger that celebrates one of my favourite veggies. The yoghurt sauce is super simple and a great thing to have up your sleeve. It's amazing what a little salt and pepper can do to a good quality natural yoghurt.

serves 2

2 zucchini, grated

75g (3oz) ground almonds

1 egg

4 tablespoons natural yoghurt

2 handfuls baby spinach leaves

1. Combine zucchini, almonds and egg in a large bowl. Season and using your hands form into 2 patties and place on a large plate.
2. Heat a pan on a medium heat. Add a little oil and carefully slide the burgers into the pan.
3. Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side, being super careful when you turn because the burgers do have a tendency to fall apart. Burgers are done when they're a deep golden brown colour on both sides.
4. Meanwhile, season yoghurt generously with salt and pepper to make the sauce.
5. Serve burgers on a bed of baby spinach with zucchini drizzled over.

VARIATIONS

nut-free – replace the almond meal with soft bread crumbs.

egg-free – the egg is really critical here to prevent the burgers falling apart, so don't be tempted to substitute egg replacers.

carnivore – serve with some crisp bacon on top.

dairy-free – replace the yoghurt sauce with a tahini sauce by combining equal parts of tahini, water and lemon juice. OR serve with a nut based pesto.



video



veggie burritos

VEGGIE BURRITOS

The secret to great burritos is to make sure the tortillas are steamed to give that lovely soft texture that stays together. My favourite way to do this is to wrap the tortillas in foil with a few sheets of damp kitchen paper and pop them in the oven for the steam to work its magic while you get on with preparing the fillings and accompaniments.

serves 2

2 large tortillas

1 dried ancho chilli

1 can black beans (400g / 14oz), drained

4-6 tablespoons sour cream

1 bunch coriander (cilantro), chopped

2 limes, zested + juice

1. Heat oven to 180C (350F) and bring your kettle to the boil.
2. Place a large sheet of foil on a work space. Soak 2 pieces paper towel in water and squeeze so they are damp but not dripping. Lay one piece of damp paper towel on the foil. Top with the tortillas and the remaining sheet of towel. Wrap to seal the foil parcel and place in the oven to heat.
3. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a large frying pan or skillet. Add beans and stir fry for a few minutes, crushing as you go.
4. Place the chilli in a small bowl and cover with boiled water and allow to stand.
5. Combine half the cilantro with the lime juice & zest. Season.
6. Drain & chop chilli. Add to the beans. Stir until chilli is heated.
7. Remove tortillas from the oven. Fill with beans, cilantro, sour cream & salsa. Repeat with the other tortilla.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free - replace the sour cream with vegan mayonnaise or some avocado mashed with a little lime juice.

more filling - beans and rice are a traditional combo. Stir some cooked short grain rice in with the beans and allow to heat through.

carnivore - either replace the beans with some ground beef and cook until well browned. Or add beef in as well as the beans.

slow-carb - either replace the tortillas with washed leaves of iceberg lettuce to make wraps. Or serve the beans in bowls topped with the sour cream, fresh coriander (cilantro) and salsa. Hungry people may like to double the beans and chilli.

can't find dried ancho chilli? - any large dried red chilli will work. Chipotle would be good. Just be careful with the heat level. Alternatively add 2 teaspoons of smoked paprika to the beans and a pinch of dried chilli powder.

cilantro-free - use a commercial red salsa instead.

video



thai red veggie curry

THAI RED VEGGIE CURRY

I love Thai curries. Feel free to play around with this base recipe, add in chicken or beef if you like. Or mix it up with the veggies. While regular basil works a treat, fragrant Thai basil will take it to a new (authentic) level, if you can find some.

serves 2

4-6 tablespoons red curry paste
1 can coconut cream (400mL / 14oz)
300g (10oz) firm tofu, drained & chopped
1 bag frozen cauliflower (500g / 1lb)
handful fresh basil leaves

1. Heat a large saucepan on a high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons peanut or other neutral oil to the pan and add curry paste. Cook for about 20 seconds or until it smells heavenly.
3. Quickly add coconut cream. Stir and add tofu and cauliflower.
4. Simmer for about 7 -8 minutes or until cauliflower is cooked & tofu is hot.
5. Taste & season, adding a little brown sugar if you like it slightly sweet.
6. Serve topped with fresh basil leaves.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – Replace tofu with an equal quantity of finely sliced chicken breast or beef. Stir fry meat first in the pan until brown, remove and keep warm while you cook the curry as above then add the meat back at the end and bring back to a simmer.

vegan / vegetarian – Make sure your curry paste doesn't contain shrimp paste or fish sauce. Ayam brand is OK.

different veg – while cauliflower is my favourite vegetable for a curry on account of its ability to soak up the flavours, other vegetables will also work well. Try carrots, red capsicum (peppers), zucchini, peas, snow peas, asparagus, green beans. Cooked potatoes are also really delicious.

soy-free – skip the tofu and replace with a drained can of lentils or white beans.



video



baked eggs with green pea salad

BAKED EGGS WITH GREEN PEA SALAD

There's something special about baking eggs in little ramekins. Apart from being super cute, they make the humble egg feel anything but boring.

Don't be tempted to skip the waterbath step, it's critical for keeping the oven temperature gentle enough so the eggs cook in the middle without overcooking at the edges.

serves 2

2 eggs

2 handfuls frozen peas

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

1/2 bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves picked

parmesan cheese

1. Preheat your oven to 200C (400F) and bring your kettle to the boil.
2. Grease 2 ramekins and crack an egg into each. Place ramekins in a heat proof dish and fill the dish with boiling water to come 1/2 way up the sides of the ramekins.
3. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until the egg white just feels set to the touch.
4. Meanwhile combine the vinegar with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season.
5. Place peas in a strainer and pour boiling water over the peas to quickly defrost them. Drain and toss peas in the dressing.
6. Add parsley and toss. Serve eggs with salad on the side and parmesan grated over the top.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - serve eggs layered with some finely sliced prosciutto.

vegan - skip the parmesan and serve the salad with avocado halves instead of the eggs. Feel free to bake the avocado and serve warm. Will take about 10 mins in a hot oven.

egg-free - replace the eggs with a few scoops of ricotta and bake until golden.

more substantial - crack 2 eggs into each of the buttered ramekins and bake for 12-15 minutes.

super quick - microwave the eggs on HIGH for 60 seconds per egg. It's important to butter the ramekins so the eggs don't stick.

truffled eggs - serve eggs with a small drizzle of truffle oil.

video



curried scrambled eggs

CURRIED SCRAMBLED EGGS

While scrambled eggs tend to have a distinctly breakfasty feel, it doesn't take much to dress them up for an evening out on the town - or at home. Just soften an onion and add in a little chilli and curry powder and you have a wonderfully fast vego supper.

serves 2

1 large onion, peeled & diced
1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes
2 teaspoons curry powder
4 eggs
1/2 bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves picked

1. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a medium saucepan over a medium heat.
2. Add onion and cook, covered, stirring occasionally for about 5 minutes or until onions are soft and a little golden. If the onion starts to brown too much, turn down the heat and add a splash of water.
3. Meanwhile lightly whisk eggs in a small bowl and season.
4. When the onions are soft, add the chilli and curry and stir for a few seconds.
5. Add eggs to the pan and cook for about 30 seconds. Stir well, scraping up the cooked egg from the base of the pan and cook for another 30 seconds or until the egg is almost cooked.
6. Remove from the heat, stir in parsley & serve immediately.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - serve with crispy bacon or some cooked sausages.

vegan - replace eggs with about 350g (12oz) crumbled firm tofu. And increase the curry powder a little.

greener - replace the parsley with a few handfuls of baby spinach and allow to wilt into the eggs before serving.

coriander eggs - replace the curry powder with ground coriander and replace the parsley with coriander leaves (cilantro).



video

carotti tofunaise



CAROTTI TOFUNAISE

If you're a big cheese fan, serve with freshly grated parmesan, but honestly, you don't need it. I've made this with regular firm tofu as well as smoked tofu. While both were delicious, the smoked tofu did have a slight edge in interesting flavours.

serves 2-3

2 brown onions, chopped
2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz each)
300g (10oz) firm tofu, crumbled
2 - 3 large carrots
small handful fresh basil leaves

1. Heat a few tablespoons olive oil in a large pan and cook onion, covered over a medium low heat, until the onion is soft.
2. Add tomatoes and their juices and break up with a spoon.
3. Bring to a simmer. Cook uncovered for about 20 minutes, or until the tomatoes have reduced into a lovely sauce.
4. Add the crumbled tofu and allow to simmer for another 5 minutes
5. Meanwhile, bring a medium saucepan of salted water to the boil. Shave carrot into long 'noodles' using a vegetable peeler.
6. Boil carrot noodles for 3-4 minutes or until tender. Drain well and return to the saucepan.
7. Season the tofu sauce generously. And toss a few tablespoons in with the cooked carrot.
8. Divide between your plates. Top with remaining sauce and a few torn basil leaves.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – use minced or ground beef in place of the tofu. Brown the meat first then let it simmer in with the tomatoes.

soy-free - replace tofu with a can of drained lentils or use cooked dried lentils.

pasta – traditionalists may prefer to serve with spaghetti or other pasta instead of the carrots.

different 'noodles' – finely shaved zucchini, baked for 10 minutes or until tender are another favourite.

beet tofunaise – serve the tofu sauce on top of finely shaved rounds of raw beetroot.



veggie kiev

VEGGIE KIEV

Don't be put off by the appearance of this dish. It's one of those ugly ducklings who taste so much better than they look. It's the type of dish that will give you an appreciation for garlic and butter. In the photo I've served my kiev's with a shaved cabbage salad - see the variations. A good green salad will work just as well.

serves 1-2

1 can red kidney beans (400g / 14oz), drained

1 egg

100g (3oz) almond meal

2 large knobs butter

1 small clove garlic, finely chopped

1. Heat a large frying pan on a medium heat. Mash beans in a bowl (hands are best). And stir in the egg and half the ground almonds.
2. Sandwich garlic between two slices of butter to make little rectangular sandwiches.
3. Place remaining almonds on a plate. Divide bean mixture in two. Form half the mixture into a log. Place the garlic butter sandwiches in the middle and use your hands to smooth the bean mixture around the butter. Place on the bed of ground almonds. Repeat.
4. Flatten kiev's slightly and roll to coat in almond meal.
5. Add a little oil to the pan and fry kiev's until deeply golden brown on both sides - about 4 minutes each side.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy free - skip the butter and make a garlic oil by combining garlic with 2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Serve kiev's drizzled with the garlic oil.

chicken - replace the beans and egg with 2 chicken breasts. Make a little pocket with a sharp knife and insert your butter. Then roll in the almond meal and fry as per the kiev's. Will take 3-4 minutes each side.

bean-free - replace the beans with about 250g crumbled tofu. Or try broccoli kiev by finely grating 1 head of broccoli with a food processor and using that in place of the beans.

nut-free / less expensive - replace the almond meal with breadcrumbs for a cheaper nut free option.

shaved cabbage salad, to serve - Combine 1 tablespoon lemon juice with 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl. Shave 1/4 white cabbage. Toss in the dressing.

video

15 minute falafels



15 MINUTE FALAFELS

My brother called me when I was making these falafels. When I said I couldn't talk because I didn't want to burn my falafels, he wanted to know what were falafels? In my haste I explained them as 'like meatballs for vegetarians'. He wasn't convinced that they'd be any good. Why would you go and take his favourite part (ie. the meat) out of a meatball? I guess I didn't do them justice, these falafels are far more delicious than any old meatball.

serves 2

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 bunch flat leaf parsley

1 egg

6-8 tablespoons natural yoghurt

1. Preheat an overhead grill (broiler) on its highest setting.
2. Place chickpeas in a food processor with the cumin, a few sprigs of parsley, saving the remaining parsley to serve. Pulse until roughly chopped and still chunky.
3. Add the egg and stir to combine by hand. Season.
4. Drizzle a baking tray with olive oil. Using a teaspoon and clean hands, form the mixture into small balls about the size of a quail egg. Place the falafels on the tray as you go.
5. Drizzle falafels with more oil and cook under the hot grill for 5-7 minutes or until starting to brown.
6. Season yoghurt with salt & pepper.
7. When falafels are brown, turn and cook for another few minutes. Serve with yoghurt and the torn leaves of the remaining parsley.

VARIATIONS

vegan / egg-free - replace the egg with about 50g fresh bread crumbs. If the mixture is too dry, a little water will help. May be difficult to get the falafels to stay together without the egg. And serve with hummus instead of yoghurt.

carnivore - replace the chickpeas and egg with ground lamb or beef. Just combine with the cumin and parsley and form into balls. Grill as per the falafels but they may take a little longer to cook through.

pita bread - serve everything wrapped in warm pita breads.

dairy-free - serve with hummus instead of the yoghurt.

fava beans - sometimes in Egypt they make falafels with fava beans - try this recipe with canned butter beans for something different.





A FLASH IN *the pan*

A FLASH IN *the pan*

If I had to limit myself to just one pan in the kitchen, I'd keep my trusty cast iron skillet or fry pan.

Actually when I was in New York recently, I think the only pot I did use in my tiny kitchen was the high sided fry pan. I even made a shallow soup for one in it one night.

This chapter is a celebration of the work horse of the kitchen equipment.

- :: chilli chicken with hummus
- :: lemon steaks with broccoli
- :: eggplant parimigiana
- :: chickpea burgers
- :: steak with spinach
- :: salt crusted burgers with lentil hummus
- :: chicken burgers with avocado
- :: sausages with lentils
- :: spanish chicken with white bean mash
- :: chicken &/or mushrooms
- :: vietnamese chicken balls

Chilli chicken with hummus



CHILLI CHICKEN WITH HUMMUS

Hummus is one of my favourite ingredients. It's wonderful here as a cross between a sauce and an accompaniment. You can get some decent commercial hummus these days so don't feel like you need to make your own from scratch.

serves 2

4 chicken thigh fillets
1 teaspoon dried chilli flakes or powder
8 tablespoons hummus
2 large handfuls washed salad leaves
1 lemon halved lengthwise

1. Heat a frying pan or skillet on a very high heat.
2. Trim fat from chicken and bash with your fist to even out the thickness. Rub with a little olive oil and sprinkle with chilli. Season.
3. Sear with the oiled side down for 3 minutes. Turn and cook for another 2-3 minutes or until chicken is cooked through.
4. Smear hummus over the base of 2 plates. Top with chicken and serve with leaves and salad on the side.

VARIATIONS

vegan – replace chicken with 2 field or portabello mushrooms per person. Trim and pan fry for about 4 minutes each side until the mushrooms are tender and juicy. Sprinkle on the chilli at the end before serving.

vegetarian – replace chicken with sliced halloumi cheese and cook in a little oil until golden and oozing.

home made hummus – whizz 1 can chickpeas with 3 tablespoons lemon juice, tahini, canning liquid and 1 clove garlic in a food processor until smooth.

more substantial – serve with pita bread for wrapping.



video



lemon steaks with broccoli

LEMON STEAKS WITH BROCCOLI

Bashing the steaks like this has three benefits. First, it allows them to cook quicker. It also makes it easier to tell when the steaks are cooked. And finally it tenderises the meat, meaning it's fine for less expensive cuts as well. Although truth be told, my favourite part of this recipe is how the lemon juice and olive oil mingles with the juices as the steaks rest to make the most wonderful instant sauce.

serves 2

2 steaks

1 head broccoli, sliced lengthwise

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Preheat a skillet or frying pan on a super high heat.
2. Using your fist or the base of a saucepan, bash steaks out until they are about half the thickness. Rub with olive oil and season.
3. Sear steaks for 2 minutes. Turn and sear for another 1-2 minutes, or until cooked to your liking.
4. Divide steaks between 2 warm dinner plates. Top with lemon and drizzle with your best peppery extra virgin olive oil.
5. Add a little oil to the pan and stir fry broccoli for a few minutes, or until charred on the outside.
6. Serve steaks topped with broccoli.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – Replace the steak with sliced halloumi cheese and cook in a little oil until golden and oozing. Serve straight away with the broccolini and chilli oil.

vegan – slice a block of tofu into 5mm (1/4in) thick slices and pan fry until golden on both sides.

fun – explore different types of meat. Chicken breast is lovely cooked in this way.

hot! – drizzle the steaks with chilli oil, or use a little dried chilli.

video



eggplant parimigiana

QUICK EGGPLANT PARMIGIANA

The secret to making eggplant parmigiana in 15 minutes is to skip the whole breading and frying step and use cooked eggplant from the deli. My preference would be for eggplant slices from the deli but unfortunately my deli had run out so I had to make do with eggplant in a jar. A little bit oilier but still delicious. For those that still need a bread fix, sprinkle the parmigiana with breadcrumbs before topping with the cheese and parmesan.

serves 2

1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)
8-10 slices grilled eggplant from the deli
5-6 small bocconcini balls
parmesan cheese
small handful fresh basil leaves

1. Preheat your overhead grill (broiler) on its highest setting and place a medium fry pan on a high heat.
2. Add a generous glug of olive oil and the tomatoes. Simmer for about 7 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, if the eggplant has been packed in oil, drain on paper towel.
4. Add eggplant to the tomato and push in to cover with the sauce. Scatter over the bocconcini and grate parmesan over the top.
5. Place under the hot grill for 4-5 minutes or until the cheese is golden and bubbling. Serve with basil leaves sprinkled over and a green salad on the side.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free- skip the cheese and replace with a couple of really generous handfuls of bread crumbs, preferably made from rustic sourdough.

carnivore - layer over a few slices of prosciutto either before adding the cheese or just before serving.

fresh eggplant - will take much longer than 15 minutes. But slice 1 large eggplant into 1cm (1/2in) slices and layer on a baking tray. Drizzle generously with olive oil and bake for 30-45 minutes or until soft and starting to brown. Then use as per the recipe.

no bocconcini? - just increase the amount of parmesan.



video



Chickpea burgers

CHICKPEA BURGERS

Inspired by Susan Austin's chickpea & roasted capsicum patties from 'Frost Bite: Easy Cooking for Your Freezer'. While I LOVE the flavours in these burgers, they are quite fragile, even with the egg to bind them. I've found it's important not to over-process the chickpeas to help avoid your burgers falling apart in the pan. Just pulse until chopped. The good news is they still taste delicious if they do happen to fall apart.

serves 2

1 can chickpeas (400g / 14oz), drained

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 egg

1/2 cup roasted red capsicum (bell pepper), diced

6 - 8 tablespoons natural yoghurt

shaved cucumber, to serve

1. Pulse chickpeas and cumin in a food processor for a few seconds or until roughly chopped. You don't want a smooth puree here.
2. Crack egg into a small bowl and whisk lightly. Add egg and pulse again for a few seconds.
3. Fold capsicum into the chickpeas by hand so it keeps its shape. Season and using your hands, form into 2 burgers. Pop in the fridge for a few minutes.
4. Heat a small fry pan on a medium high heat. Add a little oil and cook burgers for around 3 minutes on each side or until golden. Be careful when turning so they don't fall apart.
5. Meanwhile, stir yoghurt in a small bowl until smooth and season generously. Serve burgers with yoghurt and cucumber.

VARIATIONS

egg-free / vegan – we're relying on the egg to bind these fragile burgers, so I'm afraid you'll need to try a different recipe.

carnivore – serve with a few slices of crispy bacon.

beef – replace the chickpeas and egg with 400g (14oz) ground beef.

dairy-free – serve with a tahini sauce (equal amounts water, tahini and lemon juice) or hummus.



video

steak with spinach



STEAK WITH SPINACH

There's nothing like a good steak with some greens for a quick mid week dinner or a special occasion. I've really been getting in to frozen spinach of late because it's really inexpensive and saves all that prep time. If spinach isn't your thing feel free to serve your steak with a green salad instead. Or be like my dad and cook up a little packet of mixed frozen veg.

serves 2

2 steaks, at room temperature

1 packet frozen spinach (400g / 14oz), thawed

squeeze lemon juice

4-6 tablespoons whole egg mayonnaise

1 small cloves garlic, very finely chopped (optional)

1. Heat a frying pan (skillet) on a very high heat.
2. Scatter a scant teaspoon of fine salt over the pan and add steaks.
3. Cook on a very high heat for about 3 minutes each side for medium rare or until how you like it.
4. Remove steak and rest on a plate.
5. Decrease the temperature in the pan & add spinach. Cook until spinach is hot. Squeeze lemon over the spinach.
6. Combine garlic, if using with mayonnaise & serve with steak & spinach. Taste & season.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - Replace steaks with 1-2 large field mushrooms per person.

vegan - Replace steaks with 1-2 large field mushrooms per person and either use vegan mayonnaise or serve with tahini sauce (from the lentil burger recipe)

egg free - Serve with tahini sauce (made by combining two tablespoons each of water, tahini and lemon juice.)

fun - for a less expensive option serve the spinach & garlicky mayo with beef burgers or other burgers.



video



salt crusted burgers with lentil hummus

SALT CRUSTED BURGERS WITH LENTIL HUMMUS

These burgers are a regular feature in our house. By cooking them on a bed of salt, instead of in oil you get a lovely crust on the burger - almost as good as something from the BBQ.

serves 2

450g (1lb) ground (minced) beef
1 can lentils (400g / 14oz), drained
4 tablespoons lemon juice
4 tablespoons tahini
1 jar roasted red peppers (285g / 10oz)

1. Heat a frying pan on a very high heat. Shape the beef into 2 burger patties.
2. Sprinkle a scant teaspoon of salt over the base of the pan. Cook burgers for 3-4 minutes on each side.
3. Meanwhile, whizz lentils, lemon juice & tahini in a food processor. Taste. Season.
4. When the burgers are cooked, remove from the pan and add the drained peppers. Cook peppers for a minute or until just heated through.

VARIATIONS

sesame free - Make a lentil sauce by replacing the tahini with extra virgin olive oil. Or replace the tahini with almond or other nut butter.

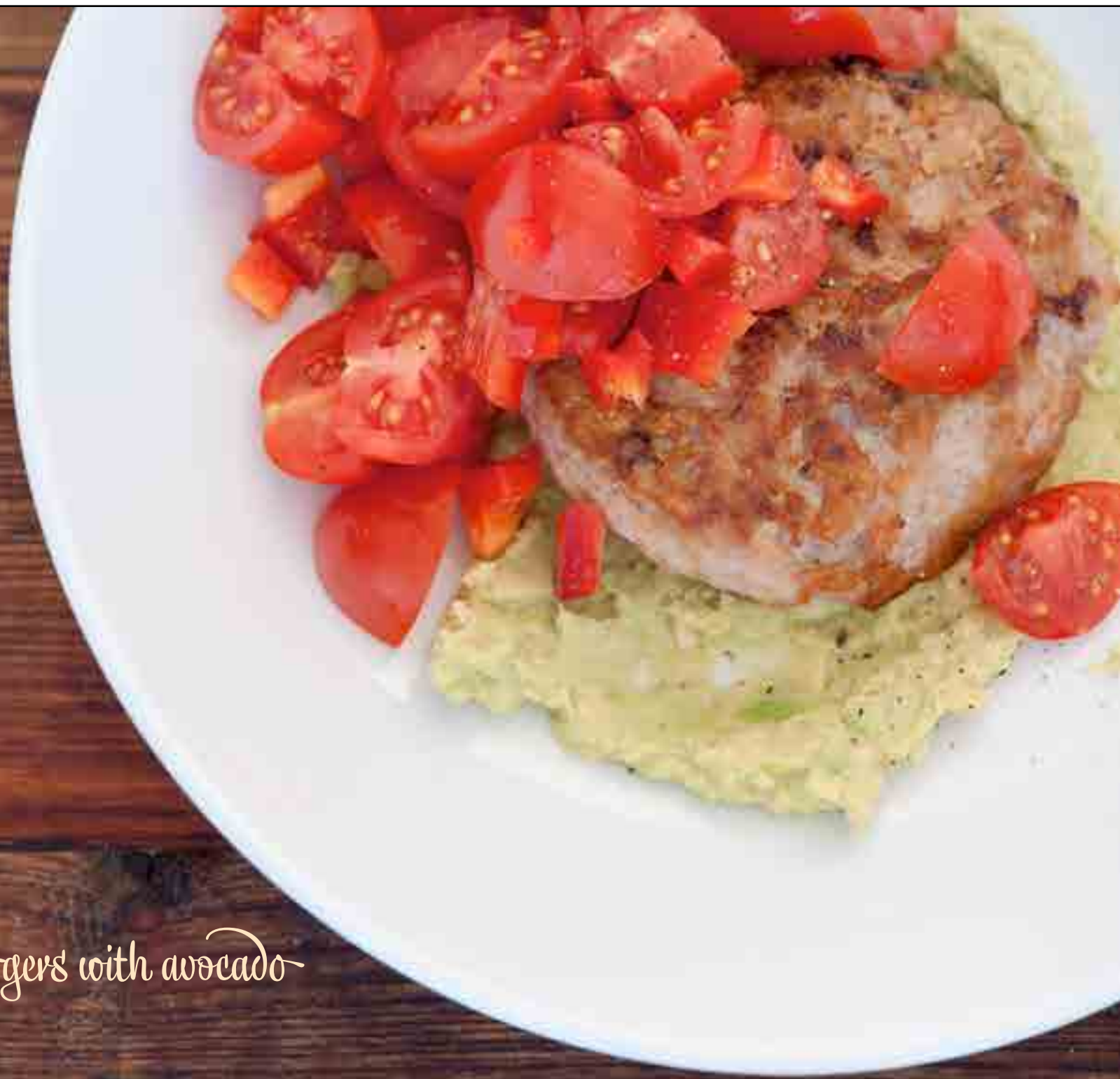
vegan - Try the lentil burgers made by mashing a drained can of lentils with a couple of handfuls of fresh breadcrumbs. Serve with hummus and peppers.

vegetarian - Try zucchini burgers with these accompaniments.

for fun - cook the salt crusted burgers and serve with your usual favourite burger accompaniments.



video



Chicken burgers with avocado

CHICKEN BURGERS WITH AVOCADO

While it's hard to beat a good burger in a bun, for mid week dinners I often fancy up my burgers by ditching the bread and serving with salad or veg and an interesting sauce.

I just love the colours in this dish with the vibrant 'red' salad and green avocado sauce. So pretty!

serves 2

450g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken

1 avocado

lemon juice

1 punnet (250g / 8oz) cherry tomatoes, halved

1 red capsicum (pepper)

1. Heat a medium frying pan (skillet) on a very high heat for about 3 minutes. You want it searing hot.
2. Divide chicken into 2 and form into 2 patties.
3. Sprinkle a scant teaspoon of salt over the base of the pan and add burgers.
4. Cook for about 4 minutes each side or until burgers are deeply golden.
5. Meanwhile, mash avocado flesh with 2 tablespoons lemon juice and season. Taste and add a little more lemon if you like.
6. Finely dice capsicum (pepper) and toss together with tomato and a squeeze of lemon.
7. Serve burgers on a bed of avocado mash with salad on the side.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - replace chicken with halloumi cheese. Slice into pieces about 1cm (1/3in) thick and pan fry in oil until golden.

vegan - Replace chicken with large field mushrooms. You'll need 1-2 mushrooms per person depending on their size. Either pan fry the mushrooms in oil OR roast in a 200C (400F) oven for about 30 minutes or until tender and juicy.

different meat - ground beef, ground buffalo, ground pork or ground lamb would all be lovely here.

green salad - if it's not Summer with tomatoes at their best, skip the red salad and serve the burgers and avocado with a simple green leaf salad instead.

avocado-free - serve burgers with a generous dollop of whole egg mayonnaise instead.



video



sausages with lentils

SAUSAGES WITH LENTILS

I love lentils and adore sausages, so it's no surprise that this combination is one of my favourites. I prefer plain pork sausages for this but feel free to play around with other bangers.

serves 2-3

3-4 thick pork sausages

200g (7oz) salami

1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)

1 can lentils (400g / 14oz)

2 knobs butter

1. Heat a large fry pan or skillet on a high heat. Add a little olive oil and the sausages.
2. While the sausages are browning, remove any plastic skin from the salami (not all salami will have it) and slice into coins about 1/2cm (1/4in) thick. Add to the pan.
3. Turn the sausages and cook for another minute to brown on both sides. Add the tomatoes and adjust the heat to a moderate simmer and leave to cook for 10 minutes.
4. Turn the sausages and continue to simmer the sausages until the 10 minutes is up and they feel firm.
5. Drain lentils well and add to the pan with the butter. Cook, stirring until the lentils are hot. If you're unsure about the sausages, cut into one and make sure they're cooked through.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – replace the sausages with 3-4 large field mushrooms, thickly sliced and replace the salami with some chopped red pepper (capsicum). The mushrooms may take a little longer to cook than the sausages. Replace butter with olive oil. Leave out the cheese in the salad or replace with finely grated brazil nuts.

dairy-free – skip the butter and finish with a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil instead. And ditch the cheese from the salad.

chilli - a little fresh or dried chilli wouldn't go astray here.

breakfasty – to turn this into a more brunch dish, serve with or without the lentils with a poached egg on top.

spinach – skip the cabbage salad and serve the sausages and lentils on a bed of washed baby spinach leaves.

gluten-free – make sure your sausages don't contain gluten fillers.

video



Spanish chicken with white bean mash

SPANISH CHICKEN WITH WHITE BEAN MASH

Smoked paprika and red peppers just scream of Spain to me. If you can't find smoked paprika, substitute in regular paprika but it won't have the same exotic flavour.

serves 2

*450g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken
1 tablespoon smoked paprika
1 red capsicum (pepper), sliced into ribbons
1 can white beans (400g / 14oz), drained
2 tablespoons lemon juice*

1. Heat a large frying pan (skillet) on a very high heat.
2. Add a few tablespoons of olive oil, chicken and paprika. Stir fry for a few minutes.
3. Meanwhile chop the pepper and add to the pan. Continue to stir fry until the chicken is golden and cooked through. Season.
4. Mash beans and lemon juice together and season.
5. Serve chicken on a bed of beans with a little extra lemon if you think it needs it.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian / vegan - replace chicken with crumbled tofu. You may like to increase the amount of paprika to add a little more flavour to the tofu. A few tablespoons of tomato paste will help too.

bean-free - serve chicken on a bed of your favourite pasta or noodles or even steamed rice.

more colourful - toss in a sliced green pepper or a handful of snowpeas at the end.

added crunch - a handful of roasted almonds, especially Spanish marcona almonds would add some lovely crunch.



video



Chicken &/or mushrooms with creamy mustard sauce

CHICKEN &/OR MUSHROOMS WITH CREAMY MUSTARD SAUCE

This was requested by one of my cooking school students, Deb, who was after something in a creamy sauce that could cater both to vegetarians such as herself and omnivores such as her partner. In the picture I've served with lemon broccolini - see variations for the recipe.

serves 2

2 portabello mushrooms or 1 chicken breast per person

1/2 cup white wine

1-2 tablespoons wholegrain mustard

1/2 cup cream (heavy / pure)

1. Place a large skillet (or two smaller ones) on a very high heat.
2. Trim mushroom stalks and bash the fat end of the chicken breast to make it a more even thickness. Season.
3. Add a little oil to the hot pan and sear the mushrooms and chicken for 2 minutes or until golden brown.
4. Turn chicken and mushrooms and cook for another 2 minutes, reducing the heat if it is starting to burn.
5. Add wine and allow to simmer and reduce for a minute or so. Reduce heat to medium. Stir in the mustard and cream and continue to simmer until the sauce has reduced slightly and the mushrooms and chicken are cooked through.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free - skip the chicken and just cook mushrooms. Ditch the cream and add a little extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil to the sauce to make it a little richer.

carnivore - skip the mushrooms. Pork cutlets would also be lovely instead of the chicken.

dairy-free - skip the cream in the sauce and finish the sauce with a generous drizzle of olive oil.

a bit of both - cook one chicken breast AND one mushroom for each person.

lemon broccolini, to serve - Bring 1cm (1/2in) of water to boil in a saucepan. Add 1 bunch broccolini and steam, covered for 5 minutes or until tender. Drain and add juice & zest from 1 lemon and a little extra virgin olive oil.

video



vietnamese chicken balls

VIETNAMESE CHICKEN BALLS

Vietnamese food is one of my favourite Asian cuisines. All those fresh herbs and pungent fish sauce combined with hot hot chilli, it's hard to be bored with all the wonderful flavours. I also love the French influences, like their love of coffee and crusty bread.

Serve meatballs with fresh herbs such as coriander (cilantro), mint or basil. And steamed rice or cauliflower 'rice' (grated raw cauliflower).

serves 2

2 tablespoons tomato paste or ketchup

3 tablespoons soy sauce

500g (1lb) minced (ground) chicken

5 small mushrooms

2 teaspoons sesame oil

1. Place a large fry pan on a high heat and add tomato paste or ketchup, 1 tablespoon soy sauce and 1 cup water. Bring to a simmer.

2. Combine chicken, chopped mushrooms, sesame oil and 2 tablespoons soy sauce in a large bowl. Using your hands and a tablespoon, shape the mixture into walnut sized balls, placing them in the simmering sauce as you go.

3. Cover the meatballs and simmer gently for 7-8 minutes.

4. When the meatballs are cooked through serve.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian - replace the chicken with 1 can drained lentils, 1 egg and 75g (3oz) almond meal.

carnivore - feel free to replace the chicken with pork, veal or even beef.

no sesame oil? - just skip it or replace with toasted sesame seeds

gluten-free - make sure you're using tamari or other good quality gluten-free soy sauce.



video

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with cooked green lentils, garnished with chopped red onions and small pieces of yellow vegetables. The bowl sits on a rustic wooden surface. To the right of the bowl, a silver fork and spoon are placed on the table. A semi-transparent light-colored banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing the text 'COMFORT food'.

COMFORT *food*

COMFORT food

As tired and hungry cooks, sometimes we're looking for more than sustenance from our evening meal.

Sometimes it's about warming our minds and imaginations as much as feeding our bodies.

And the good news is that comfort food need not take hours of simmering away. You can have all these dishes at the ready in 15 minutes or less.

- :: pasta with prosciutto
- :: grilled kofta kebabs
- :: soba noodles with peanut dressing
- :: quick veggie soup
- :: asparagus with miso butter
- :: broccolini with sesame sauce
- :: pasta with tuna & spinach
- :: italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles
- :: kofta with couscous & peas
- :: chile verde



pasta with prosciutto

PASTA WITH PROSCIUTTO

It's hard to go past a good quick pasta dinner. Especially ones like these where all you need to do is boil the pasta and make an 'instant sauce' by stirring the flavourings in at the last minute. Of course, I've included a 'pasta-free' option in the variation for those of you who prefer to go easy on the carbs or gluten.

serves 2

200g (7oz) pasta

2 tablespoons lemon juice

4-6 slices prosciutto, torn

2 handfuls finely grated parmesan + extra to serve

2-3 handfuls baby spinach leaves

1. Bring a medium pot of salted water to the boil. Add pasta and set your timer as per the recommendations on the pasta packet.
2. When pasta is 'al dente' or tender, drain and return to the pot.
3. Add lemon juice and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil to make your sauce.
4. Add prosciutto, parmesan and baby spinach. Toss to combine. Taste & season.
5. Serve with extra parmesan if needed.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – replace the prosciutto with sliced semi-dried tomatoes.

vegan – replace parmesan with finely grated brazil nuts or almond meal and replace prosciutto with semi dried tomatoes or grilled red peppers.

dairy-free – just skip the cheese or replace parmesan with finely grated brazil nuts or almond meal.

pasta-free - heat a drained can of white beans or chickpeas in a frying pan. Remove from the heat and continue from step 3.

different greens – replace spinach with fresh basil leaves or rocket (arugula)



video



grilled kefta kebabs

GRILLED KOFTA KEBABS

Cooking food on skewers is a brilliant way to make smaller 'bits and pieces' feel like something more substantial. The dish in the picture is pork with a satay sauce. Lamb is the traditional meat used for kofta but beef or chicken will be just as delicious.

serves 2

450g (1lb) minced (ground) meat

2 teaspoons ground cumin

6-8 tablespoons hummus

1 bunch flat leaf parsley, leaves picked

1. Heat an overhead grill (broiler) on a very high heat.
2. Combine meat and cumin. Season. Form the mixture into 4 'sausages' with your hands. Thread onto 4 skewers.
3. Cook for 3-4 minutes on the first side, until browned. Turn then cook for another 3-5 minutes or until just cooked.
4. Serve skewers on a bed of hummus with leaves on the side.

VARIATIONS

minced (ground) meat alternatives – use cubes of tender cuts of meat like pork fillet, lamb fillet, pork neck, beef fillet, steak, chicken breasts or thighs. Fish fillets can also be used. Tofu. Seitan. Chorizo, squid, prawns (shrimp).

vegetarian - replace meat with cubes of veg. We're looking for veg which will cook in a relatively short amount of time AND hold its shape on the skewer. Zucchini, red capsicum (bell peppers), mushrooms. Or pre-cooked veg such as sweet potato, pumpkin, potatoes, parsnips, celeriac, fennel.

hummus alternatives – pesto, herb & nut sauce, hoisin sauce or sriracha (chili sauce). Even ketchup or BBQ sauce.

salad – pretty much any washed salad leaves including baby spinach, rocket (arugula), radicchio or mixed leaves. Also try leafy herbs like parsley, mint, coriander (cilantro) and basil.

video

The image shows three white ceramic bowls filled with a cold noodle salad. The salad consists of thin, light-colored soba noodles, julienned carrots, and sliced zucchini. The ingredients are coated in a light-colored dressing. The bowls are arranged on a dark, textured wooden surface. In the bottom left corner, a pair of dark wooden chopsticks is bundled together with a piece of light-colored twine. The text 'soba noodles with peanut dressing' is written in a white, cursive font in the center-right area of the image.

soba noodles with peanut dressing

SOBA NOODLES WITH PEANUT DRESSING

One of the requests for the 5 Habits class was for 'healthy noodles'. Unfortunately I forgot to collect the name of the requestee. This is my take on healthy noodles. We're using Japanese soba noodles combined with some carrot and zucchini 'noodles'. This gives brilliant colour and crunch and keeps it lower carb than straight noodles.

serves 2

6 tablespoons peanut butter
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
90g (3oz) soba noodles
2 medium carrots or zucchini or a combo

1. Bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil.
2. Combine peanut butter, soy, vinegar and a few tablespoons of water in a large bowl. Add more water if the dressing is too thick. Taste and season with more soy or with a pinch of sugar if some sweetness is needed.
3. Add noodles to the water and cook for 4 minutes.
4. Finely slice carrot & zucchini into ribbons using a mandoline or sharp knife or vegetable peeler. Then chop the ribbons into thin 'noodles'.
5. Drain noodles and cool under running water. Toss noodles and veg into the dressing.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – toss in some hard boiled eggs or shredded cooked chicken breast.

peanut-free – If sesame is OK, replace the peanut butter with tahini (about 4 tablespoons should do it). Otherwise try a coconut dressing and replace the peanut butter with coconut milk – and skip the water.

gluten-free – replace the soba noodles with rice noodles and change the cooking time accordingly. Or skip the noodles and increase the carrot and zucchini 'noodles'.

warm salad – drain the noodles and toss the hot noodles into the dressing without cooling them first.

can't find soba noodles – replace with whatever noodles you can find (adjusting the cooking time to the packet directions of your chosen noodles) OR try spaghetti for something completely unorthodox (again adjust the cooking time).

herby – feel free to freshen this up with a few handfuls of mint leaves or coriander (cilantro) or both.



video



quick veggie soup

QUICK VEGGIE SOUP

Soup is a brilliant lunch option at any time of the year but especially when the weather is less than sunny. You can either reheat in a microwave at work or invest in a thermos so you can take your hot soup with you and have it ready to eat when you are.

serves 2

2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz each)
1 can white beans (400g / 14oz)
2 zucchinis, finely sliced into rounds
1 small jar red peppers, drained & rinsed
1 tablespoon soy sauce

1. Combine tomatoes and beans in a large saucepan, including the canning liquid from the beans.
2. Add zucchini and peppers and soy sauce and bring to a boil.
3. Simmer rapidly for about 10 minutes or until the zucchini is tender.
4. Taste, season and stir in 2 tablespoons olive oil for richness.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free - be sure and use tamari, a wheat-free version of soy sauce.

different veg - add to or replace the zucchini and red peppers with carrots, celery, mushrooms, anything really.

eggplant - replace the zucchini with roasted eggplant slices from the deli or a jar.

herby - serve with a small handful of chives, fresh basil or flat leaf parsley leaves.

italiano - serve with a generous dollop of pesto or top with shaved parmesan cheese.

video



asparagus with miso butter

ASPARAGUS WITH MISO BUTTER

Asparagus was one of my mothers favourite vegetables and I seem to have inherited her preference. When Spring time comes and brings asparagus season with it, I'm usually more excited about asparagus than the end of the long cold Winter.

The idea to make miso butter to serve with asparagus was inspired by David Chang, the chef behind the fabulous Monofuku restaurants in New York.

serves 1-2

1 bunch asparagus

50g (2oz) unsalted butter

1 tablespoon white miso paste

large handful roasted almonds

1. Bring about 2cm (1in) water to the boil in a saucepan large enough to fit the asparagus in the base cross wise. Snap the woody bases off the bottom of each asparagus spear.

2. Add asparagus to the boiling water with a little salt. Cover with a bowl that fits across the top of the saucepan and place the butter in the bowl. Leave for a few minutes to melt.

3. Remove the bowl with the butter and whisk in the miso paste. Taste and season.

4. When the asparagus is tender (4-5 minutes). Drain asparagus and serve topped with the warm butter and almonds.

VARIATIONS

vegan / dairy-free – make a miso oil by whisking miso into 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Skip the butter melting step.

nut-free – replace almonds with a couple of chopped hard boiled eggs.

higher protein – serve with a softly poached egg.

carnivore – serve layered with some fine slices of jamon or prosciutto.



video



broccolini with sesame sauce

BROCCOLINI WITH SESAME SAUCE

Steamed broccoli or broccolini is one of my fav vegetables. So green. So fresh. So good for you! While I love it with just a simple drizzle of olive oil and a squeeze of lemon, sometimes it's nice to make it more substantial with a nutty tahini sauce like this one.

Actually this sauce is a great one to have in your repertoire for times when you feel like something creamy but want to keep it dairy-free.

serves 1-2

1 bunch broccolini
4 tablespoons tahini
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Bring about 2cm (1in) of water to the boil in a medium saucepan. Trim broccolini and add to the pan.
2. Cook, covered so it steams for 5-7 minutes or until broccolini is tender.
3. Meanwhile, make the sauce but combining tahini, soy, lemon juice and 2 tablespoons water in a small bowl. Taste and add a little more soy or lemon if you think it needs it. Add water if the sauce is too thick or if it's a little grainy.
4. When the broccolini is tender, drain and serve drizzled with the sauce.

VARIATIONS

sesame-free – instead of the tahini sauce, serve steamed broccolini with some mayonnaise flavoured with lemon zest.

broccoli – broccoli chopped into florettes makes a great alternative to broccolini.

asparagus – steam a bunch of asparagus instead of the broccolini and serve with the tahini sauce.

more substantial – heat a drained can of chickpeas in the pan you used to cook the broccolini and scatter over the broccolini.

peanut sauce – replace tahini with peanut butter. Preferably one without added sugar.

carnivore - serve as a side dish to roast chicken or pan fried chicken breasts.

video

pasta with tuna & spinach



PASTA WITH TUNA & SPINACH

Tuna mornay, or 'tuna dish' as we called it in my house, was one of my all time favourite things as a child.

This is my adult take on it which has the bonus of being much more simple to prepare. The spinach adds a little colour and freshness but you may prefer to serve it on the side if you have a fussy eater on your hands.

serves 1-2

200-250g (7-8oz) short pasta
1 can tuna in oil (185g / 6oz)
1 tablespoon salted capers, optional
4-6 tablespoons whipping cream
2 handfuls baby spinach leaves

1. Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add pasta and set the timer according to the directions on the packet.
2. Soak capers, if using in a few tablespoons water to remove the salt.
3. When the pasta timer rings, test the pasta to make sure it's cooked. Drain pasta.
4. Return the pan to the heat and cook tuna and the oil, stirring for a few minutes or until tuna is starting to brown.
5. Add capers and cream. Stir, then add drained pasta, and spinach adding a little more cream if it looks too dry. Season.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - replace the tuna with 2-3 chopped hard boiled eggs. No need to brown the eggs, just toss them into the drained pasta with the cream and capers.

vegan - to be honest, a tomato based pasta sauce with a little spinach tossed through would be a better vegan option.

slow carb / gluten-free - replace the pasta with a drained can of butter beans or other white beans. Much quicker to prepare!

dairy-free - skip the cream and stir in a little of the pasta cooking water and a few tablespoons extra virgin olive oil to make a sauce.

salmon - replace tuna with a drained can of salmon - adding a little olive oil to cook the salmon in.

video



italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles

ITALIAN BEEF RAGU WITH ZUCCHINI NOODLES

These days in our house we're happier to eat our bolognese sauce with zucchini noodles instead of boring old pasta. After a bit of trial and error, I've discovered that it's much better to bake the zucchini noodles in the oven with a little olive oil rather than boiling them like you would pasta. It only takes 10 minutes and you end up with wonderfully succulent noodles.

serves 2

450g (1lb) minced (ground) beef

2-3 cloves garlic, finely sliced

2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz)

2 medium zucchiní

parmesan cheese, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 200C (400F). Heat a large fry pan on a high heat. Add a few tablespoons of oil and the beef. Stir fry beef for a few minutes.

2. Add garlic and continue to cook beef, stirring occasionally until really well browned. Add tomatoes and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook stirring occasionally.

3. Meanwhile, shave the zucchini into ribbons using a mandoline or vegetable peeler. Drizzle a baking tray with olive oil and layer zucchini over the tray, don't worry if they need to be layered. Drizzle with more oil and bake for about 10 minutes or until zucchini is tender.

4. Taste and season beef and drizzle generously with some extra virgin olive oil to balance the acidity of the tomato.

5. Serve zucchini noodles topped with beef sauce and parmesan shavings.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian - try a mushroom ragu. Replace beef with about 750g (1 1/2lb) chopped mixed mushrooms. Vegans can serve with shaved brazil nuts instead of parmesan.

dairy free - serve with finely shaved brazil nuts instead of cheese.

buttery - finish the sauce with 2-3 generous knobs of butter instead of olive oil. Makes for a wonderful meat sauce.

chilli ragu - spice it up with a teaspoon or so of dried chilli flakes or powder.

carb-fest - skip the zucchini and cook some spaghetti according to the packet directions and serve with the sauce and parmesan.



video



kofta with couscous & peas

KOFTA WITH COUSCOUS & PEAS

Kofta are just the Middle Eastern version of meatballs. In this recipe we're making them into a tajine (or stew) and serving on a bed of fluffy couscous and green peas. A super comforting meal with a twist.

serves 2-3

2 cans tomato (400g / 14oz, each)
1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon ground cumin
500g (1lb) minced (ground) beef or lamb
1 tablespoon ground coriander
1 cup frozen peas
3/4 cup couscous

1. Bring 3/4 cups water to boil in a medium saucepan.
2. Place tomato in a large frying pan on a high heat. Add 1 tablespoon ground cumin.
3. Add frozen peas when the water boils and bring back to a simmer. Add couscous and a generous glug of olive oil. Stir well then cover and remove from the heat. Stand while you cook the kofta.
4. Place meat, 1 teaspoon ground cumin and coriander in a bowl. Mix to combine.
5. Using your hands and a teaspoon, form the meat mixture into small meatballs, adding them to the simmering sauce as you go.
6. Turn the meatballs and simmer for about 5 minutes or until just cooked through. You may like to turn them again before they're done.
7. To serve, fluff couscous with a fork to break up the lumps. And top with the kofta and sauce.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free / slow carb - skip the couscous and double the peas. Simmer the peas for a few minutes until cooked then mash with a fork. Serve kofta on a bed of mashed peas.

vegetarian - make lentil kofta (balls). Replace the meat with 1 can drained lentils, 1 egg and 75g almond meal.

vegan - replace the meat with a packet of firm tofu.

herby - serve with a few handfuls of fresh mint or flat leaf parsley leaves.



video



Chile verde

CHILE VERDE

Chile verde is a Mexican stew that normally takes about 3 hours to cook. Here I've come up with a 15 minute version by using ground pork and pureeing the sauce in a food processor so everything cooks as quickly as possible. I just love the fresh green flavours of this dish. I'm not normally a green capsicum (pepper) fan, but in this case it really works.

serves 2

500g (1lb) minced (ground) pork
250g (1/2lb) tomatillos or cherry tomatoes
1 green bell pepper (capsicum)
2 jalapeno chillies + extra to serve
1 bunch coriander (cilantro)
tortillas, to serve

1. Heat a large pot on a high heat. Add a little oil and cook pork, stirring occasionally for a few minutes or until no longer pink.
2. Meanwhile, peel tomatillos of the papery skins and place in a food processor (or just add the cherry tomatoes). Chop the capsicum and add along with the jalapenos (about 8 slices if using from a jar) and the coriander (cilantro).
3. Whizz until you have a smoothish puree. Season and add the sauce to the pot. Cover and simmer for 7-8 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, heat a large frying pan / skillet on a high heat. Cook the tortillas for about 30 seconds each side on the hot pan until they are warm and a little charred in spots.
5. Wrap tortillas in baking paper and a tea towel to keep warm.
6. Taste and season the chile and serve in bowls with the tortillas and extra jalapenos on the side.

VARIATIONS

vegan - replace the pork with crumbled firm tofu.

vegetarian - skip the pork and serve with mixed vegetables instead. Stir fry veg such as red peppers, carrots, zucchini and or mushrooms until tender then add the sauce as per the recipe.

chicken - replace the ground pork with ground (minced) chicken.

slow carb / gluten-free - serve with cauliflower rice instead of the tortillas.



video



DO OTHER THINGS

while dinner makes itself

DO OTHER THINGS

while dinner makes itself

This chapter isn't really going to help hungry cooks who need food right now.

But I wanted to include it because there are many fabulous things that just take a few minutes to pop in the oven or a slow cooker and then slowly turn into the culinary equivalent of gold while you potter around the house doing other things.

Life savers for tired cooks who have a long list of other 'to-dos'.

- :: [eggplant with tomato sauce & pesto](#)
- :: [roast mushies](#)
- :: [the baked frittata](#)
- :: [chinese chicken](#)
- :: [coq au vin](#)
- :: [simple sausage supper](#)
- :: [a good roast chook](#)
- :: [pot roast lamb with feta & olives](#)
- :: [osso buco in bianco](#)
- :: [lamb shanks with apricot](#)
- :: [chilli con carne](#)



eggplant with tomato & pesto

EGGPLANT WITH TOMATO & PESTO

The eggplant (aubergine) and tomato would also make an excellent sauce for pasta. Just roughly chop the cooked vegetables and stir through hot pasta.

This dish is great to make ahead and reheat when you're ready to eat. A good one for vegetarian entertaining.

serves 4

*1 jar tomato passata (700g or 1 1/2lb)
2 large eggplant, halved lengthwise
2 cloves garlic, peeled & very finely sliced
1/3 cup everyday extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup pesto, to serve*

1. Preheat oven to 200C or 400F.
2. Pour the tomato passata into the base of a baking dish. Score the cut side of the aubergine in a chunky criss cross pattern. Slice a thin cheek off the round side of the aubergine so it will sit flat in the dish. Place aubergine in the dish and top garlic slices. Drizzle over olive oil.
3. Bake until meltingly tender, about 50 minutes to an hour.
4. Serve warm or hot with a generous dollop of pesto on top.

VARIATIONS

nut-free – serve with basil oil instead of the pesto.

goats cheese – sprinkle over a little fresh goats cheese with the ricotta.

carnivore – serve as a side dish to roast lamb or BBQ sausage.

dairy-free/ vegan – skip the pesto and just serve with fresh basil leaves and pinenuts.



roast mushies

ROAST MUSHIES

I love roasting mushrooms because I find it so simple, just pop them in the oven and about 25 minutes later you have the most divine smells. It's also great because the mushroom flavour seems to be intensified by the heat of the oven.

These roast mushrooms are a great go-to recipe when you need to find a vegetarian option. Serve with the same accompaniments that you would use for roast or grilled meat or fish. Too easy.

serves 2-3

3/4 lb (350g) medium portabello mushrooms, about 7
1 - 2 cloves garlic, finely sliced
1/2 bunch thyme
approx 60g (2oz) stick butter, diced

1. Preheat oven to 400F (200C).
2. Trim mushroom stalks and place in a baking dish stem side up. Scatter with garlic, thyme, butter, salt & pepper. Cover with aluminum foil and bake 15 minutes.
3. Remove the foil and bake for another 10 – 15 minutes or until mushrooms are browned and tender.

VARIATIONS

mushie sarnie – serve mushrooms as the ultimate veggie hangover cure between two slices of rustic sourdough bread with lashings of garlicky mayo and a little virtuous rocket (arugula).

dairy-free / vegan – replace the butter with a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.

carnivore – serve draped in the best quality prosciutto or jamon. Or crisp up some bacon to go with.

A top-down view of a round, dark-colored metal pan containing a baked frittata. The frittata is golden-brown and topped with several slices of zucchini. The pan is placed on a piece of white parchment paper on a light-colored wooden surface. To the right of the pan, a small green bowl is filled with shredded white cheese.

the baked frittata

THE BAKED FRITTATA

I'm so glad I discovered the trick of baking frittatas in a spring form pan, as opposed to the old school high maintenance frying pan method. So much easier to mix the egg with your flavouring then pop in the oven to bake for 15 minutes while you do other things. My type of dinner. Feel free to play around with the filling. Tomatoes are lovely, as are different cheeses, canned chickpeas work a treat or fresh asparagus in the spring. So many possibilities.

serves 2

2 zucchini (courgettes), sliced into rounds

4 eggs

2 handfuls grated parmesan cheese

salad leaves, to serve

1 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice

1. Preheat oven to 200C (400F).
2. Heat a large frying pan (skillet) on a medium heat. Add a little olive oil and cook zucchini, stirring occasionally until they are tender.
3. Combine eggs and parmesan and season.
4. Line a 20cm (8in) spring form pan with baking paper and grease the base and sides with butter or oil. Spoon the zucchini in then pour over the egg mixture.
5. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden and puffy.
6. Combine lemon juice with 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Season and toss the leaves in the dressing to serve with the frittata.

VARIATIONS

vegan – try baked tofu instead. Slice tofu into chunks, drizzle generously with olive oil. Season with coriander seeds or cumin seeds and lots of salt & pepper. A little lemon zest will help. Bake for about 15 minutes until golden. Serve with lemon wedges.

goats cheese & basil – skip the zucchini and scatter crumbled goats cheese over the frittata when it comes out of the oven. Finish with a few fresh basil leaves.

carnivore – layer over slices of bacon or prosciutto before baking.

dairy-free – skip the cheese. And be a bit more generous with the salt.

asparagus - skip the zucchini and lay trimmed fresh asparagus spears over the top of the frittata before baking.

tomato & basil - replace zucchini with halved ripe cherry tomatoes (no need to cook them first) and finish with fresh basil.





Chinese Chicken

CHINESE CHICKEN

The Chinese know a thing or two about slow cooking chicken to get that lovely tender, succulent flesh. It's all about gently cooking the chicken in a fragrant broth. You can either serve this as a hearty soup or save the broth for another use and serve the super moist chicken with a salad.

serves 4

1 chicken (approx 1.4kg / 3lb)
1 cup soy sauce, salt reduced
1 tablespoon Chinese 5 spice
4-6 fresh red chillies
1 bunch bok choy, washed

1. Place chicken, soy sauce, 5 spice, chillies and 2L (8 cups) water in a slow cooker or large saucepan.
2. For the slow cooker, cover and cook on low for 10-11 hours or until the chicken is super tender and the legs are easy to wiggle.
3. For the stove top, cover the pan and bring to a gentle simmer for 4-6 hours or until chicken is super tender and the legs are easy to wiggle.
4. Add bok choy to the pan and simmer until wilted. Taste & season.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – sorry guys. Struggling to think of a vegetarian alternative here. Maybe poached tofu? or chinese mushrooms?

pork – replace chicken with 2 ham hocks. You'll need to remove the skin and bones before serving.

noodle soup – add in a few handfuls of fresh hokkien noodles with the bok choy and simmer until tender.

no chinese 5 spice? - no problem. Just substitute in a mixture of ground cinnamon, fennel seeds, star anise, ground cloves and pepper.

video

super simple coq au vin



SUPER SIMPLE COQ AU VIN

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

serves 4

4 chicken marylands (thighs with drumstick attached)

4 small onions, peeled & halved

8-12 large button mushrooms

4 tablespoons tomato paste

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

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

VARIATIONS

bacon – fry 4 rashers of chopped bacon until crisp and add to the pot.

whole chicken – if you can't be bothered with chicken pieces, feel free to use a whole chicken. It will take slightly longer to cook.

vegetarian / vegan – try 'funghi au vin' - replace the chicken with 4 large field mushrooms and keep the button mushrooms.

herbs – feel free to add in some thyme or bay leaves or both.



video

simple sausage supper



SIMPLE SAUSAGE SUPPER

This is one of the best ways to cook sausages. It takes a bit of time, most of which you can be off doing other things. The types of veg you can use as accompaniments are limitless. I like this best served in the middle of the table so everyone can help themselves and pick at the delicious crispy bits around the edges.

serves 2

2 onions, peeled & chopped into 8 wedges
2 zucchinis, chopped into 8 pieces
4 thick sausages
8 cloves garlic
250g (1/2 lb) cherry tomatoes

1. Preheat oven to 200C (400F). Place onion, zucchini, garlic and sausages in a medium baking dish. Drizzle with olive oil.
2. Bake for 30 minutes uncovered.
3. Add tomatoes and 1/2 cup water. Turn sausages over.
4. Bake for another 20-30 minutes or until sausages are cooked and the vegetables are tender. If it looks like it's drying out too much add another 1/4 cup water.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – Replace the sausages with firm tofu cut into large chunks. Make sure you season the tofu generously. OR replace with 4 medium portabello mushrooms.

fun – play around with the vegetables. Parsnip, garlic, carrot, beetroot, cauliflower or red peppers (capsicum) would all work.

more tomatoey - add in a can of tomatoes and their juices instead of the water.

wintery - instead of summer veg like tomato and zucchini, try a more wintery version with chopped parsnip, carrot or potatoes, or a combination of all three.



video



a good roast chook

A GOOD ROAST CHOOK

The secret to a great roast chicken is to stuff it with lemon halves so as it cooks the lemons steam inside the chicken and keep it super moist. A roast chicken may seem like lots of effort, but it really is a set-and-forget dinner that seems like you've been slaving away for hours. Just serve with a simple green salad and some mayo from the shop spiked with a little garlic and everyone will think you're a star.

serves 4

1 small chicken (approx 1.5kg / 3.5lb)

1 lemon, halved

small bunch thyme, optional

garlicky mayonnaise, to serve

green salad, to serve

1. Remove the chicken from the fridge at least 45 minutes before you're ready to cook.
2. Place a small roasting dish or skillet (frying pan) in the oven and preheat to 230C (450F).
3. Wash chicken well and pat dry thoroughly inside and out with paper towel. Drizzle with a little olive oil. Season generously with salt & pepper and place lemon halves and thyme in the cavity.
4. Place chicken in the preheated tray/skillet breast side up. Bake for 20 minutes.
5. Reduce heat to 200C (400F) and continue to cook for another 40 minutes or until chicken is lovely and brown, the legs wiggle freely and a meat thermometer inserted in the breast reads at least (75C) 170F.
6. Rest chicken in the pan, breast side down for at least 10 minutes before carving.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian – try a baked ricotta instead. Just combine some full-fat ricotta with parmesan and shape into a loaf. Bake at 180C (350F) for about half an hour or until lovely and golden.

vegan – everyone loves roast veg. Try roasting a mixture of veg including sweet potato, mushrooms and red peppers in a hot oven for about an hour. Serve with salad and garlicky vegan mayo.

different accompaniment – serve with a 'broccoli-slaw' made by finely chopping a head of broccoli and shaving 1/4 white cabbage and tossing with a few tablespoons each of mayonnaise and lemon juice.

chilli chicken – rub the chicken with some dried red chilli flakes or powder when you season with the salt & pepper.

video

pot roast lamb with feta & olives



POT ROAST LAMB WITH FETA & OLIVES

This lamb takes 6 hours so I guess it's not really ideal for hungry cooks. BUT it's pretty much 6 hours of no work at all so tired cooks could have a little, or even a big nap while the lamb cooks away. You could substitute in ground coriander seeds - I was just being a little lazy. Serve on a bed of wilted greens such as spinach, kale or silverbeet.

serves 4

2 lemons, thickly sliced crosswise
1 small shoulder lamb, bone in (approx 1.4kg or 3lb)
1 tablespoon coriander seeds
200g feta, crumbled
large handful green olives

1. Preheat oven to 150C (300F).
2. Place sliced lemons in the base of a cast iron pot or casserole dish large enough to hold the lamb snugly. Add 1/4 cup water. Rub lamb with olive oil, salt & pepper and place on top of the lemons. Sprinkle over coriander seeds and cover tightly with foil and a lid - if you have one.
3. Bake for 3 hours. Reduce heat by 20C / 40F and cook for another 3 hours or until lamb can literally be cut with a spoon. Keep warm.
4. When you're ready to serve, pop the feta and olives in with the lamb and bring to a simmer on the stove top.

VARIATIONS

goats cheese - replace the feta with a lovely, soft goats cheese.

vegetarian - try slow roasting eggplant (aubergine) sliced into chunky rounds with these flavourings. And it should only take about an hour or two. You probably won't need the water and I'd be a bit more generous with the olio.

dairy-free - skip the cheese and serve sprinkled with some fresh mint leaves instead.

vegan - combine the vegetarian and dairy-free versions above to keep it vegan friendly.



video



osso buco in bianco

OSSO BUCO IN BIANCO

While red wine is an obvious choice for slow cooked meat dishes, white wine or 'bianco' makes a refreshing change and lets the meat speak up a little more loudly without being overwhelmed. Osso buco is a traditional Italian dish from Milano. It's usually made with veal shin, but I find the more readily available beef shin works just as well, if not better.

serves 4

4 pieces of osso buco or beef shank

8 baby carrots

4 tablespoons tomato paste

1 cup white wine

1 head garlic

1. Place beef, carrots, tomato paste, wine and garlic in a slow cooker or oven proof dish. No need to peel the garlic, just break into individual cloves.
2. For the slow cooker, cover and cook on auto for 11-12 hours or until the beef is meltingly tender.
3. For the oven, add in an extra cup of wine, cover and bake at 120C (250F) for 6-8 hours or until beef is meltingly tender. Add in a little water if it starts to dry out.
4. Taste, season and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – try slow cooked portabello or large field mushrooms - about 2 per person unless they're giants. Cook as per the beef, although the mushies will probably be done in half the time.

veal - replace beef with veal osso buco. You may need to allow 2 pieces of veal per person.

pork- replace beef with about 1kg (2lb) pork belly, sliced into 4 pieces or use 1kg (2lb) of diced pork shoulder.

gremolata- serve with the traditional topping of finely chopped flat leaf parsley (small handful), zest of a lemon and 1/2 - 1 clove garlic.

accompaniments- the traditional is a risotto flavoured with saffron but I find it too rich. I'm more likely to serve in bowls with a green salad on the side. Or on a bed of mashed potatoes.

video



lamb shanks with apricot

LAMB SHANKS WITH APRICOT

Even if you're not normally a huge fan of fruit with your meat (like me), I really encourage you to try this out. The apricots melt down in the sauce to provide a subtle sweetness without over-powering the whole dish.

serves 4
4 lamb shanks
2 onions, peeled & diced
200g (7oz) dried apricots
1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)
2 sprigs rosemary

1. Place shanks, onions, apricot, tomato and rosemary in a slow cooker or oven proof dish.
2. For the slow cooker, cover and cook on auto for 10-11 hours or until the lamb is meltingly tender.
3. For the oven, add in a cup of water, cover and bake at 120C (250F) for 6-8 hours or until lamb is meltingly tender. Add in a little water if it starts to dry out.
4. Taste, season and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – try some slow cooked tofu. Replace lamb with about 600g (21oz) firm tofu chopped into 4 chunks. The tofu won't take as long to cook.

chicken – replace lamb with 8 chicken drumsticks or 4 chicken marylands.

pork – replace lamb with 2 ham hocks OR about 1kg (2lb) diced pork shoulder.

herby – replace the rosemary with some thyme. And serve with a few fresh thyme leaves sprinkled over.

accompaniments – In the picture I've served with just a mashed, drained can of white beans (or 2 cans for 4 people). Or serve on a bed of fresh baby spinach or shredded raw kale. Also lovely with a green salad to mop up the juices.

video



Chilli con carne

CHILLI CON CARNE

It's funny, I used to have a thing about red kidney beans. And not in a good way. I think it was the name association with the stinky lamb kidneys my mum used to cook for my dear old dad. These days I've learned to love these intensely coloured beans. But if they freak you out, I totally understand. Feel free to use black or white beans or even chickpeas instead.

serves 1-2

*750g (1 1/2lb) ground (minced) beef
2 cans tomatoes (400g / 14oz each)
2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes
1 tablespoon cumin seeds or ground cumin
2 cans red kidney beans (400g / 14oz each), drained*

1. Place beef, tomato, chilli and cumin in a slow cooker or oven proof dish.
2. For the slow cooker, cover and cook on auto for 11-12 hours or until the beef is meltingly tender.
3. For the oven, add in a cup of water, cover and bake at 120C (250F) for 6-8 hours or until beef is meltingly tender. Add in a little water if it starts to dry out.
4. Add beans and cook for another 1/2 hour or until everything is hot.
5. Taste, season and serve hot.

VARIATIONS

vegan / vegetarian – for a vegetarian chilli, replace beef with 3 cans lentils but add these in at the end with the beans rather than at the beginning.

pork – replace beef with minced (ground) pork.

accompaniments – I'm happy to just eat this on its own or with a little salad, but some may enjoy it more with a little sour cream spooned on top. Or even some avocado mashed with lime juice.

more exotic chilli – soak a couple of large smoky chillies like chipotle or ancho in a little water for 10 minutes or so. Remove seeds and stems, chop and add in with everything else. Will add some more interesting chilli flavours.

different beans – mix it up with either black or white beans.

video

EFFORTLESS

entertaining



EFFORTLESS

entertaining

Welcoming friends into your home to share a meal is so much more friendly and intimate than going out to a restaurant.

Sometimes it just isn't practical to keep your entertaining exclusively to weekends. But having people over mid week need not be a stressful affair. In fact it can be a brilliant way to break up the week.

All you need is a fun theme and a simple recipe or two. Especially ones that get your guests to do most of the heavy lifting. Everyone will have far more fun and you'll be able to relax and enjoy the evening as well.

:: easy italian supper

:: sushi party

:: make like momofuku ramen

:: lamb cutlets with parmesan peas

:: friday night pizza

easy italian supper



EASY ITALIAN SUPPER

For me these days pasta is a special occasion only affair. So I love to treat myself and my guests to a little pasta supper. This sausage ragu is always a crowd pleaser. Everyone will think you've had this simmering on the stove for hours, thanks for our secret ingredient - the butter.

serves 2

2 good quality pork sausages

1 can tomatoes (400g / 14oz)

2 large knobs butter

200g (7oz) rigatoni or other dried pasta

green salad, to serve

1. Place a large frying pan or skillet on a very high heat. Add a little olive oil and crumble the sausage meat into the pan, removing the skins as you go.
2. Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to the boil.
3. When the sausage meat is well browned add the tomato and butter and reduce heat for the sauce to simmer away while the pasta cooks.
4. Add pasta to the boiling water and cook according to the packet directions.
5. When the pasta is al dente, drain and return to the pan. Toss in a few tablespoons of sauce to coat the pasta. Divide between two warm bowls and top with extra sauce.

VARIATIONS

seafood - skip the sausages and toss a few handfuls of peeled cooked prawns (shrimp) at the end.

vegetarian - tofu will work in place of the sausages. Just crumble firm tofu into the pan.

dairy-free - replace the parmesan in the salad with finely shaved brazil nuts or sliced almonds. And use olive oil instead of the butter.

vegan - skip the parmesan as per the dairy-free option and wilt a few handfuls of baby spinach into the sauce before serving.

pappadelle - for an even more special treat, either make fresh pappadelle instead of the dried pasta or use store bought fresh lasagne sheets cut into fat ribbons - check the packet for cooking instructions but fresh pasta generally only takes a few minutes.

gluten-free - serve the sauce on a bed of pan fried butter beans or other white beans. OR serve on a bed of washed baby spinach leaves.

video



sushi party

SUSHI PARTY

One of my favourite strategies for stress-free entertaining is to get my guests to do as much work as possible. Not only does this make things more interactive and fun, I find everyone appreciates their food more when they have contributed. Please just use this as a guide and substitute in your favourite sushi fillings.

serves 2-3

for the sushi:

200g / 7oz (1cup) sushi rice
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 avocado
100g (3oz) smoked salmon
3-4 large nori sheets

to serve:

wasabi
soy sauce
pickled ginger
wilted baby spinach

1. Bring a medium saucepan of water to the boil. Add rice and simmer for 12 minutes.
2. Combine vinegar and sugar with 1/4 teaspoon fine salt. Stir to dissolve the sugar.
3. Prepare salmon and avocado and place on a large platter or wooden board along with the wasabi, soy and ginger. Chop the nori sheets into quarters and place on the platter.
4. When the rice has cooked, drain very thoroughly in a strainer then transfer to a baking sheet and spread out to cool the rice as quickly as possible.
5. Transfer cooled rice to a serving bowl and take everything to the table. Get your guests to make their own sushi by placing a little rice in the centre of a nori sheet. Top with avocado, salmon, spinach and a little wasabi. Roll into a cone shape and try to eat delicately. Repeat.

VARIATIONS

fish - feel free to experiment with proper sushi fish if you can access it. Make sure your fishmonger knows you will be eating it raw. Tuna and salmon are the two most popular. Prawns and squid can also be lovely.

vegan / vegetarian - try cucumber rolls and of course have extra avocado on hand.

can't find sushi rice? - substitute in white short grain rice.

slow-carb - serve with raw grated cauliflower sprinkled with a little of the vinegar dressing instead of the sushi rice OR serve sashimi with nori on the side.

sushi bowls / can't find nori? - if the idea of 'roll your own' is a bit daunting, serve rice in bowls and top with the fillings. Serve soy and wasabi on the side.





'make like momofuku' ramen

'MAKE LIKE MOMOFUKU' RAMEN

This dish was inspired by the fabulous Momofuku noodle bar in New York. I love the idea of taking something pretty every day like a noodle soup and dressing it up for company. The secret here is to use instant dashi flakes to flavour the broth and then add smoked speck or bacon for an extra umami flavour kick.

serves 2

200g (7oz) smoked speck or bacon
200g (7oz) fresh egg noodles such as
singapore noodles or ramen
1 tablespoon instant dashi powder
1 tablespoon soy sauce
handful snowpeas (mange tout)
2 green onions (scallions), finely sliced
1 large sheet of nori cut into quarters

1. Heat a little oil in a medium saucepan. Slice speck thinly and brown in the oil for a few minutes.
2. Meanwhile soak noodles in a bowl of hot water from the tap.
3. Add 3 cups water, dashi granules and soy sauce and bring back to a simmer.
4. Trim snow peas and add to the soup. Simmer for 2 minutes.
5. Drain noodles and divide between two deep bowls. Top with soup and finish with green onion and nori sheets tucked into the side.

VARIATIONS

carnivore - true carnivores may like to follow the momofuku lead and slow roast a pork shoulder to use some of the meat in the soup.

vegetarian - use vegetable stock instead of the water, dashi and bacon. Serve with a very soft poached egg on top.

vegan - use 3 cups of best quality vegetable broth instead of the dashi and bacon. And make sure your noodles don't contain egg.

seasonal veg - snow peas tend to be pretty good all year round. But in Summer you might like to substitute in fresh sweet corn and in Winter wilted greens such as chard (silverbeet) or collard greens would add a warmer vibe.

fish-free - substitute vegetable or chicken stock for the dashi

gluten-free - use rice or mung bean noodles instead of the ramen. OR use zucchini shredded into noodle strips and simmer the zucchini 'noodles' in the broth for a few minutes before serving.

video



lamb cutlets with parmesan peas

LAMB CUTLETS WITH PARMESAN PEAS

Lamb cutlets, or 'lolly pop chops' as my friend's daughter calls them are one of my favourite cuts of meat. They are expensive, which makes them more of an entertaining or 'special' occasion item in our house. And they're super quick to cook which means perfect mid week dinner party fare.

serves 2

6-8 lamb cutlets

2 large handfuls frozen peas

1/2 bunch mint, leaves picked and torn

large handful grated parmesan cheese

splash sherry vinegar

1 can butter beans, 400g (14oz), drained

1. Get a large skillet on a high heat. Trim excess fat from along the bones of the lamb cutlets. Rub one side with olive oil and season.
2. Cook the cutlets in the hot pan for 2-3 minutes on each side or until cooked to your liking.
3. Meanwhile heat a little extra virgin olive oil on a high heat in a medium saucepan. Add peas straight from the freezer and cook, covered for 4-5 minutes while the lamb cooks.
4. Combine mint and parmesan in a small bowl.
5. When the cutlets are done divide between warm plates. Return the skillet to the heat and add drained beans. Stir fry for a minute or so, just until the beans are starting to brown. Turn off the heat. Season.
6. Remove peas from the heat and toss in with the mint and parmesan. Season with a little sherry vinegar and divide between the plates.

VARIATIONS

vegetarian - I'm thinking eggplant cutlets instead of the lamb. Slice an eggplant into 1cm (1/2in) thick discs, brush with lots of olive oil and fry in the skillet. Will probably take 5 minutes or so on each side. Keep an eye on the temp, if they're starting to burn reduce the heat.

vegan / dairy-free - use large portabello mushrooms (2 per person) instead of the lamb and replace the parmesan with finely shaved brazil nuts.

cheaper lamb - cheaper lamb chops such as loin chops or chump chops can be used instead of the cutlets. Depending on the thickness, they may need longer cooking.

bean-free - the butter beans are an optional extra. The meal would be lovely without. Traditionalists with more time on their hands may prefer to serve with roast potatoes instead.

no sherry vinegar? - lemon juice will work equally well to freshen up the peas and mint.



video



the salamino pizza

FRIDAY NIGHT PIZZA

There aren't many people in the world who don't love a good pizza feast. And the good news is it's easy to make great pizza at home (not to mention inexpensive!). The real secret is getting your oven cranked up and putting your pizza stone on the floor of the oven so it gets as hot as possible.

For more variation ideas, see the next page.

THE SALAMINO

*1/2 quantity of pizza dough (recipe next page)
approx 6 slices salami
6 tablespoons ricotta
bocconcini, optional*

1. Prepare oven and dough as per pizza base recipe.
2. Tear ricotta into chunks and scatter over the base. Repeat with the bocconcini, if using. Finish with the salami.
3. Bake for 5 - 10 minutes or until the base is golden and the salami is sizzling. Serve hot.

PATATE

*1/2 quantity of pizza dough (recipe below)
1 large potato, finely sliced
1 small sprig rosemary
pinch chilli flakes, optional
bocconcini, optional*

1. Prepare oven and dough as per pizza base recipe.
2. Toss potato slices in a few tablespoons of olive oil with rosemary and chilli, if using. Season generously.
3. Arrange potato slices over pizza base. Top with cheese, if using.
4. Bake for 5 - 10 minutes or until the base is golden and the potato is just cooked. Serve hot.

video



the patate pizza

PIZZA DOUGH RECIPE + VARIATIONS

Try to get your hands on some good quality unbleached, stone ground bread flour if you can. It makes a world of difference. Although if you have to resort to all purpose flour, it won't be the end of the world.

makes 2 medium pizzas

250g (8.8oz) bread flour

160g (5.6) water

1 teaspoon dried yeast

1 teaspoon salt

semolina, optional

1. Place a pizza stone on the base (floor) of your oven and preheat it on its highest setting.
2. Combine flour, water, yeast and salt in a bowl until the mixture comes together.
3. Transfer to a lightly floured surface and knead the dough for at least 5 minutes, preferably 10. Try to add as little flour as possible.
4. Lightly oil a bowl and pop the dough back in. Cover and stand for at least 1/2 hour but preferably an hour.
5. Divide dough into 2 and roll out on a lightly floured surface using a rolling pin until the pizza is about 25cm (12in diameter).
6. Scatter a pizza peel or baking tray with semolina, if using and top with your chosen ingredients.

VARIATIONS

margarita – make a tomato sauce by simmering 1 can tomatoes with an onion and a few knobs of butter for about 1/2 hour. Spread the sauce sparingly and top with torn halves of bocconcini. Bake then serve with a few fresh basil leaves.

bluey special – make a margarita, skipping the basil. When it comes out of the oven layer with finely sliced prosciutto and top with baby rocket leaves (arugula) that have been lightly dressed.

goats cheese & basil – make the potato pizza without the rosemary and serve scattered with fresh goats cheese and basil leaves.

broccoli & sausage – steam some broccoli florettes. Drain and scatter over pizza dough with the crumbled raw meat of a good quality pork sausage and a little bocconcini. Make sure the sausage is cooked before serving.

tuna – not exactly traditional, but delicious none the less. Scatter a drained medium can of tuna in oil over the base with a little garlic. Bake then serve topped with fresh baby rocket and a drizzle of mayonnaise.

video



TREATS FOR *tired cooks*

TREATS FOR

tired cooks

While not ideal to get in the habit of dessert every day, sometimes a tired cook just needs (and deserves!) a little something sweet.

Without going into full-on baking mode, here are a few lovely ideas to keep the sweet-toothed people happy.

:: ricotta with blueberries

:: banana ice cream

:: chocolate peanut butter slice

:: ginger bread ice cream

:: ricotta puddings with honey & pistachio

:: dark chocolate mousse

:: interactive index – click on the item to be taken to that page

ricotta with blueberries



RICOTTA WITH BLUEBERRIES

After many years of thinking about it, this ricotta was my first foray into home cheese making thanks to one of my students, Mark. The only downside is you'll have quite a bit of whey left over. Use in smoothies, baking or to feed your pets. Of course if you're really tired - just substitute in ricotta from the supermarket.

serves 2

1L (4 cups) milk

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1 punnet blueberries

1. Bring the milk just to the boil, stirring occasionally and making sure it doesn't boil over.
2. Remove from the heat and add the lemon juice. Stir and sit for about 2 minutes. Stir some more.
3. Strain into a colander or strainer lined with cloth (I used a clean tea towel).
4. Divide the curds between 2 bowls adding back a little whey if it looks too dry. Top with blueberries.

VARIATIONS

carnivore – skip the blueberries and serve the fresh ricotta with finely sliced prosciutto, a little basil and some fresh tomatoes.

vegan / dairy-free – skip the home cheesemaking and serve fresh blueberries with a generous scoop of almond butter.

savoury – to make savoury ricotta season the curds with a little sea salt and scatter over some lemon zest and fresh thyme leaves. Use anywhere you'd use fresh goats cheese.

decadent – add a few tablespoons of cream in with the milk for a richer, creamier cheese.

figs & honey – in the Autumn (Fall) if you can get access to some lovely fresh figs, swap them for the blueberries and serve with some shelled pistachios.

video

Banana 'ice cream'



BANANA 'ICE CREAM'

This has to be the simplest ice cream recipe ever. The only down side is that you need to have frozen bananas at your disposal.

The inverted commas are because there isn't any cream so it technically isn't an ice cream. Feel free to play around with the flavourings. You could pretty much add anything that takes your fancy. The riper your bananas are, the more intense the flavour will be.

serves 2

2 ripe bananas

1. Either freeze the bananas whole or peel and chop and freeze in freezer bags.
2. Remove bananas from the freezer about 10 minutes before you're ready to eat.
3. Peel the whole bananas, if using and pop in your food processor.
4. Whizz until you have smooth creamy texture. It may take a little while if your bananas are too frozen so be patient!

VARIATIONS

banana & yoghurt – add in a few tablespoons of natural yoghurt with the banana. Depending on the sweetness of your bananas, you may like to add a little icing (powdered) sugar to help sweeten.

chocolate ice cream – add a tablespoon or so of good quality cocoa powder with the banana. Again, you may need a little icing (powdered) sugar as well but best to taste and decide.

banana & honeycomb – stir smashed chocolate coated honey comb pieces into the ice cream just before serving.

hazelnut swirl – stir through a few scoops of nutella or other chocolate hazelnut paste.



Chocolate peanut butter slice



CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER SLICE

Ever wanted to make your own Reese's Peanut Butter Cups? Well now you can. And you don't even need an oven to do it. Just a mixing bowl, something to melt butter in and a little time.

makes 16-20 squares

100g (3.5oz) butter, melted

100g (3.5oz) icing (powdered) sugar

100g (3.5oz) peanut butter

100g (3.5oz) milk chocolate

1. Melt the butter in a small saucepan or microwave. Roughly line a small square or rectangular baking tin with baking or parchment paper.
2. Combine sugar, peanut butter and half (50g / 1.7oz) the melted butter in a small bowl. Stir vigorously until there are no more sugar lumps.
3. Meanwhile, break chocolate into small chunks and add to the remaining butter to melt the chocolate.
4. Spoon the mixture into your prepared pan. And try and flatten evenly.
5. When the chocolate has melted, stir to combine with the butter, then layer over the peanut butter fudge. Cool and refrigerate until firm. Cut into tiny squares.

VARIATIONS

chunky slice - add a large handful of chopped roasted peanuts to the fudge mixture.

dark chocolate - for a more adult version, replace milk chocolate with some serious good quality dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa solids)

dairy free - replace butter with melted coconut oil or copha.

vegan - use coconut oil or copha instead of butter and use dark chocolate instead of the milk. You may need to increase the sugar a little to balance out the more bitter chocolate - but that will depend on your preference.



video



ginger bread ice cream

GINGER BREAD ICE CREAM

The older I get, the more I seem to love the flavour of ginger, especially in desserts. If ginger isn't your thing, don't give up on this idea. I can imagine it would be equally delicious rolling scoops of vanilla ice cream in the crumbs of your favourite chocolate chip cookies. Or any cookie for that matter.

serves 1-2

2-4 ginger cookies

2-4 scoops vanilla ice cream

1. Place cookies in a plastic bag and bash with a rolling pin or something heavy until they are coarsely crumbled.
2. Place crumbs in a shallow bowl and roll ice cream scoops in to coat.
3. Serve immediately or pop back in the freezer until needed.

VARIATIONS

gluten-free - replace the cookies with your favourite GF cookie or sweet biscuit. Alternatively, some smashed praline would make a wonderful change from the ginger.

dairy-free / vegan - make banana ice cream by freezing chopped banana pieces and then whizzing them in the food processor until creamy. You may need to let it freeze and firm up a little before making your scoops.

chocolate chip - replace ginger cookies with your favourite chocolate chips ones.

double ginger - stir some chopped glace or candied ginger in to the ice cream before rolling in the crumbs as per the recipe.



video



ricotta puddings with honey & pistachio

RICOTTA PUDDINGS WITH HONEY & PISTACHIO

Ricotta is one of my favourite ingredients. It tends to be pretty inexpensive and has such a lovely cheesecakey, pudding like texture.

All it needs to dress it up and turn it into a proper dessert is a little honey sweetness and some pretty green pistachios.

serves 2

150g (5oz) full fat ricotta
2-4 tablespoons honey
small handful shelled pistachios

1. Divide ricotta between two chinese tea cups, espresso cups or other pretty little glasses.
2. Drizzle over honey and scatter with pistachios.

VARIATIONS

maple pecan - replace honey with maple syrup and replace pistachio with roasted pecans.

nutella - serve ricotta topped with nutella for a tasty chocolately treat.

ice cream - if ricotta isn't easy to find, you could easily replace it with good quality vanilla ice cream.

almond - shelled pistachios can be difficult to find, for an easier option replace them with roasted almonds.

video



dark chocolate mousse

DARK CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

One of my students, Kathryn, came up with a super difficult brief. A dessert that is dairy, sugar, artificial sweetener and grain-free. And I think coconut-free as well. Anyway, I love a challenge and this pure chocolate mousse, inspired by Heston Blumenthal ticks all the boxes. But not only that, it's absolutely delicious as well. One of those divine things that is both light and rich at the same time. And very satisfying.

serves 2

100g (3.5oz) dark chocolate
(70% cocoa solids minimum)

1. Prepare an ice bath by placing a tray of ice cubes with water to cover them in a large mixing bowl. Place a smaller bowl inside.
2. Weigh 85g (3oz) water into a small saucepan. Break chocolate into chunks and add to the water.
3. Place over a low heat and stir for a minute or so until the chocolate is just melted. Be careful not to let it get too hot or the chocolate will split.
4. Transfer melted chocolate to the smaller bowl and whisk until you have a light moussy texture. Divide between two pretty serving glasses.

VARIATIONS

chocolate hazelnut - serve sprinkled with finely chopped roasted hazelnuts or mix them through the mousse.

milk chocolate - don't be tempted to use milk chocolate to make the mousse - there won't be enough cocoa fat to get the mixture to whip. Instead separately whip some cream and fold the two mousses together.

chocolate swirl - as per the milk chocolate, but only partially combine the two mousses so you end up with a lovely swirled pattern.

chocolate snow - those who prefer a less bitter chocolate might appreciate a dusting of icing (powdered) sugar over the top of their mousse.



Bonus 1.

**TOP 3 QUICK & EASY WAYS
TO GET OUT OF
your FOOD RUT**

TOP 3 WAYS TO GET OUT OF YOUR FOOD RUT

Do you find yourself falling back on the same old recipes time and time again? Are you bored with your food and cooking? Do you struggle to keep it interesting?

Well you're not alone!

Food 'ruts' are one of the most common problems with getting healthy dinners on the table. And the good news is, there are a few simple tricks you can use to get yourself out of a rut.

Here are my top 3...

1. SUBSTITUTE ONE NEW INGREDIENT

This is one of my favourite ways to keep things fresh and fun. Even if you're not a very creative cook, surely there is one element you could change from your favourite meal. Trust me. For example, think about how different a steak is vs a pan fried chicken breast. To help give you ideas I've pulled together a bonus 'ingredient substitute cheat sheet'. Print it out and keep it in the kitchen.

2. TRY A NEW SAUCE

Sauces are one of the best ways to jazz up a tired meal. So I've included my favourite 10 delicious 5-Minute sauces to get you started 'saucing up' your life.

3. USE TEMPLATE RECIPES

Here's where things get a little more interesting. While I do use the first two tips on a regular basis, it's my 'template' recipes that really keep me well away from the 'food rut' zone.

These are recipes which I think of in general terms, rather than specific ingredients. I've included my 3 favourites in this bonus section. They take a little getting used to, but once you 'get it', I guarantee you'll never get stuck in a food rut again.

your
**INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTE
CHEAT SHEET**

7 TIPS FOR INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTION

These days I hardly think twice about swapping different ingredients when I'm cooking but I wasn't always this confident. I remember how frustrating and limiting it used to feel not knowing what would work. The good news is that you too can develop your substitution confidence. Here are 7 tips to make your journey as easy and pain-free as possible.

1. There are no rules

The only result we're after is something that tastes delicious, it doesn't matter how you get there.

2. Look for similar ingredients

The easiest place to start. The more similar ingredients are the more likely your substitution will be successful.

3. Look for similar functions

For example, say you're making a salad that calls for roasted almonds and you need to avoid nuts. What function are the almonds playing in the salad? If they're there to make the salad more filling and substantial, maybe you could try some avocado chunks or goats cheese. If they're there for textural interest maybe some crispy bacon pieces would work or some finely diced red capsicum (bell pepper).

4. Trust your instincts

You've got all those years of eating behind you so even if you aren't experienced in substitution you know what tastes good to you.

5. Remember Clancy's 'Law of Cooking'

"If you think it's going to taste delicious it probably will!"

6. Everyone makes mistakes

We all have failures. Take it as a learning experience and keep trying.

7. Practice makes perfect

Seriously, the more you experiment, the better you'll get!

YOUR INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTES 'CHEAT SHEET'

PROTEIN

tender cuts - chicken breasts = chicken thigh fillets = beef fillet = steak = pork fillet = pork chops = lamb fillet = lamb cutlets = fish fillets = whole fish

slow cooking - stewing steak = beef cheeks = beef ribs = lamb shanks = lamb shoulder = pork ribs = pork shoulder

veggie mains - eggs = tofu = seitan = legumes = mushrooms = eggplant = quinoa

soft cheese - ricotta = goats cheese = cottage cheese = blue cheese = brie = camembert

hard cheese - parmesan = cheddar = gruyere = swiss

legumes - chickpeas = white beans = cannellini beans = lentils = butter beans = black beans

ACCOMPANIMENTS

starchy - pasta = polenta = potatoes = rice = bread

low GI (healthier) = quinoa = lentils = beans = vegetables

SAUCES

asian - fish sauce = soy sauce = oyster sauce = hoisin sauce

tomato - canned tomatoes = tomato puree (passata) = tomato paste (+water) = tomato ketchup

hot - tabasco = chilli based sauces = dijon mustard = hot english mustard = horseradish

creamy - mayonnaise = hollandaise = yoghurt = coconut milk = cream = tahini = nut based sauces = satay

fresh - pesto = anything herb based = tapenade

liquids - stock = wine = water = tomato puree = coconut milk

VEGETABLES

leafy herbs - parsley = mint = coriander (cilantro) = basil = rocket (arugula) = sorrell

woody herbs - thyme = rosemary = sage = oregano = lemon grass = lemon thyme = kaffir lime leaves

leafy veg - spinach = chard = silverbeet = collard greens = kale = cavolo nero = beet tops = cabbage

root veg - potato = sweet potato = parsnip = beets = turnip = celeriac = swede = rutabaga

brassicas - broccoli = cauliflower = cabbage = brussels sprouts.

crunchy veg - celery = snow peas = shaved raw veg

green veg - zucchini = peas = beans = broad beans = broccoli

colourful - tomatoes = red peppers (capsicum) = beets = radicchio = carrots = radish = eggplant (aubergine)

aromatic veg - onions = celery = carrots = garlic

salad veg - lettuce = radicchio = rocket (arugula) - leafy herbs (above) = endive = witlof = beet tops

SEASONINGS

hot = fresh chilli = chilli powder = chilli flakes = chilli sauce = chilli oil = black pepper = spicy paprika

salt - sea salt flakes = soy sauce = miso paste = olives = capers = anchovies = fish sauce

spices cumin = coriander = smoked paprika = fennel seeds

curry = curry powder = curry paste = ground cumin = chilli powder

acid or sour - lemon juice = lime juice = sherry vinegar = rice vinegar = champagne vinegar = red wine vinegar = white wine vinegar = balsamic vinegar = natural yoghurt = tamarind

sweet = balsamic vinegar = fresh fruit = dried fruit = sugar = stevia = caramelized onion = vanilla = cinnamon = chocolate = caramel = honey, sweet wine (port, muscat)

10 *delicious*
5-MINUTE SAUCES

1. HUMMUS



HUMMUS

In a food processor whizz 1 can chickpeas with 1 clove garlic and 3 tablespoons each of lemon juice, tahini and chickpea canning liquid.

VARIATIONS

white bean hummus – replace chickpeas with canned white beans.

lentil hummus – replace chickpeas with 1 can lentils or home cooked lentils (250g / 9oz).

vegetable hummus – replace chickpeas with 250g / 9oz cooked vegetables. Great with roast pumpkin, roast sweet potato, carrots or even steamed broccoli or cauliflower.

no tahini? – replace with extra virgin olive oil or other nut butter such as cashew or almond butter.

2. NATURAL YOGHURT



NATURAL YOGHURT

This is seriously the easiest sauce ever. Take a good quality full fat yoghurt and season generously with salt and pepper.

VARIATIONS

lemon / lime yoghurt – add in the zest of a lemon or lime.

vegan – use a good quality coconut yoghurt (recipe on Stonesoup).

chilli – add in 1-2 finely diced fresh chillies or some dried chilli powder.

herby – stir in a handful of chopped herbs such as basil, coriander (cilantro), thyme, mint or parsley.

3. CHEAT'S AIOLI



3. CHEAT'S AIOLI

Finely chop or crush a clove of garlic. Stir through 6-8 tablespoons good quality commercial mayo (or make your own – [recipe here](#))

VARIATIONS

lemon / lime yoghurt – add in the zest of a lemon or lime.

vegan – use a good quality commercial vegan mayonnaise.

chilli – add in 1-2 finely diced fresh chillies or some dried chilli powder.

herby – stir in a handful of chopped herbs such as basil, coriander (cilantro), thyme, mint or parsley.

4. PESTO



4. PESTO

In a food processor whizz a large bunch basil leaves with 1-2 cloves garlic, large handful pinenuts, large handful grated parmesan, and 3-4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil. Taste and season, adding more parmesan or oil as needed. Sometimes I add a splash of lemon juice for freshness.

VARIATIONS

winter pesto – replace basil with flat leaf parsley and replace pinenuts with roasted almonds.

vegan – replace the parmesan with extra nuts such as brazil or almonds.

asian pesto - replace basil with coriander (cilantro), replace pinenuts and cheese with 2 large handfuls roasted cashews. Consider adding in a splash of lime juice as well.

5. SMOKY BBQ SAUCE



SMOKY BBQ SAUCE

Add 1-2 teaspoons smoked paprika to 1/2 cup commercial BBQ sauce. Taste and add more if needed.

VARIATIONS

hot smoky BBQ sauce – add in a little dried chilli powder or flakes.

home made BBQ sauce – make a big batch and keep in the pantry ([recipe here](#))

6. CASHEW NUT SAUCE



CASHEW NUT SAUCE

In a food processor whizz 200g (7oz) cashew nuts with 1-2 cloves garlic, 1/2 cup water and 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar or white wine vinegar. When you have a smooth creamy sauce, stop and taste. Season as needed.

VARIATIONS

budget – swap some or all of the nuts for torn chunks of rustic bread. Sourdough is great.

nut-free – replace nuts with cooked or canned legumes such as cannellini beans, butter beans or chickpeas. You might need a little more or less vinegar.

no sherry vinegar? – no problem. Use lemon juice or other wine vinegars. Rice vinegar is great.

different nuts – pine nuts, almonds, walnuts, pecans, peanuts (or use peanut butter with less water). So many options.

7. TAHINI LEMON SAUCE



TAHINI LEMON SAUCE

A great sauce to have up your sleeve when you're looking for something creamy and dairy-free. Combine 2 tablespoons each of lemon juice, water and tahini. Taste and season.

VARIATIONS

almond sauce – replace tahini with almond butter

thicker sauce – halve the water.

thinner sauce – double the water.

8. QUICK SATAY SAUCE



QUICK SATAY SAUCE

For each person, mix 3 tablespoons peanut butter, 1 teaspoon thai red curry paste, 1-2 teaspoons soy sauce and 2 teaspoons oil per person.

VARIATIONS

no thai curry paste? – replace with 1-2 small red chillies, finely chopped and deseeded if you prefer a milder sauce.

extra chunky sauce – stir in a handful of roughly chopped roasted peanuts.

hot! – double or triple the curry paste. But remember to taste as you go.

9. BUTTERMILK DRESSING



BUTTERMILK DRESSING

Whisk 1 tablespoon dijon mustard and 6 tablespoons buttermilk together until smooth. Taste and season.

VARIATIONS

thicker sauce – increase the mustard to 2 tablespoons. Serve with roast or BBQ chicken or drizzled over roast eggplant (aubergine).

dairy-free / vegan – replace the buttermilk with 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar or lemon juice and 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil.

10. GROWN UP KETCHUP



10. GROWN UP KETCHUP

Add 1/2 - 1 teaspoon dried chilli and 2 teaspoons soy sauce to 1/2 cup commercial ketchup. Taste and add more if needed.

Use anywhere you'd normally serve regular ketchup. Great with salt crusted burgers.

VARIATIONS

soy-free – try replacing the soy sauce with balsamic vinegar.

smoky ketchup – replace the chilli with 1-2 teaspoons smoked paprika or use both.

Bonus
TEMPLATE RECIPES

warm dinner salad



WARM DINNER SALAD

The secret to making a salad feel like enough of a substantial meal is to cook or warm at least one of the components of the salad. I can't tell you what a difference this makes to the overall feel of the dish.

per person

1 large handful main ingredient, sliced

1/2 tablespoon acid

1/2 teaspoon soy sauce, optional

1-2 handfuls salad leaves, washed and dried

small handful highlight ingredient

1. Heat a little oil in a pan and cook highlight ingredient over a medium heat until cooked to your liking.
2. Meanwhile, combine acid, soy and 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil in a medium bowl. Taste and season.
3. Toss leaves gently in the dressing. Place leaves on a serving plate.
4. Top dressed leaves with the warm main ingredient and scatter over the highlight ingredient.

VARIATIONS

main ingredient – mushrooms, chicken breasts, chicken thighs, steak, lamb fillet, roast veg, eggplant (aubergine), halloumi, tofu, cooked or canned lentils, cooked quinoa, canned chickpeas, canned beans.

acid – Sherry vinegar, rice wine vinegar, lemon juice, lime juice, red/white wine vinegar, champagne vinegar, balsamic.

soy-free – skip the soy sauce and be more generous with the salt. Or try a dash of fish sauce instead.

leaves – pretty much anything you like. Watercress, baby spinach, all lettuce, rocket (arugula), basil, parsley, mint, lovage, baby kale, baby cavolo nero, brussels sprouts leaves.

highlight ingredient – shaved parmesan, goats cheese, marinated feta, ricotta, finely sliced ripe grapes, shaved pear, roast almonds or other nuts, seeds, toasted breadcrumbs.

video

pan fried protein + sauce + salad



PAN FRIED PROTEIN + SAUCE + SALAD

You may recognize this image from our Chilli Chicken with Hummus from earlier in the book. This is a great example of how you can take a specific recipe and translate it into a general template. Feel free to do this with any of your favourite recipes.

per person

approx 150-250g (5-9oz) protein

1/2 teaspoon flavouring, optional

3-4 tablespoons sauce

2 large handfuls washed salad leaves

1/2 lemon

1. Heat a frying pan or skillet on a very high heat.
2. Trim fat from the protein and bash with your fist to even out the thickness, if needed. Rub with a little olive oil and sprinkle with flavouring, if using. Season.
3. Sear with the oiled side down for 2-4 minutes. Turn and cook for another 2-3 minutes or until protein is cooked through.
4. Smear sauce over the base of 2 plates. Top with chicken and serve with leaves and salad on the side.

VARIATIONS

veggie 'protein' - I've used halloumi in the picture. Tofu or seitan would also work well here. Or think about pan frying some precooked beans or lentils until they are just cooked and serving with the sauce and salad. Field or portabello mushrooms are great here too.

carnivore protein – for pan frying tender cuts are best. And preferably not too thick as it can be difficult to get the middle cooked without completely burning the outsides. Steak, lamb cutlets or lamb chops, pork cutlets or pork chops, chicken breasts, chicken thigh fillets. Fish fillets work really well too.

flavouring – crushed garlic, chilli powder, dried chilli flakes, fresh chilli, smoked paprika, curry powder, ground coriander, ground cumin, fennel seeds, pepper, rosemary, thyme, lemon zest, bay leaves.

sauces – hummus, pesto, natural yoghurt, ricotta, ketchup, BBQ sauce, mayo, aioli, for recipes check out our 10 delicious 5 Minute sauces.

video



sautéed greens + highlight

SAUTEED GREENS + HIGHLIGHT

This is one of my go-to meals when I'm home alone. Sometimes I add some protein in the form of a fried egg, roasted nuts or some cheese, but mostly it's just the greens. If I'm adapting it to serve my carnivore Irishman as well, I'll fry some sliced chorizo or sausages first.

per person

*1 large handful main ingredient, sliced
2 large handfuls of greens, washed & sliced
small handful highlight ingredient, optional
squeeze of lemon, optional*

1. Heat a little olive oil in a large frying pan.
2. If the main ingredient needs cooking, add it to the pan and cook on a medium high heat, stirring until cooked to your liking. Remove from the pan.
3. Add the greens and cook stirring for a few minutes until they are just wilted.
4. Remove from the heat. Taste and season with salt, pepper and a little lemon juice, if you like.
5. Serve greens with cooked main ingredient and highlight ingredient, if using scattered over the top.

VARIATIONS

different greens – beet tops, cavolo nero, or black Tuscan cabbage, silverbeet (chard) or rainbow chard, spinach, collard greens, bok choy, chinese broccoli or curly kale. I've read that radish or turnip tops can also be used but haven't ever tried.

main ingredient – chorizo, sausages, chicken breasts or thigh, fillets, lamb fillets, steak, pork fillet or chops, tofu, seitan, halloumi, bacon, pancetta, fish fillets, prawns (shrimp). Other options that don't need cooking first include goats cheese, parmesan, blue cheese, ricotta, cottage cheese, canned tuna, smoked salmon, canned salmon, sardines or avocado. A fried or poached egg can also be a lovely.

highlight ingredient – preserved lemon, olives, chilli (can be cooked in with the greens), almonds, brazil nuts, pinenuts, walnuts, pecans, dried fruit such as apricots, raisins, prunes, chives, parsley, roasted red peppers, roasted eggplant (aubergine).

summer greens – skip the whole cooking part and just slice the greens as finely as possible and dress with lemon juice and olive oil.

Bonus 2.

**PANTRY CHECKLIST +
GETTING THE MOST OUT OF
your PANTRY**

video

PANTRY CHECKLIST

Start with just one item from each category eg. one oil

OILS

good quality extra virgin olive oil - for salads and drizzling
cheaper extra virgin olive oil - for cooking (I buy in bulk)
peanut oil or macadamia oil - for frying and where you need a neutral flavoured oil like mayonnaise.

VINEGAR / ACID

sherry vinegar - my favourite or try red wine vinegar.
balsamic - because sometimes you want a little more sweetness.
lemons - not technically vinegar, but they do the same thing.

CANNED THINGS

tomatoes - preferably whole peeled
chickpeas - my all time favourite pantry ingredient
beans - butter beans, cannellini, red kidney
lentils
fish - tuna in oil (with chilli), sardines
chicken - I preferred smoked chicken
coconut milk - especially for Asian cooks and dairy-free fans.

JARS

curry paste - red Thai or Indian
tomato pasta sauce (marinara sauce) or tomato puree
tomato paste - for a more concentrated hit.
tahini - ground sesame seeds
vegetables - roast red peppers, grilled eggplant (aubergines)
pesto
vegemite - not for everyone :)
peanut butter - for people who don't like vegemite
honey &/or maple syrup

DRY GOODS

lentils - red, puy or french-style green lentils
dried beans - white, black, borlotti or chickpeas
pasta / noodles / couscous / basmati rice
quinoa

SAUCES & CONDIMENTS

mustard - I always have both dijon & wholegrain
soy sauce - wonderfully versatile
mayonnaise - preferably whole egg
ketchup - that's tomato sauce for the Aussies out there
oyster and/or fish sauce - for Asian cooks

SEASONINGS

salt - sea salt flakes like Maldon, cheaper fine sea salt or kosher salt for salting water.
black peppercorns - best quality you can afford spices
dried chilli flakes or chilli powder
spices - curry powder, ground cumin, ground coriander, garam marsala (Indian spice blend), smoked paprika

BAKING [optional]

flour - plain flour, bread flour, rice flour, coconut flour, almond meal
sugar - white sugar, brown sugar or stevia
other - cocoa powder, baking powder, dried yeast
chocolate - 70% cocoa solids

NUTS

almonds, pinenuts, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews

FRIDGE

cheese - parmesan, ricotta, goats cheese, halloumi
other dairy - butter, yoghurt
tofu
miso paste

FREEZER

vegetables - frozen peas, broad beans, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli
fruit - berries, banana, mango, pineapple
other - puff pastry, bread (for the non-slow carbers)

13 EASY WAYS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PANTRY

Without some sort of pantry backup, life can be much harder than it needs to be.

The thing is, having some sort of pantry doesn't need to be difficult or scary. Or require some sort of super human organisation.

1. AUTOMATE YOUR SHOPPING LIST.

A pantry is only as helpful as the ingredients it stocks. By developing the habit of having an ongoing list for pantry and other household items, you'll find that you 'automatically' replenish pantry stock on a regular basis.

2. ORGANISE YOUR PANTRY INTO GROUPS OF SIMILAR ITEMS.

Now I'm not suggesting that you alphabetize your spices, but having some sort of structure or order to your pantry can make a massive difference. If like items are grouped together it can save you time trying to find what you need. And you'll also be able to tell at a glance which types of items you're getting low on.

3. AVOID THE TRAP OF DEEP SHELVES.

There's a saying of of sight out of mind for a reason. If you're ever lucky enough to be designing a pantry, make sure your shelves aren't too deep so you have maximum visibility. If a complete pantry redesign isn't possible, consider investing in a few boxes so you can easily slide them out and have full view of all the contents.

4. DEVELOP THE HABIT OF ACTUALLY LOOKING IN YOUR PANTRY ON A REGULAR BASIS.

You know when you're deciding what to wear and it feels like you have nothing suitable. And then you look in your wardrobe and find heaps of things you'd forgotten about. It's the same with food and pantries. Don't rely on your memory. Use your eyes and you'll find possibilities opening up.

13 EASY WAYS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PANTRY

continued

5. WHEN SHOPPING CHOOSE SOME 'LONG SHELF LIFE' VEGETABLES.

I've had celery and cabbages which have lasted up to a month in the fridge. Making sure some of your veg will last into the next week or longer, takes the pressure off getting the amount of food you buy exactly 'right'.

6. DEVELOP THE HABIT OF ACTUALLY LOOKING IN YOUR FRIDGE AND FREEZER ON A REGULAR BASIS.

There can be a whole world of options in both these locations. But you need to know about them to take advantage of them. I'm guilty of only opening the freezer when I want to get something out. And I'm always surprised at whats in there.

7. EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR STOCKING YOUR 'FRIDGE' PANTRY.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking your pantry is only about the store cupboard ingredients stored at room temperature. The marvel of modern refrigeration makes 'pantry' staples out of many different foods. Think cheeses (especially halloumi), tofu, yoghurt, other dairy products, eggs, smoked fish, salami and other cured meats.

8. FIND A BUTCHER WHO WILL CRYOVAC FOR YOU.

Meat will keep for up to a month in the fridge, ready to use when vacuum packed or 'cryovaccated'. We've started buying our meat direct from the farmer and he packs everything up in cryovac. So some goes into the freezer but much of it just sits in the fridge until needed.

13 EASY WAYS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR PANTRY

continued

9. ROTATE PRODUCE IN YOUR FRIDGE ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Lets face it, things can easily hide at the back of the fridge and get forgotten. I have a large and a smaller space in my veg drawer. Since I adopted the policy of transferring all the older veg to the small drawer before putting new purchases away. AND remembering to look in the smaller drawer first. I've made a massive difference to the amount of veg I throw away.

10. FREEZE IN SMALL, EASILY ACCESSIBLE PACKAGES.

We'll cover freezing and defrosting in greater detail soon. But for now remember, taking the time to divide food into small packets before freezing makes it much quicker and easier to defrost as you need.

11. EXPLORE THE WORLD OF FROZEN VEG & FRUIT.

Frozen produce can be just as good, and in the case of frozen peas even better than 'fresh' produce from the supermarket. Think beyond frozen peas and berries. Soy beans (edamame), broad beans, mango, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower can all be wonderful from the freezer.

12. HAVE A SPRING CLEAN FROM TIME TO TIME.

A clean pantry can be a thing of joy. It's also helpful to identify what you aren't using to stop repeat purchase mistakes. Or inspire you to

13. HAVE A 'USE UP THE PANTRY' PROJECT EVERY NOW AND THEN.

If you're feeling a little broke. Or you know you're going away for a while. It can be fun and economical to try eating from the pantry to have a little clear out.

RECIPE *index*

:: RECIPES BY *season*

:: RECIPES BY *cuisine*

:: RECIPES BY *recipe type*

:: RECIPES BY *your mood*

RECIPES BY SEASON

summer autumn winter spring

- :: eggplant with tomato sauce & pesto
- :: ham & tomato salad
- :: warm chicken salad
- :: fast roast tomato salad
- :: pesto cauliflower
- :: beans with tuna & cherry tomato sauce
- :: sausages with summer veg
- :: stir fried eggplant with pesto
- :: green bean stir fry
- :: zucchini & lentil salad with prosciutto
- :: zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce
- :: tuna burgers with snow peas
- :: chicken stir fry with seasonal veg
- :: chicken & broccoli stir fry
- :: chicken & basil stir fry
- :: beef & black bean stir fry
- :: beef & broccoli stir fry
- :: quick veggie soup
- :: asparagus with miso butter
- :: broccolini with sesame sauce
- :: pasta with tuna & spinach
- :: chickpea burgers
- :: steak with spinach
- :: salt crusted burgers with lentil hummus
- :: chicken burgers with avocado
- :: big-ass salad
- :: vietnamese chicken balls
- :: banana ice cream
- :: hummus & veg
- :: lemon steaks with broccoli
- :: chickpea & yoghurt salad
- :: washing up-free salad
- :: soba noodles with peanut dressing

- :: simple chicken laksa
- :: pea & ham salad
- :: big vegan salad
- :: BBQ chook & butter bean salad
- :: roast mushies
- :: raw broccoli & bacon salad
- :: beef & balsamic salad with ricotta
- :: chicken &/or mushrooms
- :: warm beets with goats cheese
- :: broccoli with hummus
- :: black pepper cauliflower with tofu
- :: udon noodle soup with white beans
- :: curried scrambled eggs
- :: veggie kiev
- :: 15 minute falafels
- :: 'make like momofuku' ramen
- :: lamb shanks with apricot
- :: salmon & butter bean salad
- :: spaghetti with chilli & garlic
- :: tuna & lentil salad
- :: egg fried lentils
- :: Spanish chicken with white bean mash
- :: white bean & tomato soup
- :: mixed bean & avocado salad
- :: grilled kofta kebabs
- :: spiced couscous with broccoli
- :: pasta with prosciutto
- :: parmesan peas with noodles
- :: red pepper & tomato soup
- :: chickpea & vegetable salad
- :: chocolate peanut butter slice
- :: ginger bread ice cream

- :: broccoli & parmesan soup
- :: home baked beans
- :: hot beef curry
- :: warm salmon salad
- :: brocco-slaw
- :: soba noodle pantry soup
- :: thai green chicken curry
- :: cabbage with blue cheese
- :: chinese chicken
- :: coq au vin
- :: pantry cauliflower cheese
- :: broccoli pantry curry
- :: warm butter bean salad
- :: creamy coconut lentils
- :: quick veggie satay
- :: quinoa & grilled veg salad
- :: warm mushroom salad
- :: simple sausage supper
- :: osso buco in bianco
- :: chilli con carne
- :: easy italian supper
- :: italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles
- :: kofta with couscous & peas
- :: chile verde
- :: eggplant parimigiana
- :: sausages with lentils
- :: dark chocolate mousse

- :: chicken tajine
- :: miso soup with bok choy & tofu
- :: veggie sang choy bau
- :: the baked frittata
- :: beet & tomato soup
- :: veggie gumbo with a poached egg
- :: super simple bok choy
- :: veggie burritos
- :: thai red veggie curry
- :: baked eggs with green pea salad
- :: carotti tofunaise
- :: perfect poached eggs
- :: pot roast lamb with feta & olives
- :: a good roast chook
- :: sushi party
- :: lamb cutlets with parmesan peas
- :: a simple plate of greens
- :: single girl salmon
- :: tabbouleh fried egg
- :: white bean & tuna wraps
- :: takeaway chicken salad
- :: bachelorette eggs
- :: pesto couscous
- :: friday night pizza
- :: ricotta puddings
- :: chilli chicken with hummus
- :: rice & greens
- :: ricotta with blueberries

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RECIPES BY TYPE

soup

- :: broccoli & parmesan soup
- :: miso soup with bok choy & tofu
- :: simple chicken laksa
- :: soba noodle pantry soup
- :: red pepper & tomato soup
- :: quick veggie soup
- :: udon noodle soup with white beans
- :: beans with tuna & cherry tomato sauce
- :: beet & tomato soup
- :: 'make like momofuku' ramen
- :: white bean & tomato soup

meat

- :: sausages with summer veg
- :: sausages with lentils
- :: simple sausage supper
- :: lamb cutlets with parmesan peas
- :: lamb shanks with apricot
- :: pot roast lamb with feta & olives
- :: beef & black bean stir fry
- :: beef & broccoli stir fry
- :: steak with spinach
- :: salt crusted burgers with lentil hummus
- :: hot beef curry
- :: osso buco in bianco
- :: italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles
- :: kofta with couscous & peas
- :: chile verde
- :: chilli con carne
- :: grilled kofta kebabs
- :: lemon steaks with broccoli

salad

- :: ham & tomato salad
- :: warm chicken salad
- :: fast roast tomato salad
- :: brocco-slaw
- :: pea & ham salad
- :: big vegan salad
- :: BBQ chook & butter bean salad
- :: raw broccoli & bacon salad
- :: beef & balsamic salad with ricotta
- :: zucchini & lentil salad with prosciutto
- :: salmon & butter bean salad
- :: tuna & lentil salad
- :: chicken &/or mushrooms
- :: mixed bean & avocado salad
- :: washing up-free salad
- :: chickpea & vegetable salad
- :: warm mushroom salad
- :: chickpea & yohgurt salad
- :: warm butter bean salad
- :: warm salmon salad
- :: big-ass salad
- :: takeaway chicken salad

eggs

- :: bachelorette eggs
- :: tabbouleh fried egg
- :: baked eggs with green pea salad
- :: carotti tofunaise
- :: perfect poached eggs
- :: curried scrambled eggs
- :: the baked frittata

veg

- :: eggplant with tomato sauce & pesto
- :: pesto cauliflower
- :: stir fried eggplant with pesto
- :: green bean stir fry
- :: veggie sang choi bau
- :: roast mushies
- :: asparagus with miso butter
- :: broccolini with sesame sauce
- :: zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce
- :: warm beets with goats cheese
- :: broccoli with hummus
- :: black pepper cauliflower with tofu
- :: cabbage with blue cheese
- :: veggie gumbo with a poached egg
- :: eggplant parimigiana
- :: super simple bok choy
- :: veggie burritos
- :: thai red veggie curry
- :: a simple plate of greens
- :: quick veggie satay
- :: pantry cauliflower cheese
- :: broccoli pantry curry
- :: hummus & veg

fish

- :: tuna burgers with snow peas
- :: single girl salmon
- :: white bean & tuna wraps
- :: sushi party

legumes

- :: home baked beans
- :: pasta with tuna & spinach
- :: chickpea burgers
- :: veggie kiev
- :: 15 minute falafels
- :: spaghetti with chilli & garlic
- :: egg fried lentils
- :: easy italian supper
- :: friday night pizza
- :: pasta with prosciutto
- :: soba noodles with peanut dressing
- :: parmesan peas with noodles
- :: creamy coconut lentils
- :: quinoa & grilled veg salad
- :: spiced couscous with broccoli
- :: rice & greens
- :: pesto couscous

chicken

- :: chilli chicken with hummus
- :: a good roast chook
- :: chicken stir fry with seasonal veg
- :: chicken & broccoli stir fry
- :: chicken & basil stir fry
- :: chicken burgers with avocado
- :: vietnamese chicken balls
- :: chicken tajine
- :: thai green chicken curry
- :: chinese chicken
- :: coq au vin
- :: spanish chicken + white bean mash

sweets

- :: dark chocolate mousse
- :: ricotta puddings
- :: chocolate peanut butter slice
- :: ginger bread ice cream
- :: banana ice cream
- :: ricotta with blueberries

RECIPES BY CUISINE

italian asian modern

middle eastern

- :: osso buco in bianco
- :: eggplant with tomato sauce & pesto
- :: friday night pizza
- :: beef & balsamic salad with ricotta
- :: fast roast tomato salad
- :: pesto cauliflower
- :: stir fried eggplant with pesto
- :: the baked frittata
- :: zucchini & lentil salad with prosciutto
- :: quick veggie soup
- :: pasta with tuna & spinach
- :: spaghetti with chilli & garlic
- :: tuna & lentil salad
- :: easy italian supper
- :: italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles
- :: broccoli & parmesan soup
- :: white bean & tomato soup
- :: eggplant parimigiana
- :: sausages with lentils
- :: pasta with prosciutto
- :: parmesan peas with noodles
- :: red pepper & tomato soup

other

- :: bachelorette eggs
- :: pantry cauliflower cheese
- :: takeaway chicken salad
- :: coq au vin
- :: veggie kiev
- :: spanish chicken with white bean mash
- :: veggie gumbo
- :: dark chocolate mousse

- :: simple chicken laksa
- :: green bean stir fry
- :: veggie sang choi bau
- :: black pepper cauliflower with tofu
- :: udon noodle soup with white beans
- :: curried scrambled eggs
- :: miso soup with bok choy & tofu
- :: chicken & broccoli stir fry
- :: chicken & basil stir fry
- :: beef & black bean stir fry
- :: beef & broccoli stir fry
- :: 'make like momofuku' ramen
- :: asparagus with miso butter
- :: broccolini with sesame sauce
- :: vietnamese chicken balls
- :: soba noodle pantry soup
- :: thai green chicken curry
- :: chinese chicken
- :: egg fried lentils
- :: hot beef curry
- :: super simple bok choy
- :: thai red veggie curry
- :: sushi party
- :: rice & greens
- :: soba noodles with peanut dressing
- :: quick veggie satay
- :: broccoli pantry curry
- :: creamy coconut lentils

- :: big vegan salad
- :: BBQ chook & butter bean salad
- :: roast mushies
- :: ham & tomato salad
- :: warm chicken salad
- :: beans with tuna & cherry tomato
- :: sausages with summer veg
- :: pea & ham salad
- :: raw broccoli & bacon salad
- :: chicken &/or mushrooms
- :: warm beets with goats cheese
- :: zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce
- :: tuna burgers with snow peas
- :: chicken stir fry with seasonal veg
- :: steak with spinach
- :: salt crusted burgers with lentil
- :: chicken burgers with avocado
- :: salmon & butter bean salad
- :: lemon steaks with broccoli
- :: ricotta with blueberries
- :: home baked beans
- :: brocco-slaw
- :: cabbage with blue cheese
- :: simple sausage supper
- :: washing up-free salad
- :: baked eggs with green pea salad
- :: carotti tofunaise
- :: perfect poached eggs
- :: pot roast lamb with feta & olives
- :: a good roast chook
- :: lamb cutlets with parmesan peas
- :: a simple plate of greens
- :: single girl salmon
- :: chocolate peanut butter slice
- :: warm mushroom & goats cheese salad
- :: big-ass salad

- :: chicken tajine
- :: broccoli with hummus
- :: 15 minute falafels
- :: lamb shanks with apricot
- :: chickpea burgers
- :: chickpea & vegetable salad
- :: beet & tomato soup
- :: white bean & tuna wraps
- :: kofta with couscous & peas
- :: banana ice cream
- :: ginger bread ice cream
- :: ricotta puddings
- :: quinoa & grilled veg salad
- :: hummus & veg
- :: chickpea & yohgurt salad
- :: warm butter bean salad
- :: tabbouleh fried egg
- :: chilli chicken with hummus
- :: spiced couscous with broccoli
- :: warm salmon salad
- :: pesto couscous
- :: grilled kofta kebabs

mexican

- :: chilli con carne
- :: veggie burritos
- :: mixed bean & avocado salad
- :: chile verde

RECIPES BY YOUR MOOD

virtuous ravencous sharing indulgent

- :: eggplant with tomato sauce & pesto
- :: ham & tomato salad
- :: warm chicken salad
- :: fast roast tomato salad
- :: pesto cauliflower
- :: beans with tuna & cherry tomato sauce
- :: pea & ham salad
- :: big vegan salad
- :: raw broccoli & bacon salad
- :: roast mushies
- :: sausages with summer veg
- :: stir fried eggplant with pesto
- :: green bean stir fry
- :: zucchini & lentil salad with prosciutto
- :: zucchini burgers with yoghurt sauce
- :: broccoli with hummus
- :: black pepper cauliflower with tofu
- :: quick veggie soup
- :: asparagus with miso butter
- :: broccolini with sesame sauce
- :: broccoli & parmesan soup
- :: brocco-slaw
- :: soba noodle pantry soup
- :: salmon & butter bean salad
- :: tuna & lentil salad
- :: egg fried lentils
- :: mixed bean & avocado salad
- :: washing up-free salad
- :: a simple plate of greens
- :: single girl salmon
- :: miso soup with bok choy & tofu
- :: bachelorette eggs
- :: big-ass salad
- :: tabbouleh fried egg
- :: warm butter bean salad
- :: soba noodles with peanut dressing
- :: warm mushroom & goats cheese salad
- :: chickpea & yoghurt salad

- :: salt crusted burgers with lentil hummus
- :: chicken burgers with avocado
- :: vietnamese chicken balls
- :: BBQ chook & butter bean salad
- :: beef & balsamic salad with ricotta
- :: chicken &/or mushrooms
- :: warm beets with goats cheese
- :: chinese chicken
- :: coq au vin
- :: simple sausage supper
- :: osso buco in bianco
- :: chilli con carne
- :: kofta with couscous & peas
- :: home baked beans
- :: chickpea burgers
- :: udon noodle soup with white beans
- :: curried scrambled eggs
- :: veggie kiev
- :: lamb shanks with apricot
- :: Spanish chicken with white bean mash
- :: white bean & tomato soup
- :: baked eggs with green pea salad
- :: carotti tofunaise
- :: perfect poached eggs
- :: takeaway chicken salad
- :: spiced couscous with broccoli
- :: chilli chicken with hummus
- :: lemon steaks with broccoli
- :: grilled kofta kebabs
- :: red pepper & tomato soup
- :: tuna burgers with snow peas
- :: simple chicken laksa

- :: friday night pizza
- :: 15 minute falafels
- :: veggie burritos
- :: veggie sang choi bau
- :: sushi party
- :: hot beef curry
- :: chicken stir fry with seasonal veg
- :: chicken & broccoli stir fry
- :: chicken & basil stir fry
- :: beef & black bean stir fry
- :: beef & broccoli stir fry
- :: chicken tajine
- :: chickpea & vegetable salad
- :: pot roast lamb with feta & olives
- :: 'make like momofuku' ramen
- :: thai green chicken curry
- :: cabbage with blue cheese
- :: chile verde
- :: eggplant parimigiana
- :: sausages with lentils
- :: thai red veggie curry
- :: the baked frittata
- :: beet & tomato soup
- :: veggie gumbo with a poached egg
- :: super simple bok choy
- :: hummus & veg
- :: pantry cauliflower cheese
- :: broccoli pantry curry
- :: white bean & tuna wraps
- :: creamy coconut lentils
- :: quick veggie satay
- :: quinoa & grilled veg salad

- :: dark chocolate mousse
- :: chocolate peanut butter slice
- :: easy italian supper
- :: italian beef ragu with zucchini noodles
- :: steak with spinach
- :: pasta with tuna & spinach
- :: banana ice cream
- :: ricotta puddings
- :: ginger bread ice cream
- :: spaghetti with chilli & garlic
- :: a good roast chook
- :: lamb cutlets with parmesan peas
- :: pesto couscous
- :: parmesan peas with noodles
- :: warm salmon salad
- :: rice & greens
- :: pasta with prosciutto
- :: ricotta with blueberries

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



The author of this e-cookbook is Jules Clancy.

I'm first and foremost a food lover who adores her veggies. The type of girl who plans her holidays around restaurant reservations.

I'm equally happy spending 6 hours dining at the (former) best restaurant in the world as I am sitting on stools in a Brooklyn alleyway wolfing down Texas-style BBQ brisket.

I also love cooking and simplicity. So I am constantly on the lookout for ways to make my cooking less complicated and time-consuming without sacrificing flavour or wholesomeness.

I have degrees in both food and wine science but I'm not a nerd, really. In January 2010, I packed in my day job as a chocolate biscuit designer for Australia's largest biscuit company to become a full time blogger over at [Stonesoup](#).

When I'm not cooking, writing about food or taking photographs [of food], I can be found indulging my passions for long boozy lunches, travel, running, cookbooks, growing my own veggies, cheese and red shoes.

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