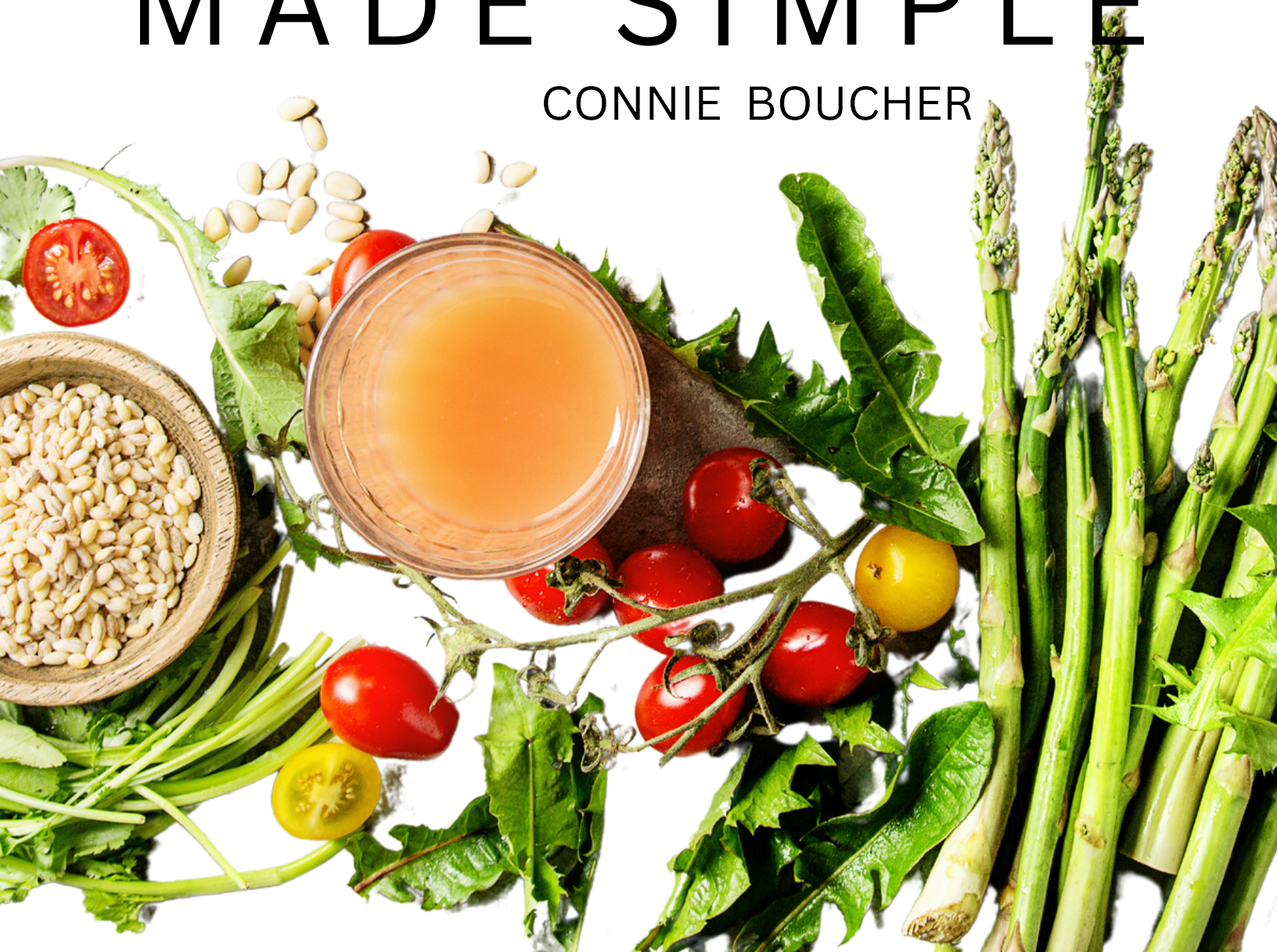


FOOD FOR WELLNESS

MADE SIMPLE

CONNIE BOUCHER





**COOKING IS NOT A SCIENCE
BUT AN ART, MISTAKES ARE
OKAY, MESSSES ARE FINE, THE
PLEASURE IS IN CREATING
AND SHARING THE RESULT.**

LORI POLLAN

Hi, I'm Connie, and I like good food!

I like food that grows in the ground and hasn't been altered, processed, or poisoned. I've never liked meat—I prefer organic plant foods that don't come in packages or cans. In other words, I like real God-made earth-grown food that's clean and unrefined.

I love sourdough bread, big green salads with homemade dressings, and soups. I also adore pantry foods because beans and legumes are easy to find, store well, and are substantial, versatile, and far more delicious than most people realize. I eat the way I do for three reasons:

- I like to feel good, and my diet supports that.
- I prefer real homemade food over fast and convenience foods.
- I don't like meat, never have, and I find beans and veggies superior.

This is a collection of my most loved and used recipes. For the most part, they contain natural ingredients, are packed with essential nutrients, and I hope you enjoy them as much as I do. I've made them easy to print, and if you love them, feel free to share them.

Not only is healthy eating an essential part of wellness, but sharing good food with loved ones also has its own special benefits.

This is your call to invite people you love and make delicious food with them, because sharing meals makes good food taste even better, and it creates memories that are priceless.

Download these recipes and print them to put in a binder, or save them in a file where you can easily find them and print one at a time when needed. They are wholesome, homemade recipes that nourish the body and soul.

When it comes to cooking, I'm not great at following recipes. I mainly use them as guidelines and taste as I go. When something doesn't taste quite right, I simply adjust by adding whatever I think is missing. I taste, then add a little of this or that until I'm happy with the result. And often, all that's needed is a couple of shakes of Real Salt, Slap Ya Mama (must-have seasoning), or a splash of freshly squeezed citrus juice.

Here's what I use to boost flavors naturally:

- Vinegars & Wines – A quick way to enhance flavor is by adding a splash of vinegar, red wine, or sherry.
 - Red wine pairs well with tomato-based soups and sauces.
 - Sherry works great with potatoes and pastas.
 - A little goes a long way!
- Bold Flavors – I love flavor, so I go heavy on garlic, vanilla, cinnamon, and other bold ingredients.
- Spices & Seasonings – I keep a variety of herbs and spices in my cupboard because they have the ability to transform simple pantry staples into international masterpieces.

My must-have seasonings:

If I could only have three spices in my kitchen (besides Real Salt and freshly ground pepper), they would be:

- Cinnamon
- Spice Islands Garlic Herb Seasoning (Costco)
- Slap Ya Mama Seasoning (Walmart)

How I use essential oils in recipes:

I love using doTERRA essential oils for seasoning, but they can be too intense if added directly to food. The best way I've found to cook with them is to:

- Mix essential oils with Real Salt or organic sugar, stirring well to distribute the flavor.
- Store labeled oil-infused salts and sugars in tightly sealed jars and use them in place of essential oils when cooking.

I keep small labeled jars of seasoned salts and sugars in my spice cupboard and use a small amount along with unseasoned salt or sugar. I start with less because I can always add more if needed.

My shopping & ingredient choices:

- I buy the best, freshest organic ingredients I can find because they're healthier and make everything taste better.
- There is no white sugar or iodized salt in my kitchen—only Real Salt, organic sugar, coconut sugar, and natural alternatives.
- When I shop, I rarely go into the inner aisles of the grocery store.
- I stick to the produce and bulk sections and buy grains, nuts, and staples in bulk when they're on sale—it saves money and ensures I always have plenty on hand.

I like having plenty of options in my kitchen because I prefer homemade to processed and pre-packaged foods. I also don't want to run to the store every time I want to make something, so I keep my pantry well-stocked.

Storage & organization:

- I reuse empty jars by soaking off the labels and using them to store herbs, spices, and bulk items.
- I prefer storing food in glass whenever possible.
- Labeling is key—if I don't label my jars, I tend to forget what's in them!

Kitchen equipment I rely on:

Over the years, I've invested in good kitchen equipment, and I use almost all of it regularly. Some of my essentials include:

- High-power blender
- Food processor
- Heavy-duty produce chopper
- Mandoline
- Immersion blender
- Hand mixer
- Decent knives
- A variety of bowls, large stirring spoons, and spatulas
- Strainers and colanders
- High-quality, toxin-free pans
- Several enamel-coated Dutch ovens

I couldn't build a house without the right equipment, and I can't cook without it either.

My kitchen style:

- I love pretty bowls and dishes, but I'm not into delicate china.
- If something is in my kitchen, it has to be functional and aesthetically pleasing.
- Many of my dishes and bowls are mismatched—they came from pottery shops and thrift stores. I love them and think they look eclectically beautiful together.
- A well-set table with pulled-together place settings makes good food taste even better.

Why I don't own a microwave:

- I got rid of my microwave thirty years ago after I found out they radiate food and make it incompatible with the human body, and they're known to cause cancer.
- I cook and reheat food on my stove or in a toaster oven because it's healthier. And, I prefer cooking the old-school way because it connects me with what I'm cooking, and it makes the food taste much better.

My cooking process:

- When I come up with a new recipe that works, I write it down.
- If I don't, I'll forget it—and it's fun to glance through my notes later and remember.
- Cooking has been one of my best teachers—through repetition, I've learned what works, what doesn't, and how to trust my instincts in the kitchen.

And now, here's my collection of go-to recipes. I hope you enjoy them!

FOR SIPPING



SMOOTHIES

In the summer, I freeze kale, spinach, and fruit from my garden, and throughout the year, I buy organic fruit in bulk when it's a good price. This way, I can make smoothies all winter for next to nothing.

You can leave the greens out, but I always add them because you can't taste them, and they significantly boost the nutritional value. You can even pick nutritious unsprayed "weeds" like dandelion, purslane, and lamb's quarters in the summer, wash them, and freeze them for later use in smoothies.

Use the following general guidelines to make delicious, nutrient-packed smoothies.

Liquid (1 ½ - 2 cups or more)

- Distilled or alkalized water
- Nut milk (coconut, almond, rice)
- Unsweetened juice (preferably fresh)

Protein (¾ to 1 scoop, optional but recommended)

- Good-quality, plant-based protein powder
- Unsweetened Greek yogurt

I almost always add a scoop of plant-based vanilla protein and a spoonful of Greek yogurt to green smoothies—it adds nutrition, creaminess, and extra flavor.

Greens (1 big handful - ¾ to 1 cup, or as much as will fit after blending everything else)

- Organic dark leafy greens: spinach, romaine, kale, Swiss chard, wheatgrass
- Unsprayed edible weeds: dandelion, purslane, lamb's quarters, etc.

Fruit (1 ½ to 2 cups)

- 1-2 inch chunks of any fruit you have on hand
- Frozen fruit works best—it chills the smoothie without needing ice

Fiber (1 scoop)

- I use doTERRA Fiber for added digestion support. (Its phenomenal!)

Nuts & Seeds (1-2 spoonfuls, optional)

- Soaked almonds
- Coconut oil
- Flaxseed oil
- Ground flaxseeds
- Hemp seeds
- Chia seeds

Ice (3 cubes or more, optional)

- If using frozen fruit, you likely won't need extra ice.

This formula makes thick, creamy, and nutritious smoothies packed with real, whole-food ingredients. Feel free to mix and match ingredients to keep things interesting!

INFUSED WATER

Infused water is a refreshing and flavorful way to stay hydrated while enjoying the benefits of fresh fruits, herbs, and natural flavors. Simply add one of the following combinations to about five cups of chilled water in a clear glass jar with a spigot, and let it sit for at least 30 minutes to infuse.

Citrus & Herb Refresh

- 1 pink grapefruit, sliced
- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 sprig rosemary

Cool Cucumber Mint

- ½ cucumber, sliced
- 1 lime, sliced
- 3 mint sprigs

Pomegranate Ginger Twist

- Seeds from 1 large pomegranate
- 1 lime, sliced
- 2 inches fresh ginger, sliced

Berry Melon Burst

- 2 cups watermelon cubes
- ⅔ cup sliced strawberries
- ½ cup mint leaves, torn

Crisp Apple Citrus

- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 apple, sliced
- ⅔ cup blueberries

How to Enjoy:

- Let the ingredients infuse for at least 30 minutes for a light flavor, or refrigerate overnight for a stronger infusion.
- Serve over ice for a crisp, refreshing drink.
- Refill with water once or twice before replacing ingredients.

This is an easy, delicious way to hydrate while enjoying natural flavors and health benefits from fresh fruits and herbs!

STRAWBERRY BASIL SPARKLING WATER

This is a refreshing, vibrant drink with the perfect balance of sweet strawberries, bright citrus, and fragrant basil. This simple, naturally flavored sparkling water is a delicious way to hydrate and enjoy fresh ingredients.

Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh organic strawberries, de-stemmed
- 3 lemons, juiced
- 1 cup fresh basil, plus extra for garnish
- Sparkling water
- Ice

Instructions

1. Combine strawberries, lemon juice, and basil in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and fully pureed.
3. Fill a glass with ice, then pour the strawberry-basil mixture over it.
4. Top with sparkling water, using about half and half to taste.
5. Stir gently and garnish with fresh basil sprigs.

Enjoy immediately for a refreshing, naturally flavored drink! (about half and half) and garnish with little sprigs of basil leaves.

SPARKLING GINGER MOCKTAIL

This is a refreshing, spiced, and slightly tart mocktail with the perfect balance of apple, lime, ginger, and warming cinnamon. This drink is light, invigorating, and perfect for any occasion.

Makes 1 Drink

Ingredients

- 3 oz fresh apple cider
- 1 oz freshly squeezed lime juice
- 6 mint leaves
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- Pinch of powdered cinnamon
- 3 oz ginger ale
- Ice

Instructions

1. Add apple cider, lime juice, cinnamon, apple cider vinegar, and a few ice cubes to a cocktail shaker.
 - If you don't have a shaker, use a mason jar or any bottle with a tight lid.
2. Rub the mint leaves together in your hands to release their natural oils, then add them to the shaker.
3. Shake vigorously for 20–30 seconds until the ingredients are well combined.
4. Fill a glass with ice, then pour the mixture over it.
5. Top with ginger ale, stir gently, and garnish with fresh mint.

Enjoy this crisp and refreshing mocktail immediately!

SPARKLING CRANBERRY LIME MOCKTAIL

This is a bright, refreshing, and festive mocktail with the perfect combination of tart cranberry, zesty lime, and bubbly soda. This simple drink is perfect for any occasion and can be easily customized for extra flair.

Ingredients

- 1 cup sweetened cranberry juice
- 1 lime, juiced
- Soda or tonic water
- Ice
- Fresh lime slices (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Combine cranberry juice and fresh lime juice in a mixing glass.
2. Fill serving glasses halfway with ice and pour the juice mixture over the ice.
3. Top off with soda or tonic water, stirring gently to combine.
4. Garnish with fresh lime slices.

Make It More Festive!

- Freeze fresh cranberries in ice cube trays and use them as a colorful, fun addition to the drink.
- Swap tonic water for sparkling apple cider for a sweeter variation.

Enjoy this light and refreshing mocktail any time you need a crisp, bubbly treat!

GOLDEN MILK

This is a warm, soothing, and nutrient-packed drink with anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties. This turmeric latte is perfect for chilly nights, when you're feeling under the weather, or when you just need a comforting health boost.

Ingredients

- 2 cups non-dairy milk (almond, coconut, oat, or cashew)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ginger
- ¼ teaspoon cardamom
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- Generous pinch black pepper (enhances turmeric absorption)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey
- ½ tablespoon coconut oil or MCT oil

Instructions

1. In a small saucepan, heat non-dairy milk over medium heat until warm but not boiling.
2. Add the remaining ingredients and blend using:
 - A milk frother or immersion blender for a creamy texture.
 - A blender if you want a smoother consistency.
3. Taste and adjust by adding more milk or sweetener, if desired.
4. Pour into a mug and enjoy warm.

What's Great About This Drink

- Rich in antioxidants & anti-inflammatory compounds
- Supports immunity & digestion
- Warming and comforting—great for winter nights
- Naturally dairy-free & refined sugar-free

Enjoy this strong, healing drink and let its impressive health benefits nourish your body and soul!

MASALA CHAI TEA SPICE BLEND

I love chai tea, but I'm not a fan of all the refined sugar or having to go out to get it. So, I created a healthier version at home! This Indian Masala Chai Tea blend is full-flavored, slightly exotic, and not overly sweet.

I grind fresh whole spices in a coffee grinder to enhance the flavor—it makes all the difference!

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground black cardamom
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon
- 3 generous cups coconut sugar

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir well.
2. Store in an airtight glass jar.

This blend makes it easy to whip up a warm, comforting chai latte anytime!

SPICY CHAI TEA LATTE

This rich, creamy chai latte is perfect for cozy mornings, quiet afternoons, or whenever you need a little warmth and spice.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- 6 tea bags (I love Stash Decaffeinated Hazelnut Chocolate)
- 3 cups hot almond milk
- 3 heaping tablespoons Masala Chai Tea Mix (or more to taste)

Instructions

1. Steep the tea bags in boiling water for about five minutes.
2. In a separate pan, heat the almond milk until warm.
3. Combine the steeped tea, hot almond milk, and chai tea mix.
4. Stir with a frother or immersion blender for a smooth, creamy texture.
5. Pour into mugs and sip slowly, savoring every warm, spiced sip!

This homemade chai latte is deeply flavorful, naturally sweetened, and completely customizable. Adjust the spice blend to suit your taste and enjoy a better-than-coffee-shop chai from the comfort of home!

FIRE CIDER

This isn't a recipe for sipping—it's a powerful immune booster that's great to have on hand in the winter. I take a shot glass full at a time, and it's helped me stay well when people around me were sick and turned things around quickly when I felt like I was coming down with something.

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 bulb garlic, peeled and roughly chopped
- 3-inch piece fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tablespoon dried echinacea root, sliced thin (or 3 tablespoons dried leaves)
- 1 orange, sliced (optional)
- 1 jalapeño, sliced (optional)
- Apple cider vinegar (organic, with "the mother")
- Raw organic honey
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper

Instructions

1. Prepare the ingredients – Roughly chop the onion, garlic, and ginger.
2. Fill the jar – Add the echinacea root, orange, and jalapeño (if using) to a quart-sized mason jar.
 - Place the garlic at the bottom and make sure it stays fully submerged.
3. Add the apple cider vinegar – Pour enough to completely cover the ingredients.
4. Weigh it down – Use a fermentation weight or press the ingredients down to keep everything below the liquid level.
5. Cap tightly and ferment – Store in a warm or sunny spot for 2-3 weeks.
6. Strain & mix – After fermenting, strain out the solids and measure the remaining vinegar.
7. Add the finishing ingredients – Mix the strained vinegar with an equal amount of raw honey and stir in cayenne pepper.

How to Use Fire Cider

- Take 1 teaspoon daily (or more if you can handle it).
- When sick, take 1 teaspoon every hour until symptoms improve.

This potent, warming, and powerful tonic is a must-have during cold and flu season. Keep a jar ready, and your immune system will thank you!

BITES



NUTTY CRACKERS

These crisp, flavorful homemade crackers are packed with nutty goodness and are so easy to make, you'll never want store-bought crackers again!

Ingredients

- 1 cup almonds
- 1 cup cashews
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons water
- Toppings: sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, poppy seeds, etc.

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. In a blender, grind almonds, cashews, and salt into a coarse flour. Transfer to a small mixing bowl.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the egg and water. Stir into the nut flour and mix until combined.
4. Place the dough between two sheets of parchment paper on an upside-down cookie sheet.
5. Roll out the dough until it is less than ¼ inch thick, spreading it to the edges of the pan.
6. Sprinkle seeds or other toppings over the dough and gently press them in.
7. Using a pizza cutter, score the dough diagonally to form cracker shapes.
8. Carefully slide the parchment paper onto another upside-down cookie sheet. Remove the top sheet of parchment paper.
9. Bake for about 10 minutes, or until crispy and golden—watch closely to prevent burning.

Let cool before breaking apart and enjoying!

Once you've had homemade crackers, you'll find it hard to settle for store-bought!

GARLICKY PARMESAN CRACKERS

These crispy, cheesy crackers are packed with garlic flavor and a nutty crunch. They're easy to make and perfect for snacking, dipping, or pairing with soups and salads.

Ingredients

- ½ cup almond meal (blend almonds in a blender to make your own)
- ½ cup ground flaxseed (blend flax in a blender or coffee grinder)
- ⅓ cup parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup water

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and stir until a dough forms.
3. Place the dough between two sheets of parchment paper on an upside-down cookie sheet.
4. Roll out the dough thinly and evenly to the edges of the pan.
5. Using a pizza cutter, score the dough into cracker shapes.
6. Carefully slide the parchment paper onto another upside-down cookie sheet and remove the top sheet.
7. Bake for about 15 minutes, or until crispy and golden. Watch closely to prevent burning.
8. Let cool before breaking apart and enjoying.

These garlicky, cheesy crackers are delicious on their own or paired with your favorite dips!

AVOCADO TOAST

This simple, flavorful avocado toast is creamy, garlicky, and packed with healthy fats. It's perfect for a quick, nourishing breakfast or snack.

Ingredients

- 1 ripe avocado, halved and pitted
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Red pepper flakes, to taste
- Sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- Whole wheat or sourdough toast, for serving

Instructions

1. Scoop the avocado into a bowl and mash until mostly smooth.
2. Stir in the garlic and olive oil until well combined.
3. Add red pepper flakes, sea salt, and black pepper to taste.
4. Spread generously on toasted whole wheat or sourdough bread.

Optional Toppings

- Crumbled feta cheese
- Pomegranate arils
- Freshly ground black pepper

Enjoy this rich, satisfying avocado toast as-is or customize it with your favorite toppings!

WHIPPED FETA & ROASTED ONION SPREAD

This creamy, savory spread is perfect for parties—quick to make, full of flavor, and always a crowd-pleaser. Serve it with crackers or toasted sourdough for an easy appetizer that impresses every time.

Ingredients

Whipped Feta Base

- 1 (8-oz) package cream cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sour cream
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoon good-quality olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Roasted Onion & Olive Topping

- 1 large shallot or small red onion, thinly sliced (a mandoline works great!)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup kalamata olives
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup stuffed green olives
- Olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

Step 1: Make the Whipped Feta Base

1. Combine cream cheese, sour cream, honey, olive oil, salt, and pepper in a mixing bowl.
2. Use a hand mixer to blend until smooth and fluffy.

Step 2: Roast the Onions & Olives

1. Preheat oven to broil.
2. Place the sliced shallot or onion and olives in a baking dish.
3. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and toss to coat.
4. Broil for 1-2 minutes, stir, then broil for another minute until onions begin to brown slightly.
5. Remove from oven and let cool slightly.

Step 3: Assemble & Serve

1. Spread the whipped feta mixture in a shallow serving dish.
2. Top with the roasted onion and olive mixture.
3. Serve with crackers or thinly sliced, toasted sourdough bread.

This spread is rich, creamy, and packed with flavor, making it the perfect addition to any gathering!

SALADS



MEAL PREP SALADS

Half the battle of eating well is having things ready to go in the fridge. When I'm chopping veggies and fruits for salads, I always chop extra and store them in covered glass bowls so I can easily see what's inside.

For easy, grab-and-go meals, I love making layered salads in quart-sized canning jars. They stay fresh, prevent sogginess, and make eating nutritious meals convenient.

How to Layer a Salad Jar for Maximum Freshness

Layer 1: Dressing (goes in first to keep other ingredients crisp!)

Layer 2: Sturdy vegetables that won't go soggy (broccoli, beets, jicama, carrots)

Layer 3: Crisp vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, celery, snap peas)

Layer 4: More delicate ingredients (boiled eggs, cheese, avocado)

Layer 5: Substantial grains (quinoa, rice, couscous, farro, chickpeas)

Layer 6: Greens, chopped into bite-sized pieces (spinach, kale, romaine, arugula)

How to Serve

- When ready to eat, shake the jar to distribute the dressing or pour into a bowl and toss.
- For extra crunch, add seeds, nuts, or croutons just before serving.

Having ready-to-go salads in the fridge makes healthy eating effortless and ensures I always have a nutritious meal on hand!

KALE SALAD PREP

Kale is a perfect green for meal prep salads because it stays fresh longer than most chopped greens. However, the trick to making kale taste delicious is to massage it—this helps break down its tough texture and makes it more enjoyable to eat.

How to Prepare Kale for Salads

1. Wash the kale thoroughly and check the back of the leaves for spider mite eggs.
2. Fold each leaf lengthwise and use scissors to cut out the thick spine.
3. Hold the kale over a salad bowl and clip leaves into bite-sized pieces.
4. Once all the kale is in the bowl, sprinkle with salt.
5. Massage the kale with your hands until it turns a darker shade of green and becomes softer.
6. Store in a tightly covered container in the fridge for 3-4 days.

Pairing Ideas

- Kale pairs well with fruits like berries, apples, and pears.
- It tastes best with sweeter dressings, such as honey mustard, balsamic vinaigrette, or citrus-based dressings.

By prepping kale this way, you'll always have a nutritious, ready-to-use green for fresh salads throughout the week!

WINTER SALAD

This hearty, nutrient-packed winter salad combines warm roasted sweet potatoes, fluffy quinoa, crisp arugula, and bright pomegranate seeds for a flavorful, satisfying dish. Lightly toasted seeds add crunch, and a tangy-sweet lime dressing brings everything together.

Salad

- 1 cup quinoa
- 2 medium organic sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 tablespoon (or more) extra-virgin olive oil
- A salad bowl full of young arugula
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro, chopped
- 2 tablespoons mixed seeds (pine nuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds), lightly toasted
- Seeds from 1 pomegranate
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste

Instructions

Step 1: Roast the Sweet Potatoes

1. Preheat oven to 425°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Peel and cut sweet potatoes into 1 to 1 ½-inch chunks.
3. Place in a large bowl, drizzle with olive oil, and stir to coat.
4. Spread on the prepared baking sheet and season with salt and pepper.
5. Bake for 25-30 minutes, tossing once halfway through, until soft with slightly crisp edges.

Step 2: Cook the Quinoa & Prep Other Ingredients

1. While the sweet potatoes are roasting, rinse and cook quinoa according to package directions.
2. While the quinoa is cooking, seed the pomegranate, chop the cilantro, and toast the seeds:
 - Place seeds in a hot frying pan over medium heat.
 - Stir constantly to prevent burning (this happens fast!).
 - Remove from heat once lightly golden and fragrant.

Dressing

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 tablespoons honey (or to taste)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Sea salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions

1. In a blender, combine lime juice, honey, garlic, salt, and pepper, and blend until smooth.
2. Slowly add the olive oil, blending until fully emulsified.
3. Taste and adjust honey or lime if needed.

Step 3: Assemble the Salad

1. In a large bowl, drizzle the dressing over the cooked quinoa and toss to combine.
2. Add arugula and chopped cilantro, tossing again.
3. Gently fold in roasted sweet potatoes.
4. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds and toasted seeds.
5. Serve immediately and enjoy!

This warm, vibrant salad is perfect for winter meals, offering a delicious blend of sweet, savory, and tangy flavors with a satisfying crunch. Enjoy as a light main dish or a colorful side!

PANTRY SALADS

Pantry salads are a versatile and delicious way to use food storage ingredients while creating something fresh, filling, and full of flavor. The best part? You can tweak them in endless ways to suit your taste and what you have on hand.

Basic Ingredients:

- Cooked beans (rinsed and drained) – about 2-3 cups
- Cooked grains (rinsed and drained) – about 2-3 cups
- Thinly sliced red onion
- Choppees (crunchy and flavorful add-ins) – about 2-3 cups
- Salad dressing – about 1 cup, or more to taste
- Toppings (optional) – roasted or salted sunflower or pumpkin seeds, cheese (feta, cheddar chunks, parmesan)
- Beans & Grains: Any variety works, and they can be combined. Quinoa and unhulled barley are my personal favorites.
- Choppees (my word for crunchy add-ins):
 - Chopped pickles, carrots, celery, peppers, apples, fresh herbs
 - Fermented tomatoes, capers, olives, diced beets, etc.

Salad Dressing:

- Use what you have! If you have mayo, a spoonful makes a great base.
- If not, mix red wine vinegar with olive oil for a simple, fresh dressing.
- Boost the flavor with citrus juice, maple syrup, mustard, hot sauce, salt, pepper, and cumin.
- Pickle and olive brine (which is just seasoned vinegar and water) makes a fantastic addition—don't throw it away!

How to Make It:

1. Create the dressing – mix your chosen ingredients until balanced to your taste.
2. Combine the beans, onions, and choppees in a large bowl.
3. Stir in the dressing and mix well. Taste and adjust if needed.
4. Top with seeds and cheese if desired.

Storage & Meal Prep:

- Bean and grain salads keep well in the fridge for several days, making this an easy meal-prep staple.
- The flavors deepen and improve over time, so this salad only gets better!

This simple yet satisfying salad is nutritious, adaptable, and packed with flavor—perfect for quick lunches or side dishes anytime!

CHOPPED GREEN SALAD

I love chopped green salads so much that I often make a whole meal out of them. They're fresh, flavorful, and endlessly versatile. The best part? You can use whatever you have on hand, and as long as your ingredients are fresh, your salad will always be delicious!

I believe variety and unexpected flavors make both salads and life more interesting!

What to Include in a Chopped Green Salad

- Fresh greens (lettuce, kale, spinach, arugula, romaine, mixed greens)
- Fresh herbs (parsley, cilantro, basil, dill, mint)
- Fresh veggies (cucumbers, bell peppers, radishes, carrots, tomatoes, snap peas—any kind!)
- Fresh fruit (berries, citrus slices, apples, pears, pomegranate seeds)
- Seeds and/or nuts (sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, walnuts, almonds, pecans)
- Feta or other sharp cheeses (goat cheese, parmesan, blue cheese, aged cheddar)
- Dressing (homemade vinaigrettes, citrus-based dressings, balsamic glaze, or any favorite dressing)

How to Make It

1. Start with the greens and herbs – place them in a large bowl.
2. Use scissors to snip everything into bite-sized pieces for easy eating.
3. Chop, grate, or slice fruits and veggies, then mix them in.
4. Add seeds, nuts, and cheese for crunch and flavor.
5. Drizzle with dressing, toss everything together, and enjoy!

This salad is quick, versatile, and packed with fresh flavor—perfect for a light meal or a vibrant side dish!

MEDITERRANEAN SALAD

This is a vibrant, flavorful salad packed with fresh ingredients and a tangy dressing. Perfect as a main dish or a hearty side.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes (halved) or chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 small cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup yellow hot peppers, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup black olives, halved
- 1/2 cup pimento-stuffed green olives, halved
- 1 cup assorted colorful bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/2 cup chopped marinated artichokes
- 10 large basil leaves, shredded

Dressing

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 TBSP red wine vinegar (or more to taste)
- 1 tsp dried Italian herbs (thyme, oregano, and rosemary)
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, red wine vinegar, dried herbs, garlic, salt, and pepper. Taste and adjust as needed. For extra tang, add more vinegar. Set aside.
2. Assemble the salad: Add the white beans and garbanzo beans to a large bowl. Layer in the cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, red onion, hot peppers, black olives, green olives, bell peppers, feta cheese, artichokes, and basil.
3. Dress and toss: Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat.
4. Serve or store: Enjoy immediately or refrigerate for a few hours to let the flavors meld. This salad keeps well for several days—stir before serving to redistribute the dressing.

Enjoy this Mediterranean-inspired dish as a satisfying meal or a flavorful side!

MEXI BEAN SALAD

This is a colorful, zesty salad packed with bold flavors and hearty ingredients. Perfect as a side dish or a fresh, protein-rich meal.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups cooked kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 1/2 cups cooked white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels
- 1 red onion, chopped

Dressing

- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 TBSP lime juice
- 1 TBSP lemon juice
- 2 TBSP sugar
- 1 TBSP salt
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1/2 TBSP ground cumin
- 1/2 TBSP ground black pepper
- 1 dash hot pepper sauce
- 1/2 tsp chili powder

Instructions

1. Prepare the salad: In a large bowl, combine the black beans, kidney beans, white beans, bell peppers, corn, and red onion.
2. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, red wine vinegar, lime juice, lemon juice, sugar, salt, garlic, cilantro, cumin, black pepper, hot sauce, and chili powder. Taste and adjust seasoning as desired.
3. Assemble and chill: Pour the dressing over the salad and mix well. Cover and refrigerate for at least an hour to let the flavors meld.
4. Serve: Enjoy chilled as a refreshing side dish or a light meal.

A perfect blend of crunch, spice, and zest in every bite!

THREE BEAN SALAD

This is a fresh and tangy bean salad with crisp veggies and a flavorful dressing. Perfect for meal prep, potlucks, or a healthy side dish.

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked white beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups cooked kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups cooked garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 3/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup celery stalks, finely chopped
- 1 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped

Dressing

- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp black pepper

Instructions

1. Prep the onion: Soak the chopped red onion in water for 10–15 minutes to mellow its bite.
2. Assemble the salad: In a medium bowl, combine the white beans, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, celery, parsley, and rosemary. Drain the onion and add it to the mix.
3. Make the dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together the apple cider vinegar, sugar, olive oil, salt, and black pepper. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Combine and chill: Pour the dressing over the salad and gently stir to coat all ingredients evenly. Cover and refrigerate for at least two hours to let the flavors develop.
5. Serve: Allow the salad to sit at room temperature for a few minutes before serving for the best flavor.

A refreshing and hearty salad with the perfect balance of tangy, sweet, and savory!

CURRIED COUSCOUS SALAD

This is a versatile and flavorful salad that can be customized with whatever ingredients you have on hand. The dressing brings warmth, sweetness, and depth to grains and veggies, making every bite delicious.

Ingredients

- Cooked couscous (or substitute rice, quinoa, or another grain)
- Shredded carrots
- Shredded beets
- Chopped celery
- Craisins
- Chopped dried apricots
- Fresh parsley, chopped
- Chopped nuts (your choice)

Dressing

- 1 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 TBSP honey
- 1 TBSP lime juice (or doTERRA Lime to taste)
- 2 TBSP curry powder
- 1 TBSP turmeric
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

Instructions

1. Assemble the salad: In a large bowl, combine the cooked couscous, shredded carrots, shredded beets, celery, craisins, dried apricots, parsley, and nuts.
2. Make the dressing: Whisk together the apple cider vinegar, olive oil, honey, lime juice, curry powder, turmeric, salt, and black pepper until well blended.
3. Dress and marinate: Pour some dressing over the salad, toss well, and let sit for about 10 minutes. Taste and add more dressing if needed.
4. Store leftovers: Any extra dressing can be kept in the fridge and used for other dishes like stir-fries or grain bowls.

FRESH FRUIT SALAD

This is a simple fruit salad that doesn't need extra sweetener. The citrus and mint bring out the natural flavors, and you can use whatever fresh fruit you have on hand. The key is making sure it's ripe and fresh.

Suggested Fruits

- Apples
- Peaches
- Pears
- Grapes
- Pineapple
- Kiwis
- Bananas
- Pomegranate arils
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Raspberries

Other Ingredients

- Fresh mint leaves
- 1 orange
- 1 lime

Instructions

1. Prepare the fruit: Chop or slice the fruit and place it in a salad bowl, leaving out the blueberries and raspberries for now.
2. Add mint and citrus: Finely chop a handful of mint leaves and sprinkle them over the fruit. Drizzle with the freshly squeezed juice of one orange and a little lime juice. Gently stir to mix.
3. Fold in soft berries: Add the blueberries and raspberries last, folding them in carefully to avoid crushing them.
4. Serve fresh: Enjoy immediately or let it sit for a few minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

A refreshing, naturally sweet salad that's perfect for any occasion!

DRESSINGS



BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

I love this bold and flavorful dressing that adds a rich, tangy kick to salads, beans, pasta, eggs, and roasted vegetables.

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 4 TBSP Dijon mustard
- 2 TBSP horseradish
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Blend: Add all ingredients to a blender and blend on high speed until smooth and emulsified.
2. Adjust seasoning: Taste and add more salt, pepper, or horseradish if desired.
3. Store & use: Keep in an airtight container in the fridge. Shake or stir before using.

CITRUS HONEY DRESSING

This is my go-to dressing for fruit and winter salads. I rarely follow the recipe exactly, but I lean heavily on limes for the citrus juice, and it always turns out well. It's a real crowd-pleaser!

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup citrus juice (lemon, lime, and orange combined)
- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 3-4 cloves garlic
- 1/4 - 1/3 cup honey
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Blend: Add all ingredients to a blender and blend on high speed until smooth.
2. Adjust: Taste and add more citrus juice or honey if desired.
3. Use & store: Drizzle over salads, fish tacos, beans, pasta, eggs, or veggies. Store in the fridge and shake before using.

A bright, zesty dressing that brings fresh flavor to any dish!

CHEF'S DRESSING

A rich, creamy, and flavorful dressing perfect for salads, grain bowls, roasted veggies, or as a dip.

Ingredients

- 1 cup sunflower seeds, soaked in boiling water for 10 minutes, then drained
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup nutritional yeast
- 1/4 cup unsweetened nut milk (add more for a thinner consistency)
- 2 TBSP pure maple syrup
- 2-4 TBSP miso (adjust to taste)
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 slice raw onion
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Blend: Add all ingredients to a blender and blend until completely smooth, with no lumps.
2. Adjust: Taste and adjust seasoning or consistency by adding more nut milk for a thinner dressing.
3. Store & use: Keep in an airtight container in the fridge. Use as a creamy dressing, dip, or drizzle over bowls and roasted veggies.

A delicious, umami-packed dressing that elevates any dish!

POPPY SEED DRESSING

This dressing is a favorite at my house. My kids grew up eating it, and now they make it in their own kitchens.

Ingredients

- 1 small red onion, peeled and chunked
- 1/2 cup agave nectar
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 TBSP Dijon mustard
- 1 TBSP poppy seeds
- 1 tsp Real Salt
- 1 cup olive oil

Instructions

1. Blend: In a high-power blender, combine the red onion, agave nectar, apple cider vinegar, Dijon mustard, poppy seeds, and salt. Blend until smooth.
2. Incorporate oil: Slowly add the olive oil and blend until fully mixed.
3. Store & use: Transfer to a tightly sealed container and refrigerate for up to two weeks.

This dressing is excellent on fruit salads and kale salads, adding the perfect balance of sweetness and tang!

RANCH DRESSING MIX

I got this preservative-free recipe from my friend Kimberly. Her family uses this mix instead of the store-bought version. It can be made in smaller batches (see parentheses) and also works as a great all-purpose seasoning.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup black pepper (or 1 TBSP)
- 1 1/2 cups parsley flakes (or 6 TBSP)
- 1/2 cup garlic salt (or 2 TBSP)
- 2 TBSP salt (or 1 1/2 tsp)
- 1/4 cup garlic powder (or 1 TBSP)
- 3/4 cup onion powder (or 3 TBSP)
- 2 TBSP dill weed (or 1 1/2 tsp)

Instructions

- 1.Mix: Combine all ingredients in a bowl and stir well to evenly distribute.
- 2.Store: Transfer to an airtight container and keep in a cool, dry place.

HOMEMADE RANCH DRESSING

This is a creamy, tangy ranch dressing made from scratch using the homemade ranch mix. Perfect for salads, dips, and drizzling over veggies!

Ingredients

- 2 TBSP homemade ranch mix
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Instructions

- 1.Mix: In a bowl, whisk together all ingredients until fully combined.
- 2.Chill: Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours to allow flavors to meld.
- 3.Serve: Enjoy as a dressing, dip, or drizzle.

Makes about 1 ¾ quarts. Recipe can be halved for a smaller batch. Keep refrigerated and use within a week for the best flavor!

HERBAL VINAIGRETTE

Experiment with the herbs in this dressing and note which flavors you like best. If you have fresh herbs, you can use them instead of dried for an even brighter taste.

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2-3 TBSP white vinegar
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano or basil, crushed (or use fresh if available)
- 1 tsp Dijon-style mustard
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/8 tsp salt

Instructions

1. Mix: Combine all ingredients in a bowl and use a hand mixer to blend well until fully emulsified.
2. Store: Transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate for up to a week.
3. Use: Shake well before serving and drizzle over salads, roasted vegetables, or grain bowls.

A light, flavorful dressing that pairs well with fresh greens and hearty dishes alike!

TANGY DRESSING

A bright and flavorful dressing that pairs perfectly with simple green salads, as well as bean and grain salads.

Ingredients

- 1 small red onion
- 1 cup light-flavored olive oil
- 1/2 cup agave nectar
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 TBSP Dijon mustard
- 1 TBSP poppy seeds
- 1 tsp Real Salt

Instructions

1. Blend: In a high-power blender, blend the red onion with the olive oil until smooth.
2. Incorporate: Add the remaining ingredients and blend again until well combined.
3. Store: Transfer to a tightly sealed container and refrigerate for up to two weeks.

A perfectly balanced dressing that's both sweet and tangy—great for drizzling over your favorite salads!

DILL SAUCE

This tangy, creamy sauce works great as a veggie dip, a dressing for bean salads, and even as a topping for baked potatoes.

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup cashews (soaked if not using a high-speed blender)
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cashew milk (or other nut milk)
- 1/2 cup fresh dill
- 3 TBSP fresh lemon juice
- 3 TBSP apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp Real Salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Instructions

1. Blend: Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until smooth.
2. Adjust: Taste and add more salt, lemon, or dill if desired.
3. Serve: Use as a dip, dressing, or drizzle over baked potatoes.

A regular blender will work, but the sauce won't be as creamy and smooth. Enjoy this fresh, herby sauce in a variety of dishes!

VEGGIES



FANCY BEETS

The first time I had beets like this was at a restaurant, beautifully arranged as an appetizer with three different colors. They were nothing short of delicious! Now, I make them at home. While mine never look quite as fancy, they taste just as good and have become a family favorite.

Ingredients

- Beets (any variety)
- Pesto
- Feta cheese
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Cook the beets: Trim the ends and place them in a saucepan. Cover with water and boil until they are soft and a sharp knife slides in easily.
2. Cool and peel: Drain the water and let the beets cool. Once cool enough to handle, peel off the skins.
3. Slice and arrange: Cut the beets into thick 1/4-inch slices and arrange them slightly overlapping on a serving dish.
4. Garnish: Spoon or pipe pesto over the beets, then generously sprinkle with feta cheese. Finish with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Serve warm: These beets are especially delicious when served slightly warm.

A simple yet elegant dish that always impresses!

HONEY'D CARROTS

This is how I cook carrots, and you know you've got a winner when your kids repeatedly call and ask for the recipe!

Ingredients

- Carrots, sliced
- Honey
- Butter, ghee, or olive oil
- Parsley (fresh or dried)
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Cook the carrots: Place sliced carrots in a saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook until tender.
2. Drain and season: Drain the water, then add a spoonful of honey, a spoonful of butter (or oil), and finely chopped parsley.
3. Finish and serve: Stir until the butter and honey melt, then season with salt and pepper to taste.

A simple, sweet, and savory side dish that's always a hit!

ROASTED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

This is a simple, flavorful way to enjoy crispy, caramelized Brussels sprouts with a tangy balsamic finish.

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- Brussels sprouts, halved
- Salt and pepper
- Balsamic vinegar

Instructions

1. Preheat oven: Set to 425°F (218°C).
2. Prepare sprouts: Cut Brussels sprouts in half and drizzle with just enough olive oil to coat them evenly. Toss to mix well, then sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Roast: Spread them out on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake until crispy on the edges and al dente, about 20-25 minutes.
4. Finish: Remove from the oven and lightly drizzle with balsamic vinegar.

A perfect balance of crispy, savory, and tangy flavors!

CAULIFLOWER PARMESAN

This is a hearty, cheesy, and flavorful dish that transforms cauliflower into a satisfying, Italian-inspired meal.

Ingredients

- 1 large head cauliflower
- Olive oil
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 large can or jar of whole peeled tomatoes
- 1 head garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves, plus extra for garnish
- 6 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat oven: Set to 450°F (232°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Prepare cauliflower: Cut the head crosswise into 1-inch-thick slices, keeping the core and stem intact. Place on the prepared baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper.
3. Roast: Place on the bottom oven rack and roast for 15–20 minutes until browned underneath and tender.
4. Make the sauce:
 - Chop tomatoes directly in the can using kitchen shears.
 - Heat 1 TBSP olive oil in a small pot over medium-high heat, add crushed garlic, and sauté until lightly golden and fragrant.
 - Stir in tomatoes, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until slightly thickened.
 - Turn off heat and stir in fresh basil.
5. Broil with cheese:
 - Switch the oven to broil.
 - Flip the cauliflower slices over and spoon half of the tomato sauce on top.
 - Sprinkle with mozzarella and half of the Parmesan cheese.
 - Place on the top oven rack and broil for 2–3 minutes, watching closely until the cheese is melted and golden brown.
6. Finish and serve:
 - Remove from the oven and plate the cauliflower slices.
 - Spoon the remaining sauce over the top, sprinkle with the rest of the Parmesan, and garnish with snipped basil.
 - Serve while piping hot.

A delicious, low-carb take on a classic Italian favorite!

EGGPLANT LASAGNA

I've been making this since I was in my 20's. It's a hearty, flavorful, and veggie-packed lasagna with layers of eggplant, lentils, and rich tomato sauce, finished with melted mozzarella.

Ingredients

- 4 eggplants
- 8 TBSP olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 1 TBSP chili flakes (plus extra for garnish)
- 2 TBSP dried thyme
- 4 cans or jars plum tomatoes
- 2 2/3 cups cooked puy lentils
- 1 TBSP balsamic vinegar
- Juice of half a lemon
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- 12 pre-cooked lasagna noodles
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- 2 cups mozzarella, grated

Instructions

1. Preheat oven: Set to 350°F (175°C).
2. Steam the eggplant:
 - Bring a large pot of water to a boil.
 - Place the eggplants in a metal colander and set it over the pot.
 - Cover with a lid and steam for 25 minutes, turning halfway through.
 - Allow to cool slightly, then cut in half lengthwise, scoop out the flesh, and finely chop. Set aside.
3. Prepare the sauce:
 - Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat.
 - Add garlic, onions, eggplant, thyme, and chili flakes. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
 - Add the plum tomatoes, breaking them up with a spoon.
 - Stir in the lentils, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, and walnuts.
 - Season well, stir, and let simmer for 15 minutes.
4. Assemble the lasagna:
 - In an ovenproof baking dish, layer one-third of the sauce, lasagna noodles, and grated cheese.
 - Repeat twice, using all the sauce and ricotta cheese.
 - Scatter the mozzarella on top.
5. Bake: Place in the oven and bake for 25–30 minutes, until the mozzarella is melted and golden.
6. Finish & serve:
 - Remove from the oven and sprinkle with extra chili flakes.
 - Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

VEGGIE BURGERS

This is my favorite veggie burger recipe! It's fast and easy to make and hard to beat the taste. It's a satisfying, protein-packed veggie burger with the perfect texture and flavor!

Ingredients

- 1 large red pepper, chopped into large pieces
- 1/2 small onion, chopped into large pieces
- 1/2 cup raw almonds
- 1/4 cup roasted or dehydrated pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup hemp seeds
- 2 TBSP ground flax seeds
- 3 cloves garlic, quartered
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 1/4 tsp cumin
- 3/4 tsp chili powder (adjust for heat preference)
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 1/2 cups cooked black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 cup rolled oats (plus more as needed)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven: Set to 350°F (175°C) and line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Prepare vegetables: In a food processor, pulse the red pepper and onion until finely minced. Transfer to a large mixing bowl.
3. Process dry ingredients: Add almonds, pumpkin seeds, hemp seeds, flax seeds, garlic, salt, cumin, chili powder, and smoked paprika to the food processor. Process until the mixture is grainy. Transfer to the bowl with the onion and pepper.
4. Process black beans: Add black beans, 1/2 cup oats, and 2 TBSP water to the food processor. Blend until mostly smooth, then add to the mixing bowl.
5. Combine: Use a hand mixer to blend everything well. If the mixture is too wet to form patties, add additional oats until the consistency is firm enough to shape.
6. Form patties: Shape into uniform patties (about 1/3 cup each) and place them on the prepared baking sheets.
7. Bake: Bake for 20 minutes, then flip the patties and bake for another 5-10 minutes, until lightly crisp and golden brown.
8. Store or freeze:
 - Refrigerate: Stack with parchment paper between them in an airtight container.
 - Freeze: Place patties on a plastic wrap-lined cutting board and freeze until solid. Once frozen, separate with parchment paper, wrap in plastic, and store in a zip-top bag in the freezer.

HOME FRIES

These simple oven fries are crispy, delicious, and a family favorite! While you can cut them by hand, a French fry cutter makes the job faster and ensures uniform fries.

Ingredients

- 4 large baking potatoes
- 2-3 TBSP olive oil
- 1 tsp seasoned salt

Instructions

1. Preheat oven: Set to 375°F (190°C).
2. Prepare potatoes: Wash well, leaving the skin on, and cut into 1/4-inch fries.
3. Soak: Place fries in a bowl of cold water and let soak for at least 30 minutes. This helps remove excess starch for crispier fries.
4. Dry thoroughly: Drain and pat completely dry with a clean towel.
5. Season: In a large mixing bowl, toss the fries with olive oil and seasoned salt until evenly coated.
6. Bake: Spread fries in a single layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes.
7. Crisp them up: Turn the oven up to 425°F (218°C) and bake for another 20-25 minutes, or until golden and crispy.

A perfect homemade fry—crispy on the outside, fluffy on the inside!

FRY SAUCE DRESSED UP

Fry sauce can be as simple as mayo and ketchup, but a few extra ingredients take it to the next level!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup ketchup
- 1/2 TBSP pickle relish
- 1/2 TBSP Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/4 tsp salt

Instructions

- 1.Mix: Combine all ingredients in a bowl and whisk until smooth and well blended.
- 2.Store: Transfer to an airtight container and refrigerate.

A creamy, tangy sauce that pairs perfectly with fries, burgers, or anything that needs a little extra flavor!

SWEET POTATO FRIES

These baked sweet potato fries are crispy, flavorful, and perfectly seasoned, and healthier alternative to traditional fries.

Ingredients

- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled
- 2 TBSP olive oil
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp freshly cracked black pepper
- Sea salt, to taste

Instructions

1. Prep the fries: Slice sweet potatoes into 1/4-inch-wide strips, keeping them as uniform as possible for even cooking.
2. Soak: Add the fries to a large bowl of cold water and soak for at least 30 minutes (or up to overnight) to remove excess starch and improve crispiness.
3. Preheat oven: Set to 425°F (218°C) and line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Dry the fries: Drain the water, rinse out the bowl, and pat the fries completely dry with a clean kitchen towel. Return the fries to the dry bowl.
5. Coat with oil: Drizzle the fries with olive oil and toss until evenly coated.
6. Season: In a small bowl, whisk together the cornstarch, garlic powder, smoked paprika, and black pepper. Sprinkle over the fries and toss until well coated.
7. Bake: Spread fries in a single layer on the prepared baking sheets, ensuring they don't overlap. Bake for 15 minutes.
8. Flip: Remove from the oven, flip each fry with a spatula, and rearrange so they are evenly spaced. Bake for another 10-15 minutes, or until crispy and golden brown on the edges.
9. Finish: Remove from the oven, sprinkle with sea salt (and Parmesan cheese if desired), and let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Perfectly crispy on the outside and tender on the inside—these fries are a must-try!

LETTUCE WRAPS

A super versatile recipe that can be customized with tuna, hard-boiled eggs, or finely chopped veggies. The ingredients don't have to be exact—use what you have, and it's always good!

Ingredients

- 1 can black beans, drained
- 3/4–1 cup cooked brown rice or quinoa
- 1/2–3/4 cup grated Parmesan or feta cheese
- 1–2 TBSP red onion or 4–5 green onions, minced fine
- 1–2 TBSP chopped roasted red peppers and/or Tabasco sauce
- 2 TBSP hummus and/or Dijon mustard
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Garlic herb seasoning or all-purpose herb seasoning, to taste
- About 1/2 cup healthy salad dressing (any kind) or a mix of balsamic vinegar and olive oil
- Romaine lettuce leaves

Instructions

1. Mix the filling: Combine all ingredients in a bowl, stirring well. Add more dressing if the mixture is too dry.
2. Assemble wraps: Spoon the filling into romaine lettuce leaves and wrap them up.
3. Serve immediately and enjoy!

A fresh, flavorful, and nutritious meal that's easy to customize and perfect for any time of day!

QUINOA SPRING ROLLS

Spring rolls are easy and fun to make! Rice paper is inexpensive and available at Asian and health food stores—I recommend keeping a couple of packages on hand.

Ingredients

- About 2 cups cooked quinoa
- About 10 sheets of rice paper
- 3-4 pieces of green or red leaf lettuce
- 1 bell pepper, cut into thin strips
- 1 avocado, cut into thin strips
- 1 cucumber, julienned
- 1 large carrot, julienned
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 1 bunch mint leaves

Instructions

1. Prep the veggies: Wash and cut all vegetables. Arrange them in piles on a cookie sheet for easy access.
2. Soften the rice paper: Fill a large dinner plate with warm water. Submerge one sheet of rice paper completely and soak for about 10 seconds, then transfer it to a dry plate.
3. Assemble the spring rolls:
 - On the bottom third of the rice paper, place a spoonful of quinoa.
 - Layer with carrots, bell peppers, cucumber, fresh herbs, and lettuce.
 - Gently fold over once, tuck in the edges, and continue rolling until the seam is sealed—like a burrito!
 - Place seam-side down on a serving platter and cover with a damp towel to keep fresh.
4. Repeat until all fillings are used—makes about 8-10 spring rolls.
5. Serve with dipping sauce (recipe below).

DIPPING SAUCE

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup cashew butter (or peanut butter)
- 2 TBSP soy sauce
- 3/4 tsp chili garlic sauce
- 2 TBSP honey
- 1/2 lime, juiced
- Hot water to thin

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl.
2. Whisk together, adding hot water as needed until the sauce reaches a smooth, dippable consistency.

EXTRAS



CHEEZIES

This is a delicious, dairy-free alternative for sprinkling on everything from soups to salads and roasted veggies! I make three to four batches at a time and store them in recycled glass jars in my fridge. I also keep a jar by my stove to sprinkle into soups for flavoring and thickening, or to use just like grated or powdered cheese.

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup raw cashews
- 3 TBSP nutritional yeast
- 3/4 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp garlic powder

Instructions

1. Blend: Add all ingredients to a food processor and pulse until the nuts are broken into very small pieces, similar to coarse cornmeal.
2. Store: Transfer to an airtight jar and keep refrigerated for freshness.

HOMEMADE TAHINI

This is a smooth, versatile tahini (also called sesame paste) that's perfect for recipes, hummus, dressings, dips, and more!

Ingredients

- 1 cup sesame seeds (hulled works best)
- 2 to 4 TBSP light olive oil (or another neutral-flavored oil)
- Pinch of salt

Instructions

1. Toast the sesame seeds:

- Add sesame seeds to a wide, dry saucepan over medium-low heat.
- Stir constantly for 3 to 5 minutes until fragrant and lightly golden (do not brown).
- Immediately transfer to a plate to cool completely.

2. Process into tahini:

- Add cooled sesame seeds to a food processor and process for about 1 minute, until a crumbly paste forms.
- Add 3 TBSP oil and continue processing for 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed.
- If the tahini is too thick, process for another minute and add more oil, 1 TBSP at a time, until smooth and pourable.

3. Season and store:

- Taste and add a pinch of salt, then process for 5 to 10 seconds to mix it in.
- Store in a covered jar in the refrigerator for up to a month. If separation occurs, stir well before using.

MEATLESS TACO "MEAT"

I love this meat alternative! It's packed with flavor, and you won't miss the meat.

Ingredients

- 2 cups walnuts – soaked in warm water for 20 minutes
- 1 large package portabella mushrooms
- Dried tomatoes (amount to taste)
- 1 onion
- Garlic cloves (to taste)
- 2 TBSP cumin
- 1 1/2 TBSP chili powder (start with less and adjust)
- 2 TBSP ketchup
- 2 TBSP soy sauce
- 2 TBSP liquid smoke
- 2 tsp dried oregano
- Cilantro (or a drizzle of oil if you don't have fresh)
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Chop the base: Add the soaked walnuts and mushrooms to a food processor. Pulse until finely chopped (but not mushy).
2. Add seasonings: Stir in dried tomatoes, onion, garlic, cumin, chili powder, ketchup, soy sauce, liquid smoke, oregano, cilantro (or oil), lime juice, salt, and pepper.
3. Cook: Heat in a skillet over medium heat until warmed through and slightly browned.
4. Serve: Use in tacos, burritos, nachos, or any Mexican dish.

A rich, smoky, and hearty plant-based filling that's packed with flavor!

NOT-ROASTED SEEDS AND NUTS

A simple and healthier way to enjoy crispy, flavorful nuts and seeds without roasting. This method enhances flavor, preserves nutrients, and extends shelf life.

Ingredients

- 4 cups nuts or seeds (almonds, pumpkin seeds, or sunflower seeds)
- 1 1/2 TBSP Real Salt or sea salt
- Water (enough to cover nuts/seeds by 3-4 inches)

Instructions

1. Soak: Place the nuts or seeds in a large bowl. Add salt and cover with water until submerged by 3-4 inches. Soak overnight.
2. Drain: The next day, drain the nuts/seeds but do not rinse.
3. Dehydrate: Spread evenly on dehydrator trays and dehydrate at 115°F until crispy (this can take several hours).
4. Cool & store: Let cool completely, then store in an airtight container.

These nuts and seeds have the rich taste of roasted varieties but are more nutritious and stay fresh longer without going rancid. Enjoy as a snack, in trail mixes, or sprinkled over salads and dishes!

CASHEW CREAM – TWO WAYS

This is a versatile, dairy-free cream that can be made sweet or spicy, depending on how you want to use it.

SWEET CREAM (For pancakes, puddings, pies, etc.)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil
- 1-2 TBSP pure maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

SPICY CREAM (For dips, spreads, and sauces)

Ingredients:

- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 TBSP lemon juice
- 1-2 tsp sriracha or hot sauce (optional)
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

Instructions

1. Soak cashews: Place cashews in boiling water for 20 minutes, then drain well.
2. Blend: Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until completely smooth and creamy.
3. Use & store:
 - Sweet cream: Serve as a creamy topping for pancakes, puddings, or pies.
 - Spicy cream: Use as a flavorful dip, spread, or sauce.
 - Store leftovers in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

A simple, delicious way to add richness to sweet or savory dishes!

CASHEW SOUR CREAM

A rich, dairy-free alternative to traditional sour cream—creamy, tangy, and perfect for topping tacos, baked potatoes, soups, and more!

Ingredients

- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 TBSP lemon juice
- 1 TBSP white wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1 garlic clove, peeled
- 1/2 tsp sea salt

Instructions

1. Soak cashews: Place cashews in boiling water for 20 minutes, then drain well.
2. Blend: Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until completely smooth and creamy.
3. Use & store:
 - Use in place of sour cream in any recipe.
 - Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

A tangy, creamy, and versatile dairy-free sour cream alternative!

VEGAN CHEESE SAUCE

A rich, creamy, and flavorful dairy-free cheese sauce perfect for macaroni and cheese, dipping, or drizzling over veggies.

Ingredients

- 3 medium red potatoes (skins on)
- 1/3 of a medium red pepper
- 2 orange carrots
- 1/2 small sweet onion
- 4 medium garlic cloves, roasted
- 1/2 cup raw cashews, soaked
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 3/4 tsp chickpea miso
- 1/2 tsp mustard seed powder
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp Real Salt (or to taste)

Instructions

1. Roast the garlic:

- Peel garlic cloves and mix with a splash of veggie broth.
- Wrap in tin foil or parchment paper and roast at 400°F (200°C) for 20-25 minutes, until lightly browned.

2. Cook the veggies:

- Bring a pot of water to a boil.
- Add potatoes, red pepper, carrots, and onion and cook for about 25 minutes, until potatoes are fork-tender.
- Drain and let cool slightly. Save some of the cooking water for thinning the sauce later.

3. Blend the potatoes first:

- Place only the potatoes into a high-speed blender.
- Blend until they reach a gooey, sticky consistency, scraping down the sides as needed.

4. Blend the rest:

- Add red pepper, carrots, onion, and roasted garlic to the blender and blend until smooth.
- Add cashews, lemon juice, miso, mustard seed powder, paprika, and salt, then blend again.
- If the sauce is too thick, add 1 TBSP at a time of the reserved cooking water until it reaches the desired consistency.

Storage & Reheating

- Refrigerate: Store in an airtight container in the fridge. It will thicken as it cools, so heat it slowly and stir well before using. Add a little water if needed to thin it out.
- Freeze: Pour into a freezer-safe container. Defrost slowly, then reheat and use an immersion blender or whisk to restore its smooth, creamy texture.

Ways to Use It

- Macaroni and cheese
- A dip for veggies, chips, or pretzels
- Drizzled over nachos, baked potatoes, or tacos
- Mixed into casseroles for extra creaminess

HOMEMADE PLANT-BASED MILKS

Simple, fresh, and free from additives—these homemade milk alternatives are easy to make and perfect for drinking, baking, or adding to smoothies.

RICE MILK

A mild and refreshing dairy-free milk that's great for cereals and smoothies.

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked rice
- 4 cups water

Instructions

1. Combine rice and water in a blender.
2. Blend until completely smooth, with no lumps.
3. Pour into a glass jar and chill.
4. Shake before serving.

ALMOND MILK

A creamy and slightly nutty milk with an optional touch of sweetness.

Ingredients

- 1 cup almonds, soaked overnight in boiling water
- 5 cups water
- 1 date or 1 tsp pure maple syrup (optional)

Instructions

1. Drain the soaked almonds.
2. Add almonds, fresh water, and sweetener (if using) to a blender. Blend until creamy and smooth.
3. Strain:
 - Line a large bowl with a nut bag or a clean dish towel.
 - Pour the blended mixture into the bag/towel.
 - If using a towel, pull up the corners to form a bag and squeeze out the milk into the bowl.
4. Store: Pour into a glass jar and refrigerate. Shake before serving.

Save the almond pulp to add to smoothies, muffins, or crackers!

OAT MILK

A smooth, slightly sweet milk that's perfect for coffee, baking, and more.

Ingredients

- 3 cups water
- 1 TBSP organic sugar, coconut sugar, or pure maple syrup
- 1/2 cup rolled oats

Instructions

- Combine all ingredients in a blender.
- Blend for 20-30 seconds until creamy—DO NOT over-blend to avoid a slimy texture.
- Strain:
 - Place a fine-mesh nylon strainer over a bowl.
 - Pour the oat milk through the strainer, letting it drain naturally.
 - Do not press the oat pulp through with a spoon, as this can make the milk slimy.
- Use immediately or store in a glass jar for up to 4 days.

A quick and easy dairy-free alternative that's smooth and naturally sweet!

FLAX EGGS

This is a simple, plant-based egg substitute perfect for baking!

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP ground flaxseed
- 1 TBSP water

Instructions

- 1.Mix: Stir together flaxseed and water in a small bowl.
- 2.Let sit: Allow the mixture to rest for a couple of minutes until it thickens into a gel-like consistency.
- 3.Use: Substitute for one egg in baking recipes.

Easily doubles or triples as needed!

HOMEMADE APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

Making apple cider vinegar at home is a great way to use up extra apples while ensuring it's truly organic. While it takes time, the process is simple and rewarding!

Ingredients

- 4-5 organic apples, chopped (or about 1 cup apple scraps)
- Filtered water

Instructions

1. Prepare the jar:

- Use a sterilized glass jar large enough to hold the apples and water.
- Add the chopped apples or apple scraps to the jar.

2. Ferment the apples:

- Cover the apples completely with filtered water.
- Place a cheesecloth over the jar and secure with a rubber band or string.
- Store in a warm, dark place for 3-4 weeks.

3. Strain and rest:

- After 3-4 weeks, strain out the solids and discard them.
- Return the liquid to the jar and allow it to sit for another 2 weeks.

4. Final filtering & bottling:

- Filter the vinegar one last time.
- Pour into a clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.

Storage & Use

- Store in a cool, dark place or refrigerate for long-term use.
- Use in dressings, marinades, or as a natural health tonic!

A simple, homemade way to enjoy fresh apple cider vinegar!

LEGUMES



SOAKING & COOKING LEGUMES

Legumes are nutrient-dense and versatile, but they often get a bad rap due to digestion issues. The good news? Proper soaking and cooking—especially pressure cooking—can make them easier to digest and eliminate bloating and gas.

BEANS

- Soaking beans reduces digestive discomfort and enhances nutrient absorption.
- Longer soaking times yield better results.

How to Soak Beans

1. Use 4 times as much warm water as beans.
2. Soak for 12–24 hours.
3. Drain and rinse thoroughly before cooking.

How to Cook Beans

- Instant Pot: The fastest and easiest method—highly recommended!
- Stovetop: Simmer soaked beans in fresh water until tender.

Once properly cooked, beans can be used in countless recipes, from savory meals to breads and desserts—often without anyone realizing they're there!

LENTILS & SPLIT PEAS

Many people think lentils and split peas don't need soaking, but soaking makes a huge difference in texture and digestion.

How to Soak Lentils & Split Peas

1. Use a 3:1 ratio of water to legumes.
2. Soak for 10–24 hours (some may begin to sprout—this is fine!).

How to Cook

- After soaking, drain and rinse, then cook as usual.
- They will be extra tender and cook much faster than unsoaked lentils and peas.

People often comment on how much better my split peas and lentils taste, and the only difference? I soak them first!

Soaking legumes is a simple, game-changing step for better digestion, flavor, and texture!

FLAVORED BEANS

Before I got an Instant Pot, I never made "just" beans. Now, it's not uncommon to find a bowl of beans in my fridge. They never taste exactly the same—but they're always good. I often use them as a base for whatever else I'm cooking.

Ingredients

- Beans – Cooked on the bean setting twice, then rinsed and drained
- Olive oil
- Chopped onion
- Minced garlic
- Herbal seasonings
- Add-ins (choose any or mix & match):
 - Bottled tomatoes, tomato sauce, or tomato paste
 - Cooked lentils
 - Onion broth or veggie broth
 - Quinoa or rice
 - Chopped peppers, eggplant, potatoes, carrots, beets, cabbage, etc.

Instructions

1. Sauté the aromatics: Heat olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add chopped onion and sauté until tender. Add garlic and cook until fragrant.
2. Cook the vegetables: If using chopped vegetables, add them to the pot and sauté until softened.
3. Add beans & liquid: Stir in the cooked beans, tomatoes (or other add-ins), and $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 cup broth or water.
4. Season: Bring to a boil, then reduce to medium heat. Add salt, pepper, and seasonings such as chili powder, cumin, oregano, and Slap Ya Mama. If you like heat, add a little hot sauce.
5. Simmer & reduce: Let the beans cook down uncovered until most of the liquid has been absorbed and the flavors have deepened.
6. Taste & adjust: Keep adding seasonings in small amounts until it tastes just right.

Ways to Enjoy Flavored Beans

- On their own with a salad and a crusty piece of sourdough bread
- Paired with scrambled eggs for a hearty breakfast
- As a dip for chips
- In tacos or breakfast burritos

These beans are simple, flavorful, and incredibly versatile!

VEGETARIAN SHEPHERDS PIE

This savory pie can be a main dish, stew, or casserole—it's comforting, filling, and delicious—a rich, hearty, and comforting plant-based take on a classic!

Ingredients

Filling

- 2 TBSP olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup carrots, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 2 tsp dried thyme (or 1 tsp rosemary)
- 3 cups cooked lentils
- 2 TBSP flour
- 2 TBSP tomato paste
- 1 TBSP Worcestershire sauce (or tamari/soy sauce)
- 1 rounded tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 cup frozen corn (or 6 oz. can, drained)
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- Salt + pepper, to taste

Potato Topping

- 2 1/2 lbs. potatoes (Yukon or Russet), cut into 1-inch cubes
- 4 TBSP butter or olive oil
- 1/2 - 2/3 cup unsweetened plain almond milk
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- Salt + fresh cracked pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Cook the potatoes:

- Place potatoes in a large pot of water and boil until tender.
- Drain and mash with butter or olive oil while warm.
- Stir in almond milk, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Set aside.

2. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).

3. Make the filling:

- Heat olive oil over medium heat in a frying pan.
- Sauté onions, carrots, celery, and garlic for 5 minutes.
- Add thyme/rosemary and cook for 1 minute.
- Stir in lentils, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, and flour until well combined.
- Add corn, peas, Dijon, salt, pepper, and broth, then simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.

4. Assemble:

- Spoon the filling into a lightly oiled casserole or 9x11 baking dish.
- Evenly spread the mashed potatoes over the top.

5. Bake:

- Bake uncovered for 25–30 minutes, until the potatoes are lightly golden.
- Let cool for 15 minutes before serving.

BLACK-EYED PEA CURRY

I love Indian curries that call for fresh curry leaves, but they can be hard to find. So, I keep dried curry leaves in a tightly sealed jar in my fridge—they work just fine! This is a flavorful, hearty, and satisfying curry that's perfect for any meal!

Ingredients

- Olive oil
- 1/8 tsp mustard seeds
- 3 dried curry leaves (or 1 tsp coriander seeds)
- 2 cups cooked black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups water
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 medium white onion, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 TBSP tomato paste
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/4 tsp turmeric
- 3 tsp coconut sugar or brown sugar
- 2 tsp lemon juice (fresh if available)
- Chili powder, to taste (optional)
- Salt, to taste
- Fresh cilantro, finely chopped (or Italian parsley if needed)

Instructions

1. Heat oil: Pour a little olive oil into a Dutch oven or deep pan and heat over medium.
2. Toast spices: When the oil is hot, add mustard seeds and curry leaves (or coriander seeds) and fry for a few seconds until fragrant.
3. Sauté aromatics: Add onions and garlic and sauté until onions are translucent, stirring frequently to prevent burning.
4. Cook spices & tomato paste: Stir in tomato paste, cumin, and coriander, cooking for about a minute.
5. Simmer the curry: Add black-eyed peas, water, turmeric, chili powder (if using), brown sugar, lemon juice, and 1 tsp salt. Stir to combine.
6. Thicken: Simmer until the curry thickens, stirring occasionally.
7. Taste & adjust: Add more salt, lemon juice, or sugar as needed.
8. Finish & serve: Stir in fresh cilantro and serve hot on its own or over rice or quinoa.

BLACK LENTIL CURRY

This is a rich, creamy, and deeply flavorful curry made with black or puy lentils. It's perfectly spiced and satisfying!

Ingredients

- 1 cup black or puy lentils, soaked 12-24 hours, then rinsed
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 TBSP fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 large can or quart jar tomatoes
- 2 TBSP tomato powder or paste
- 1 red bell pepper, roughly chopped
- 2 TBSP ghee or coconut oil
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3/4 tsp ground coriander
- 3/4 tsp turmeric
- 1/4 - 1/2 tsp chili flakes
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1-2 cans coconut milk (Asian brands preferred)
- 1 yellow or green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 vegetable stock cube, crumbled
- 1 tsp Real Salt
- Ground black pepper, to taste
- Fresh cilantro, finely chopped (for flavor and garnish)

Instructions

1. Make the vegetable puree:
 - In a blender, pulse together onion, ginger, garlic, tomatoes, tomato paste/powder, and red bell pepper until well combined.
2. Cook the spices:
 - Heat ghee or coconut oil in a soup pot over medium heat.
 - Add bay leaves, cumin, coriander, turmeric, chili flakes, and garam masala. Stir for about 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Simmer the base:
 - Add the blended vegetable and tomato puree to the pot. Stir and cook for 3 minutes.
4. Cook the lentils:
 - Add the chopped yellow/green bell pepper, lentils, crumbled stock cube, and 1 can of coconut milk. Stir to combine.
 - Cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes, stirring often, until the lentils are tender.
5. Final adjustments:
 - Taste and adjust salt or seasonings as needed.
 - Add more coconut milk for a creamier texture, if desired.
6. Serve:
 - Garnish with fresh cilantro and serve hot, on its own or over rice.

Dirty Lentils

I call these dirty lentils because they turn a dirty brown when cooked, but don't let the color fool you—they're packed with flavor! Even the non-healthy eaters in my family love them.

Ingredients

- 2 cups lentils, soaked for 12 hours and rinsed
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, any color, chopped
- 2 heads garlic, minced
- Olive oil
- 1 scant TBSP veggie-flavored Better Than Bouillon (Costco)
- Several shakes Spice Island Garlic Herb Seasoning (Costco)
- Several shakes Slap Ya Mama seasoning (Walmart)
- Generous shakes of salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Soak & rinse lentils:
 - Soak 2 cups lentils in 5-6 cups water for about 12 hours.
 - Strain and rinse well before cooking.
2. Sauté aromatics:
 - In a large soup pan, heat olive oil over medium heat.
 - Sauté onion and bell pepper until softened.
 - Add garlic and stir for another minute.
3. Cook the lentils:
 - Add lentils, bouillon, and about 2 cups water to the pot.
 - Stir and add all seasonings (adjust to taste).
4. Simmer:
 - Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and let simmer until tender.
 - Taste and adjust salt or seasonings as needed.

ITALIAN LENTILS

This is comfort food at its best—a casserole and pasta dish combined! If you don't have real cheese, Cheezies (recipe in the Extra section) make a delicious topping.

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups dry lentils, soaked and rinsed
- 1 1/4 cups pasta elbows (or other short pasta)
- 5-6 cups veggie or chicken broth
- 1/2 cup tomatoes (fresh diced, bottled, or sun-dried)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 TBSP olive oil (plus more for drizzling)
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 small-medium onion, diced
- 1 TBSP tomato paste
- 1 pinch ground cumin
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- Parmesan cheese (or Cheezies)

Instructions

1. Sauté aromatics:

- Heat 1 TBSP olive oil in a large pot over medium heat.
- Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes until soft.
- Stir in garlic, tomatoes, and bay leaves, cooking for 1 minute until fragrant.

2. Cook lentils:

- Add lentils, broth, tomato paste, cumin, salt, and black pepper.
- Increase heat and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.
- Cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes until lentils are soft.

3. Cook pasta:

- Add pasta and cook over medium heat, stirring often, until al dente.
- If the mixture becomes too thick, add a little water or broth to adjust consistency.

4. Taste & serve:

- Adjust seasonings as needed.
- Serve with a drizzle of olive oil, freshly ground black pepper, chili flakes, chopped Italian parsley, and grated Parmesan (or Cheezies).

HOMEMADE HUMMUS

Hummus is easy to make and tastes better than store-bought. It's perfect as a dip for veggies and chips or as a spread for roll-ups and sandwiches.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice (about 1 large lemon)
- 1/4 cup well-stirred tahini
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 2 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil (plus more for serving)
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- Real salt, to taste
- 2 to 3 TBSP water (as needed for consistency)
- Dash of ground paprika or sumac (for serving)
- Pine nuts (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Blend the tahini & lemon juice:
 - Add tahini and lemon juice to a food processor and process for 1 minute.
 - Scrape the sides and bottom, then process for another 30 seconds until smooth and creamy.
2. Add the seasonings:
 - Add olive oil, minced garlic, cumin, and salt, then process for 30 seconds.
 - Scrape the sides and process again for another 30 seconds until well blended.
3. Add the chickpeas:
 - Add half of the garbanzo beans and process for 1 minute.
 - Scrape the sides and add the remaining beans, blending for another 1-2 minutes until thick and smooth.
4. Adjust consistency:
 - With the processor running, slowly add 2-3 TBSP of water until the hummus reaches a smooth, creamy consistency.
5. Taste & serve:
 - Adjust salt if needed.
 - Transfer to a serving dish and drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with paprika or sumac, and top with pine nuts.
6. Storage:
 - Keep in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a week.

BLACK BEAN SPREAD

This is a flavor-packed, healthy, and satisfying spread you'll love having on hand! When I've got a bowl in my fridge, it keeps me from reaching for empty-calorie foods. I never use a set recipe, so it tastes a little different every time, but it's always very good!

Ingredients

- Beans – Cooked on the bean setting twice, then rinsed and drained (use one or a mix of any beans)
- Choppees – Crunchy & flavorful add-ins such as:
 - Pickles
 - Cucumbers
 - Carrots
 - Red onions
 - Celery
 - Olives
 - Capers
- Fresh chopped herbs (whatever you have on hand)
- Seeds or chopped nuts for texture
- Dressing – Any dressing works! (See Dressing section for ideas.)

Instructions

1. Mash the beans:
 - Place cooked beans in a large mixing bowl.
 - Use a hand mixer or the back of a serving spoon to roughly mash them, leaving at least half of the beans whole for texture.
2. Mix in the add-ins:
 - Stir in choppees, fresh herbs, and seeds or nuts.
3. Make the dressing:
 - In a small bowl, mix together a dressing using whatever you have on hand.
 - A typical base includes:
 - 1-2 spoonfuls of mayo
 - Olive oil and/or pickle brine
 - Red wine vinegar and seasonings
 - Optional add-ins for extra flavor:
 - Maple syrup
 - Dijon mustard
 - Lemon juice
 - Cumin
 - Garlic or garlic powder
 - Hot sauce
 - Chili powder
 - Cheezies (recipe in Extras)
4. Combine & adjust:
 - Once you're happy with the dressing's flavor, spoon it over the bean mixture and stir well.
 - Add more dressing if needed to achieve a spreadable consistency.

Ways to Enjoy It:

- Spread on toast or crackers
- Use as a dip for chips or veggies
- Spoon onto romaine lettuce leaves for a fresh, crunchy snack

FALAFEL

These crispy, herby, flavorful falafel patties are a Middle Eastern classic, perfect for stuffing in pita, serving with hummus, or enjoying as a snack!

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups dried garbanzo beans (Do NOT use canned or cooked)
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup fresh parsley leaves (stems removed)
- 3/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves (stems removed)
- 1 small onion, quartered
- 7-8 garlic cloves, peeled
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 TBSP ground black pepper
- 1 TBSP ground cumin
- 1 TBSP ground coriander
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper (optional, for heat)
- 3/4 tsp baking powder (optional, for fluffier patties)
- 2 TBSP toasted sesame seeds
- Oil for frying

Instructions

1. Soak the garbanzo beans (1-2 days in advance):
 - Place dried garbanzo beans and baking soda in a large bowl.
 - Cover with 4 times as much water as beans and soak for at least 18 hours (or longer if beans are still hard).
 - Drain completely and pat dry.
2. Prepare the falafel mixture:
 - In a food processor, add garbanzo beans, parsley, cilantro, onion, garlic, and spices.
 - Process 40 seconds at a time until well combined but not pureed.
 - Transfer mixture to a sealed container and refrigerate for at least 1 hour (or up to overnight).
3. Form the patties:
 - Remove the mixture from the fridge and stir in baking powder and sesame seeds.
 - Using a small ice cream scoop, scoop out portions and, with wet hands, shape into 1/2-inch thick patties.
4. Fry the falafel:
 - Pour about 1 inch of oil into a frying pan and heat on high until bubbling.
 - Place 4-5 patties in the oil at a time (don't overcrowd).
 - Fry until the bottom side is browned, then flip and brown the other side.
 - Remove and place on a paper towel-lined baking sheet to drain excess oil.
 - Sprinkle with kosher salt while still warm.
 - Repeat with the remaining mixture.
5. Serve & enjoy:
 - Serve hot with warm pita bread, tahini or hummus, kalamata olives, chopped lettuce, tomatoes, and cucumbers.

BLACK & WHITE ROASTED BEANS

Roasted chickpeas are like popcorn, and they make a great crunchy snack! Pairing them with black beans adds even more texture and flavor.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups cooked black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 tsp ground coriander, divided
- 1 tsp paprika, divided
- 1 tsp cumin, divided
- 1 tsp salt

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Season the beans:
 - Place garbanzo beans in one bowl and black beans in another.
 - Add ½ tsp of each spice to each bowl and toss to coat evenly.
3. Prepare for baking:
 - Spread garbanzo beans on one baking sheet.
 - Spread black beans on a second baking sheet.
4. Roast the beans:
 - Bake both trays for 25–30 minutes.
 - Remove the black beans and continue roasting the garbanzo beans for another 15–20 minutes until crispy.
5. Cool & combine:
 - Let both types of beans cool completely before combining.
 - Gently toss together and serve.

ROASTED CHICKPEAS

A deliciously crunchy, savory, protein-packed snack that's great for on-the-go, salads, or just eating by the handful!

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp onion powder
- 1/4 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 to 1 TBSP olive oil

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Pre-bake the chickpeas: Spread garbanzo beans on the prepared baking sheet and bake for 15 minutes.
3. Season the chickpeas:
 - Remove from the oven and drizzle with half the olive oil, stirring to coat.
 - In a small bowl, mix together all the dry seasonings.
 - Sprinkle the spices over the chickpeas and stir well.
4. Bake again:
 - Return to the oven and bake for 10 minutes. Stir.
 - Bake for another 5-10 minutes until crispy (total baking time: 35-40 minutes).
5. Cool for extra crunch:
 - Turn off the oven and crack the door open.
 - Let chickpeas cool inside the oven for maximum crispiness.

CURRIED CHICKPEA SPREAD

This is a slightly sweet, curry-flavored garbanzo bean spread that's unexpectedly delicious and incredibly versatile!

Ingredients

- 3 heaping spoonfuls mayo (or thinned hummus)
- Juice of 1 lemon (about 2 TBSP)
- 1 TBSP curry powder
- 3/4 tsp garlic powder
- 3 cups cooked garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 2-3 carrots or sweet peppers, diced
- About 1 cup onions, diced (or green onions, sliced)
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup raw cashews
- Sea salt & cracked black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Make the dressing:
 - In a small bowl, whisk together mayo, curry powder, garlic powder, and a generous pinch of salt until smooth. Set aside.
2. Mash chickpeas:
 - In a mixing bowl, mash half to two-thirds of the chickpeas using a fork or potato masher, leaving some texture.
3. Combine the mix-ins:
 - Stir in diced carrots, onions, raisins, and cashews.
4. Add dressing & season:
 - Pour the dressing and lemon juice over the chickpea mixture and stir well.
 - Taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed.
5. Optional flavor tweaks:
 - Add a splash of red wine vinegar, maple syrup, or hot sauce for extra depth.

Ways to Serve:

- Spread on crackers, toasted bread, or sliced bell peppers
- Wrap in green lettuce leaves for a fresh snack
- Dip with carrots, cucumbers, peppers, or chips

Garlicky Bean Spread

This is a creamy, garlicky, and nutrient-dense spread perfect for spreading on crackers or toast, and adding flavor to meals!

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups cooked kidney beans, with cooking liquid
- 1 medium head of roasted garlic
- 1/4 cup tahini
- Salt & pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Separate the beans & liquid:
 - Remove the beans from the cooking liquid, but don't drain or rinse them.
 - Set aside about 1/2 cup of the bean liquid.
2. Blend the spread:
 - In a food processor, combine kidney beans, 1/2 cup bean liquid, roasted garlic, and tahini.
 - Process until smooth and creamy.
3. Adjust the consistency:
 - If you prefer a thinner spread, add more bean liquid, 1 tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency is reached.
4. Season & serve:
 - Add salt and pepper to taste.
 - Serve as a spread for toast, crackers, or sandwiches, or as a dip for veggies and chips.

SOUPS



BASIC SOUP RECIPE

Hot homemade soup is one of my favorite things about winter! It's easy to make, and all you need is a big pot and a few basic ingredients. Be adventurous—it's hard to ruin a pot of soup! Just don't add too much spice at once. Taste as you go, and when you create a combination you love, write it down!

Soup Building Blocks

- Olive oil, coconut oil, or butter
- Onions (chopped)
- Garlic (minced—more is better!)
- Liquid:
 - Water
 - Veggie broth
 - Coconut milk or nut milk (for creaminess)
- Veggies:
 - Potatoes, sweet potatoes
 - Carrots, celery
 - Corn, peppers, tomatoes, etc.
- Beans (optional):
 - Black, red, white, pinto, garbanzo, black-eyed peas, etc.
- Grains (optional):
 - Quinoa, amaranth, brown rice, barley, etc.
- Nuts & Seeds (optional):
 - Ground nuts (to thicken)
 - Whole nuts/seeds (for garnish)
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- Herbs & spices (experiment and adjust to taste)

Instructions

1. Sauté the aromatics:
 - In a large soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat.
 - Add chopped onions and minced garlic and sauté until tender.
2. Add veggies & liquid:
 - Stir in chopped vegetables and pour in broth, water, or coconut milk.
 - Bring to a gentle simmer.
3. Add beans & grains (if using):
 - Stir in cooked beans and/or grains for a heartier soup.
4. Season & taste:
 - Add salt, pepper, herbs, and spices to taste.
 - Adjust seasonings gradually—start small and build up flavors.
5. Simmer & serve:
 - Let the soup cook until all flavors meld together and vegetables are tender.
 - Garnish with chopped nuts, seeds, or fresh herbs if desired.

VEGGIE BROTH

I love making veggie broth at the end of summer when my garden is overflowing with fresh produce. But when I didn't have a garden, I saved organic veggie scraps in the freezer until I had enough to make a batch.

Here's how to make a rich, homemade broth that's perfect for soups, stews, and cooking grains!

No exact amounts are needed—just clean out your fridge and use what you have!

What to Put In It:

- Olive oil
- Onions, large dice
- Garlic cloves
- Root vegetables (carrots, turnips, parsnips)
- Celery
- Spinach
- Vegetable scraps & peelings (including tomato peels)
- Fresh parsley
- Bay leaf
- Fresh thyme
- Sea salt, to taste
- Dash of cayenne

Instructions

1. Sauté aromatics:

- Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.
- Add onions and sauté until browned.
- Add garlic and cook for 5 more minutes.

2. Simmer the broth:

- Transfer onions and garlic to a large stockpot.
- Add remaining vegetables, herbs, and enough water to cover everything.
- Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer partially covered for 1 to 1 ½ hours.

3. Strain & store:

- Strain the broth through a large strainer, pressing on the vegetables to extract all the liquid.
- Pour into quart-size ziplock freezer bags and freeze flat for easy storage.

ITALIAN SPLIT PEA SOUP

A rich and comforting Italian-inspired split pea soup with potatoes, fennel, and Parmigiano-Reggiano, finished with a flavorful onion garnish.

Ingredients

- About 6 cups veggie broth
- 1 1/2 cups split green peas, picked over, soaked, and rinsed
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1/4 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and diced
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- Sea salt & black pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. Cook the peas & potatoes:

- Add 4 cups of broth to a large soup pot.
- Stir in peas and potatoes and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.
- Reduce to a slow but steady simmer, cover, and cook for about 45 minutes, until the peas and potatoes are very tender.

2. Sauté the aromatics:

- Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
- Add onion and sauté until softened.
- Stir in fennel seeds and cook until the onions turn golden brown.
- Remove from heat and set aside.

3. Blend the soup:

- Transfer pea and potato mixture to a blender in batches and puree until smooth.
- Return blended soup to the pot and stir in 1 cup more broth.

4. Add carrots & season:

- Stir in carrots and cover. Cook on low heat until carrots are just tender.
- If the soup is too thick, add more broth as needed.

5. Finish & serve:

- Remove from heat and stir in grated Parmigiano-Reggiano.
- Season to taste with salt and black pepper.
- Serve hot, topped with onion garnish and crostini on the side.
(next page)

ONION GARNISH

This is a bright, fresh topping that adds contrast to creamy soup.

Ingredients

- 1 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 1 TBSP finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

- Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and stir together.
- Sprinkle over soup just before serving.

CROSTINI

These crispy, golden bread cubes are perfect for topping soups and salads!

Ingredients

- 3 slices of good-quality bread
- Light olive oil (enough to fill a skillet 1/2 inch deep)

Instructions

1. Prepare the bread:
 - Remove crusts from the bread and cut into 1/2-inch cubes.
2. Heat the oil:
 - Pour 1/2 inch of olive oil into an 8- or 9-inch skillet.
 - Heat over medium-high until the oil simmers.
3. Fry the bread cubes:
 - Add enough bread cubes to form a single layer without crowding.
 - Turn them as they brown to ensure even crisping.
 - Quickly remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.
4. Adjust heat as needed:
 - If the oil gets too hot, remove the skillet from the heat or turn it down briefly before continuing.
5. Repeat:
 - Fry the remaining bread cubes in batches.
6. Storage:
 - Store in an airtight container for up to 3 hours for the best crispness.

MEXI SOUP

I've been making this soup for many years, and it's a family favorite! I leave it in a pot on the stove with all the toppings in bowls, so everyone can customize their own bowl. It's an easy way to feed a group, and even picky eaters love it!

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4-5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 1/2 - 3 quarts water
- 2 veggie or chicken bouillon cubes (or 2 TBSP bouillon powder)
- 8 stalks celery, chopped
- 9 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp cayenne
- Salt & black pepper, to taste
- 1-2 cups cooked brown rice or quinoa
- 2 cups cooked black beans, rinsed and drained

Instructions

1. Sauté the aromatics:
 - Heat olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat.
 - Add onion and garlic, and sauté until tender.
2. Build the broth:
 - Add water, bouillon, celery, carrots, thyme, cumin, cayenne, salt, and pepper.
 - Stir well to dissolve the bouillon.
 - Bring to a simmer and cook until celery and carrots are just tender.
3. Add the grains & beans:
 - Stir in cooked brown rice or quinoa and black beans.
 - Simmer briefly to heat through.
4. Serve & customize:
 - Set out bowls of toppings so everyone can make their own perfect bowl!

Topping Ideas:

- Lime wedges
- Chopped cilantro
- Diced tomatoes
- Sliced green onions
- Salsa
- Grated cheese (vegan or regular)
- Plain Greek yogurt
- Tortilla chips

CREAMY NON-DAIRY SOUP

This versatile soup is rich, creamy, and completely dairy-free! It's a potato soup at heart, but you can substitute broccoli, celery, or zucchini instead. If you want a thicker, cheesier flavor, stir in potato flakes and Cheezies (recipe in the Extra section).

Ingredients

- 2 TBSP olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and diced
- About 4 cups potatoes, peeled and chopped into small chunks (or use broccoli, celery, or zucchini)
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 can full-fat coconut milk
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp garlic herb seasoning (Costco)
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp Real Salt (or more to taste)

Instructions

1. Sauté aromatics:
 - Heat olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat.
 - Add onion and garlic and sauté until tender and fragrant.
2. Add vegetables & broth:
 - Stir in carrots and potatoes (or your chosen veggies).
 - Pour in vegetable broth and coconut milk.
 - Season with thyme, garlic herb seasoning, black pepper, and salt.
3. Simmer:
 - Heat over medium heat, stirring occasionally.
 - Taste and adjust seasonings and salt as needed.
 - Cook until vegetables are fully tender.
4. Blend for creaminess:
 - Ladle half of the soup into a blender and blend until smooth.
 - Pour the blended soup back into the pot and stir well.

Optional Additions for Extra Flavor & Texture:

- Stir in potato flakes for a thicker consistency.
- Mix in Cheezies (recipe in Extra section) for a cheesy flavor.
- Add a squeeze of lemon juice or a dash of nutritional yeast for brightness.

VEGGIE RICE SOUP

This is a simple, nourishing, and comforting soup perfect for any time of year. Light yet hearty, this soup is packed with veggies and tender rice.

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups water
- 1/2 cup rice
- 4 carrots, chopped
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 TBSP dried parsley

Instructions

1. Sauté aromatics:

- In a large soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat.
- Add onion and sauté until tender.
- Stir in garlic and cook for another 30 seconds until fragrant.

2. Add ingredients & simmer:

- Pour in chicken broth and water.
- Add rice, carrots, celery, and parsley.
- Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low.

3. Cook until tender:

- Stir occasionally and simmer until rice and vegetables are tender.
- Adjust with more water and extra seasonings if needed.

SWEET POTATO, CHICKPEA & LENTIL SOUP

This is one of those uniquely delicious, soul-nourishing soups that's especially perfect for chilly winter nights. I love serving it with crusty sourdough toast.

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP coconut oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tsp finely grated ginger
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp coriander
- 1/2 - 1 tsp chili pepper flakes
- 1 bottle or 1 large can of tomatoes
- 4 cups peeled & diced sweet potatoes
- 1 cup lentils
- 1 can garbanzo beans, drained
- 5 cups vegetable stock
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- 1-2 lemons, juiced
- Finely chopped cilantro (or other fresh herbs)
- Handful of pumpkin or sunflower seeds (for garnish)

Instructions

1. Sauté aromatics:
 - In a large soup pot, heat coconut oil over medium heat.
 - Add onions, garlic, and ginger and sauté until fragrant.
2. Add spices & main ingredients:
 - Stir in salt, paprika, cumin, coriander, and chili flakes.
 - Add tomatoes, sweet potatoes, lentils, garbanzo beans, and vegetable stock.
 - Stir and bring to a low boil.
3. Simmer:
 - Reduce heat to medium-low and cook until sweet potatoes and lentils are tender.
4. Blend for creaminess:
 - Remove from heat and cool slightly.
 - Ladle half of the soup into a blender and blend until smooth.
 - Pour blended soup back into the pot and stir well.
5. Finish & serve:
 - Stir in lemon juice and adjust salt & pepper as needed.
 - Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with cilantro and sunflower seeds.

QUINOA LENTIL SOUP

This is a nutrient-rich, protein-packed, hearty soup made with red lentils and quinoa. If you don't have red lentils, brown lentils work just as well!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup quinoa
- 1/2 cup red lentils (or brown lentils)
- 1 TBSP olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2-inch knob of ginger, peeled and minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 cup onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup carrot, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped (about 1 cup)
- 5 cups water or vegetable stock
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp red chili powder
- 1 tsp garam masala (or curry powder)
- Salt & black pepper, to taste
- Juice of 1/2 lemon (or 1 TBSP bottled lemon juice)
- 2 cups spinach

Instructions

1. Cook the quinoa & lentils:

- Rinse & strain quinoa and red lentils.
- Add to a large pot and cover with at least 3 inches of water.
- Bring to a boil, then reduce to medium heat and cook until tender.
- Strain water and set aside.

2. Sauté aromatics:

- In a Dutch oven or soup pot, heat olive oil over medium heat.
- Add bay leaves, garlic, ginger, and onions.
- Sauté until soft and fragrant.

3. Add vegetables & spices:

- Stir in carrot, celery, red bell pepper, tomato, quinoa, red lentils, turmeric, cumin, chili powder, and garam masala/curry powder.
- Pour in vegetable stock or water and season with salt & black pepper.

4. Simmer:

- Let soup cook on low heat until all vegetables are tender.

5. Finish & serve:

- Stir in cooked lentils & quinoa, spinach, and lemon juice.
- Taste and adjust seasonings or add more water if needed.
- Serve hot and enjoy!

GYPSY SOUP

This hearty, nourishing, satisfying, flavorful soup comes from Jane Brody's Good Food Book—and it's delicious!

Ingredients

- 2 TBSP coconut or olive oil
- 2 large onions, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 cup chopped celery (about 1 large stalk)
- 2 cups peeled & chopped sweet potato (or winter squash)
- 3 cups broth or water
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp dried basil
- Dash cinnamon
- Dash cayenne
- 1 cup fresh chopped tomato (or 1 can diced tomatoes)
- 3/4 cup chopped green bell pepper (about 1 large pepper)
- 1 1/2 cups cooked chickpeas, drained & rinsed
- Sea salt & black pepper, to taste
- 1 TBSP tamari or soy sauce

Instructions

1. Sauté the vegetables:
 - In a large saucepan or stockpot, heat oil over medium heat.
 - Add onions, garlic, celery, and sweet potatoes.
 - Sauté for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Simmer the base:
 - Pour in broth or water and add bay leaf, paprika, turmeric, basil, cinnamon, and cayenne.
 - Bring to a boil, then reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Add the remaining ingredients:
 - Stir in tomatoes, green bell pepper, and chickpeas.
 - Simmer for about 10 more minutes—don't overcook!
4. Finish & serve:
 - Stir in tamari or soy sauce.
 - Taste and adjust salt & pepper as needed.
 - Serve hot and enjoy!

WHITE BEAN SOUP

3 large onions, chopped
2 TBSP coconut or olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 green or red peppers, chopped
1/2 tsp chili pepper flakes
2 tsp cumin
1 tsp oregano
2 tsp salt
1-quart soup stock, or chicken or veggie broth
8 cups cooked white beans, drained and rinsed

Sauté onions in oil until golden and tender. Add garlic and peppers and sauté until peppers are soft. Add all other ingredients and simmer until hot.

Serve with chopped green onions, fresh cilantro, chips, and salsa.

MIDDLE EASTERN CHICKPEA SOUP

This rich, comforting potato and chickpea soup is so good! I love adding garlic and herb seasoning (Costco) and sometimes mix in quinoa with extra water to stretch it further.

Ingredients

- 1 large red potato, diced (about 2 cups)
- 4 cups water
- 3 to 4 cups reserved potato-cooking liquid or vegetable stock
- 4 cups cooked chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 TBSP minced fresh peppermint
- 2 TBSP olive or coconut oil
- 1 large onion, chopped (about 2 cups)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 TBSP cumin
- 1 TBSP coriander
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1/8–1/4 tsp cayenne
- Salt & ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- Chopped fresh parsley (for garnish)
- Lemon wedges (for serving)

Instructions

1. Cook the potatoes:
 - In a large pot, boil diced potatoes in water until very soft.
 - Drain, reserving 3-4 cups of the cooking liquid.
2. Blend the base:
 - In a blender, combine the potatoes with 1 cup of reserved liquid or stock and puree.
 - Transfer the mixture to a soup pot.
 - Blend chickpeas, peppermint, and 2 cups of reserved liquid or stock until very smooth.
 - Stir the chickpea puree into the soup pot and heat gently, stirring frequently.
3. Prepare the spiced onion mix:
 - In a skillet, heat olive or coconut oil over medium heat.
 - Sauté onion, garlic, cumin, coriander, turmeric, cayenne, salt, and black pepper for about 10 minutes, until onions are translucent.
 - Stir the spiced onion mixture into the soup.
4. Adjust consistency & season:
 - If the soup is too thick, add more cooking liquid, water, or stock to thin it out.
 - Stir in diced tomatoes and let simmer for a few more minutes.
 - Taste and adjust salt & pepper as needed.
5. Serve & enjoy:
 - Ladle into bowls and garnish with fresh parsley.
 - Serve with lemon wedges on the side for a bright, citrusy kick.

SOURDOUGH



SOURDOUGH TIPS

Sourdough isn't hard, but it is needy, and it requires planning ahead. It's a living organism, kind of like a baby—you can't ignore it and expect great results. When your starter and dough need attention, you have to stop and give it to them.

When a baby is hungry you can't say, I'm busy and I'll get to you next week. When a baby needs their diaper changed, if you wait too long to change it, the results won't be pretty. Same goes for sourdough.

Sourdough isn't nearly as needy as a baby, but it does require awareness and timing. Here's what you need to know:

1. Feed Your Starter Often

- Learn what the right consistency should be.
- If you're going to be away, either:
 - Leave it with a friend who will feed it.
 - Freeze or dehydrate it for later use.
- Before using your starter in a recipe, refresh it multiple times until it's active and bubbly.

2. Timing & Dough Handling

- Autolyse your dough for at least three hours before adding salt—this improves taste and texture.
- Let it rise until it doubles in size—then move to the next stage immediately.
- Keep shaped dough in the fridge for 9-13 hours—but not longer.
- Bake when the dough is ready—plan your schedule so you don't miss the perfect timing.

3. Baking Tips

- Preheat properly:
 - Place a cold Dutch oven in a cold oven and heat them together.
 - Always put chilly dough into a HOT Dutch oven for the best oven spring.
- Prevent over-browning:
 - Place a round rack at the bottom of the Dutch oven to keep the bottom crust from getting too dark.

4. Flour & Starter Choices

- Use high-quality unbleached flour:
 - White, wheat, kamut, spelt, rye, or a combination.
 - Organic is best for optimal results.
- You can make your own starter or buy one:
 - San Francisco Style Starter (available on Amazon) works well. I prefer to use this!

DIY SOURDOUGH STARTER

Creating your own sourdough starter is fairly easy, but it requires patience and daily care. After about 10 days, your starter will be active, bubbly, and ready to use!

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup unbleached flour (many people claim regular—not organic—works best for the first step)
- 1/4 cup warm filtered water

Instructions

Day 1: Create the Starter

1. In a glass jar, combine flour and warm water and stir until smooth. The mixture will be thick and pasty.
2. Cover loosely with a lid or plastic wrap.
3. Place in a warm spot and let sit for 24 hours.

Day 3: First Feeding

1. Add 1/2 cup unbleached flour and 1/4 cup warm filtered water.
2. Stir well—aim for the consistency of thick pancake batter. (If too thick, add a little more water.)
3. Cover and let sit in a warm spot.

Days 4–10: Daily Refreshing

1. Discard about half of the starter. (This prevents it from growing too large while strengthening the yeast.)
2. Feed again with 1/2 cup flour and 1/4 cup warm water. Stir well.
3. If the starter is too watery, add a little extra flour.
4. Continue this daily.

How to Know When Your Starter is Ready (Around Day 10)

- Bubbles form on the surface and throughout.
- The texture becomes spongy.
- It has a pleasant sour smell.

At this point, it is active and ready to use in recipes!

Storing & Maintaining Your Starter

1. Transfer to a clean jar with a lid.
2. Store tightly covered in the fridge between uses.
3. Refresh at least every two weeks to keep it active.

How to Use Starter from the Fridge

1. Take it out and refresh it.
2. If it has been sitting for a while, refresh it 1–2 times before baking.
3. If it's too thin and watery, add a little extra flour.
4. Wait until it's bubbly and active before using in recipes.

What is Hooch?

- A dark liquid can form on top of the starter after sitting.
- Harmless—either stir it back in or pour it off.

With regular feedings and practice, your sourdough starter will become strong, reliable, and perfect for baking!

EASY SOURDOUGH BREAD

This is a simple, no-fuss sourdough bread recipe with minimal kneading and great flavor. A long autolyse time and cold-proofing give it the best texture and taste!

Ingredients

- 6 cups unbleached flour
- 1 cup (or more) active sourdough starter
- 5 cups filtered water (adjust as needed)
- 1 1/2 TBSP salt

Instructions

1. Mix the Dough

1. In a large mixing bowl, add flour and pour in about 1 cup of starter. (No need to be exact—leave 1-2 TBSP of starter in the jar to refresh.)
2. Refresh your starter immediately by adding fresh flour and water to the jar.
3. Add water to the flour and starter mixture.
4. Mix with your hand until you have a sticky dough. Add more water if needed.
5. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit for 1-3 hours (autolyse). A long autolyse is the secret to easy, flavorful sourdough!

2. Add Salt & First Rise

1. After 1-3 hours, add salt and knead it in thoroughly.
2. Cover with plastic wrap and let the dough sit in a warm spot until it doubles in size. Use plastic wrap instead of cloth to prevent the dough from drying out and forming a crust.

3. Shape & Cold Proof

1. When dough has doubled, turn it out onto a floured surface.
2. Flip the dough so flour coats both sides.
3. Use a bench scraper to divide it into two or three sections.
4. Shape each section into round loaves and place them into proofing baskets lined with floured cloth napkins or liners.
5. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge for 10-12 hours. Cold-proofing helps develop flavor and gives a better rise during baking.

4. Baking

1. Place a Dutch oven in a cold oven and preheat to 495°F (257°C).
2. Once the oven is hot, remove one loaf from the fridge.
3. Dust the top with flour, then place a square of parchment paper on top.
4. Place an upside-down plate over the dough and flip the basket so the dough rests on the plate.
5. Score the bread using a sharp knife or bread-scoring tool.
6. Remove the hot Dutch oven, and slide the parchment paper with dough into it. To prevent over-browning on the bottom, place a round rack inside the Dutch oven before baking.
7. Cover and bake for ~35 minutes, until the crust is medium brown.
8. Remove from the oven and cool on a rack.
9. Repeat for remaining loaves.

Tips & Adjustments

- Oven temp may need adjusting based on your setup.
- Cold dough + hot oven = best oven spring!
- Experiment with hydration—if your flour absorbs more water, add slightly more.
- Practice makes perfect! Every bake will teach you something new.

SOURDOUGH BREAD VARIATIONS

When I first started making sourdough, I experimented with a lot of different flavors. Out of everything I tried, the most loved variations were Garlic Herb & Parmesan, Cheddar Jalapeño, and Salted Rosemary. Here's how to make them!

Garlic Herb & Parmesan Sourdough

Ingredients:

- 1 large spoonful of minced garlic (the type in liquid)
- 1 large spoonful Italian herbs
- 3/4 cup Parmesan cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

Instructions:

1. After the autolyse, add garlic and herbs along with the salt.
2. Knead well with your hands. This takes some effort—keep working the dough until there are no pockets of garlic, salt, or herbs.
3. Continue making the bread as usual until you reach the step where you turn the dough onto a floured counter.
4. Coat the dough in flour and divide into sections.
5. Incorporate the cheese:
 - Spread out one section of dough.
 - Place one-third of the Parmesan cubes over it.
 - Fold the edges inward from each corner to form a ball.
 - Gently place it in a lined and floured proofing basket.
6. Repeat for remaining dough sections and finish as normal.

Cheddar Jalapeño Sourdough

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup finely chopped jalapeño (or more for extra heat)
- 1 cup sharp cheddar cheese, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

Instructions:

1. Prepare the sourdough dough as usual until you reach the step where you turn it onto a floured counter.
2. Coat the dough in flour and divide into sections.
3. Incorporate the jalapeño and cheese:
 - Spread out one section of dough.
 - Sprinkle one-third of the chopped jalapeños and cheese over it.
 - Fold the edges inward from each corner to form a ball.
 - Gently place it in a lined and floured proofing basket.
4. Repeat for remaining dough sections and finish as normal.

Salted Rosemary Sourdough

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 TBSP dried or fresh chopped rosemary leaves (no stems)
- Maldon salt or flaky sea salt

Instructions:

1. After the autolyse, add rosemary along with the salt, and knead thoroughly until there are no pockets of herbs or salt.
2. Continue making the bread as usual until you are ready to place dough in proofing baskets.
3. Prepare the proofing baskets:
 - Lightly sprinkle a little flour inside.
 - Sprinkle flake salt over the flour.
4. Place the dough into the basket and continue with the rest of the process as normal.

Final Tips for Flavored Sourdough

- Adjust cheese sizes: Keeping the cheese in 1/2-inch cubes prevents it from melting completely into the dough.
- Be mindful of moisture: Jalapeños and garlic can add moisture—don't overdo it!
- Flake salt trick: Sprinkling flaky salt into the proofing basket gives the bread a delicious crusty texture.

SOURDOUGH NAAN

This a soft, fluffy, and slightly tangy naan made with sourdough discard. Perfect for dipping, wrapping, or eating on its own!

Ingredients

- ½ cup (125 g) sourdough starter discard (unfed)
- 2 ½ cups (300 g) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (120 g) milk (dairy or plant-based)
- ¼ cup (60 g) plain yogurt (dairy or plant-based)
- 1 TBSP (15 g) olive oil
- 1 ½ tsp (7 g) sea salt

Instructions

1. Mix & Ferment the Dough

1. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together sourdough discard, milk, yogurt, and olive oil.
2. Add flour and salt, then mix with your hands until well combined. The dough will be stiff.
3. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let the dough rest at room temperature until doubled in size.
 - Warm kitchens: Less time
 - Cooler kitchens: More time

2. Shape the Dough

1. Turn the dough out onto a floured counter.
2. Use a bench scraper to divide into 8 equal pieces.
3. Shape each piece into a ball and cover with a kitchen towel.
4. (Optional: Store the dough balls in a covered container in the fridge for up to 3 days before cooking.)

3. Cook the Naan

1. Preheat a cast iron skillet over medium-high heat for 10-15 minutes. (If sticking is a concern, lightly oil the skillet.)
2. Roll out one dough ball at a time into a 6-inch round about ⅛" thick. Use a little flour to prevent sticking.
3. Cook the naan:
 - Place the rolled dough into the hot skillet and cook for 2 minutes.
 - Flip and cook the second side for 1-2 minutes.
 - Flip once more and watch for the naan to puff up with air.
 - Once fully puffed, remove from the skillet.
4. Repeat for the remaining dough balls.

Serving & Storage

- Serve hot or at room temperature.
- Store cooked naan at room temperature in a plastic bag for up to 3 days.
- If using refrigerated dough, allow it to come to room temperature before cooking for best results.
- Freeze cooked naan in a freezer-safe container for up to 3 months.

BANANA PUMPKIN SOURDOUGH BREAD

This moist, spiced, and slightly tangy bread is the perfect way to use up sourdough discard while combining the flavors of banana and pumpkin! It's perfectly moist and spiced and perfect for fall—or any time of year!

Ingredients

Wet Ingredients:

- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ cups organic sugar
- ½ cup pumpkin purée
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup sourdough starter discard (unfed)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Dry Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 TBSP pumpkin spice
- 1 TBSP cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Prepare the loaf pan: Lightly grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan or line with parchment paper.
3. Mix wet ingredients:
 - In a mixing bowl, combine melted butter, sugar, pumpkin purée, eggs, sourdough discard, and vanilla.
 - Use a mixer to blend until fully combined.
4. Fold in dry ingredients:
 - Add flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, pumpkin spice, cinnamon, and walnuts.
 - Gently stir to combine, being careful not to overmix.
5. Bake:
 - Pour the batter into the prepared pan.
 - Bake for 50–60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
6. Cool & serve:
 - Remove from the pan and place on a cooling rack until fully cooled.

Tips & Variations:

- Add ½ cup mashed banana for an extra banana flavor.
- Stir in ½ cup chocolate chips for a sweeter twist.
- Substitute pecans for walnuts if preferred.

TREATS



SWEETS 101

Sugar is hard on the system, but if you're going to enjoy sweets, there are healthier options. Most of the recipes in this collection fall into that category.

Make wise choices and enjoy treats sparingly for best results.

Healthier Natural Sweeteners:

- Raw honey – Packed with enzymes & antioxidants
- Maple syrup – Mineral-rich with a deep, natural sweetness
- Agave nectar – A lower-glycemic alternative
- Coconut sugar – Contains minerals & has a caramel-like flavor
- Date syrup – Nutrient-dense with fiber from whole dates
- Blackstrap molasses – High in iron, calcium, and potassium
- Stevia – A no-calorie, plant-based sweetener
- Monk fruit sweetener – Natural & low-glycemic
- Mashed bananas – A great whole-food sweetener for baking
- Unsweetened applesauce – Adds moisture & mild sweetness to recipes

When using sugar in a recipe, organic sugar is a healthier choice than white. Still, use it sparingly.

By choosing natural, less-processed sweeteners, you can satisfy your sweet tooth while being mindful of your health!

DATE SNICKERS

These chocolate-covered, peanut butter-stuffed dates taste like homemade Snickers bars—but healthier!

Ingredients

- 10 Medjool dates
- 1/3 cup peanut butter
- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts or peanuts
- 4 oz dark chocolate bar or chocolate chips
- 1 TBSP coconut oil

Instructions

1. Prep the Dates:

- Cut open each Medjool date and remove the pit.
- Fill the cavity with peanut butter and sprinkle with chopped nuts.
- Place the stuffed dates in the freezer for 5 minutes to firm up.

2. Melt the Chocolate:

- In a heatproof bowl, add chocolate and coconut oil.
- Set the bowl over a boiling pan of water (double-boiler method).
- Stir every 20-30 seconds until completely melted and smooth.

3. Coat the Dates:

- Dip each chilled date into the melted chocolate.
- Sprinkle extra crushed nuts on top.
- Place on a parchment-lined plate or tray.

4. Set & Store:

- Refrigerate until the chocolate firms up.
- Store in a sealed container in the fridge.

RICE CANDY

These naturally sweet, chewy, and nutty treats are packed with wholesome ingredients and have a delicious hint of orange.

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 2 cups pitted & chopped dates or raisins
- 1½ cups nuts, finely chopped
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- ⅓ cup agave nectar or honey
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 2 drops certified pure orange essential oil
- 4 TBSP almond butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Shredded unsweetened coconut, toasted (for rolling)

Instructions

1. Mix ingredients:

- In a large bowl, combine brown rice, chopped dates/raisins, nuts, sesame seeds, agave nectar, sea salt, orange essential oil, almond butter, and vanilla.
- Stir until well combined.

2. Adjust consistency:

- If the mixture is too sticky or thin, add more chopped nuts.
- If it's too thick, add more agave nectar or honey.

3. Form & coat:

- Roll the mixture into 1-inch balls.
- Roll each ball in toasted shredded coconut for a crunchy coating.

4. Store:

- Place in a sealed container and store in the fridge.

NO-BAKE FIG NEWTONS

This is a simple, wholesome, and naturally sweet version of Fig Newtons—no baking required!

Ingredients

- 1 cup rolled oats (or ground sprouted oats)
- 1 cup dried Mission figs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped nuts
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp sea salt
- 2 TBSP agave nectar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Blend:

- Add all ingredients to a food processor or heavy-duty blender.
- Process until fully combined and sticky.

2. Shape:

- Roll the mixture into small balls.
- Flatten them slightly into cookie shapes.

3. Enjoy or Dehydrate:

- Eat as is for a soft, chewy texture.
- For a firmer texture, dehydrate on mesh sheets until desired consistency is reached.

Storage:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for 3-5 days.
- Refrigerate for longer freshness.

NUTTY PIE CRUST

This is a nutty, flavorful, and wholesome pie crust that pairs well with any filling! It's naturally sweet, crunchy, and a delicious alternative to traditional pie crust!

Ingredients

- 1 cup oatmeal
- 4 TBSP agave nectar or honey
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup coconut oil (warmed if solid)
- ⅔ cup finely minced nuts (walnuts, pecans, or almonds work well)

Instructions

1. Toast the oats:

- In a skillet over medium heat, toast the oatmeal, stirring frequently.
- Watch carefully to prevent burning. Remove from heat once lightly golden and fragrant.

2. Mix the crust ingredients:

- In a small mixing bowl, combine toasted oatmeal, agave (or honey), sea salt, vanilla, coconut oil, and minced nuts.
- Stir well until evenly mixed.

3. Press into pie dish:

- Transfer mixture to a 9-inch pie dish.
- Use the back of a spoon or your fingers to press the crust evenly along the bottom and up the sides.

4. Bake (if pre-cooking):

- For a pie with a pre-cooked filling, bake the empty crust at 350°F (175°C) until golden brown (about 10-12 minutes).
- For a filled pie, bake as directed in the pie recipe.

Tips & Variations:

- Use maple syrup instead of honey/agave for a richer flavor.
- Swap different nuts for a unique taste (cashews, macadamias, etc.).
- For an extra crispy crust, chill the dough in the fridge before baking.

CANNELLINI BEAN PIE CRUST

This is a unique, fiber-rich, and protein-packed pie crust made with cannellini beans—perfect for both sweet and savory fillings!

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 egg
- 2 TBSP light olive oil or coconut oil
- 2 tsp cinnamon (for a sweet crust, omit for savory pies)
- 1 TBSP sugar (optional for sweet pies)
- 1 cup flour

Instructions

1. Puree the beans:

- In a food processor, blend cooked cannellini beans until smooth and creamy.

2. Mix the dough:

- Transfer the pureed beans to a large bowl.
- Add baking powder, egg, oil, cinnamon (if using), sugar (if using), and flour.
- Mix with a pastry blender or large fork until well combined.

3. Shape & roll out:

- Form the dough into a ball.
- Roll out on a floured surface to about ⅛" thick.

4. Fit into pie plate:

- Carefully place into a 9-inch pie plate.
- Fill with your favorite pie filling and bake according to the recipe directions.

Tips & Variations:

- For a savory crust: Omit cinnamon & sugar and add ½ tsp salt and fresh herbs if desired.
- For a crispier crust: Pre-bake at 350°F (175°C) for 10 minutes before adding filling.
- For gluten-free: Substitute 1:1 gluten-free flour blend.

Pinto Bean Pecan Pie

This is a rich, naturally sweetened, and protein-packed twist on classic pecan pie—made with pinto beans for extra creaminess! It's as nutrient-dense as it is indulgent!

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 cups agave nectar or pure maple syrup
- 4 eggs
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract
- 1 cup unsweetened flaked coconut
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- ½ cups coconut oil (warmed if solid)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (163°C).
2. Blend the base:
 - In a food processor, mash pinto beans with ½ cup of agave nectar until smooth.
 - Add eggs and blend again until fully incorporated.
3. Combine the filling:
 - Transfer to a mixing bowl and stir in the remaining agave nectar, vanilla, coconut, pecans, and melted coconut oil.
 - Mix well until everything is fully combined.
4. Assemble & bake:
 - Pour the filling into two prepared nutty pie crusts (see Nutty Pie Crust recipe).
 - Bake for 1 hour, or until the pie is set and golden.
5. Cool & serve:
 - Let cool before slicing.
 - Top with whipped coconut cream for an extra decadent treat!

Tips & Variations:

- Swap pecans for walnuts for a different flavor.
- Use honey or maple syrup for a richer sweetness.
- Add 1 tsp cinnamon or nutmeg for extra warmth.

Makes two pies, that are extra good when topped with whipped coconut cream.

WHIPPED COCONUT CREAM

This is a light, fluffy, and dairy-free whipped cream perfect for topping pies, cakes, fruit, or hot drinks!

Ingredients

- 1 can full-fat coconut milk, chilled overnight (UNSHAKEN or tipped)
- 2 TBSP coconut sugar, blended to a fine powder (or use powdered maple sugar)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Chilled mixing bowl & beaters

Instructions

1. Prepare the coconut milk:

- Do NOT shake the can.
- Open carefully and use a spatula to scoop out the thick coconut cream on top.
- Save the liquid part for smoothies or other recipes.

2. Whip the cream:

- Place the thick coconut cream in a chilled mixing bowl.
- Beat with a hand mixer for about 30 seconds.

3. Sweeten & flavor:

- Add powdered coconut sugar and vanilla extract.
- Continue mixing until light and smooth.

4. Use immediately or store in the fridge for a few hours before serving.

Tips & Variations:

- Make sure to refrigerate the can for 24 hours before using.
- For chocolate whipped coconut cream, add 1 TBSP cocoa powder.
- Use maple syrup or honey instead of coconut sugar for a slightly different flavor.

FUDGY BLACK BEAN BROWNIES

These rich, fudgy, and naturally gluten-free brownies are packed with protein and fiber from black beans—yet they taste just as indulgent as classic brownies!

Ingredients

- 1¾ cups black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 eggs (or 2 flax eggs: 2 TBSP ground flaxseed + 5 TBSP water)
- 3 TBSP coconut oil, melted
- ¾ cup cocoa powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- ½ cup (heaping) organic sugar
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1 cup chopped nuts (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Prepare the flax eggs (if using): In a small bowl, whisk flaxseed and water together and let sit for 5 minutes to thicken.
3. Mash & mix:
 - Place black beans in a mixing bowl.
 - Add flax eggs (or regular eggs) and mix until combined.
4. Blend the batter:
 - Stir in coconut oil, cocoa powder, salt, vanilla, sugar, and baking powder.
 - Mix until smooth. (A food processor or hand mixer can help achieve a smoother texture.)
 - If the batter is too thick, add 1-2 spoonfuls of water.
5. Spread & bake:
 - Evenly spread batter into a lightly greased 9×9-inch baking dish.
 - Bake for 30-35 minutes, until the edges pull away and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out fairly clean.
6. Cool & serve:
 - Let brownies cool for 30 minutes before cutting into squares.

Storage Tips:

- Store in an airtight container at room temperature for 1-2 days.
- Refrigerate for up to a week or freeze for longer storage.

BREAKFAST COOKIES

These soft, chewy, and nutrient-dense cookies make a perfect grab-and-go breakfast or healthy snack!

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 2 large bananas, mashed
- ⅓ cup peanut or almond butter
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract
- 1 cup almond flour
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1¼ cups oats
- ¼ cup raisins
- ¼ cup chopped nuts
- Maldon flake salt (for sprinkling, optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Mix the dough:
 - In a large bowl, combine egg, mashed bananas, peanut/almond butter, maple syrup, and vanilla.
 - Stir in almond flour, cinnamon, baking soda, and sea salt.
 - Fold in oats, raisins, and chopped nuts until well combined.
3. Form cookies:
 - Scoop out spoonfuls of dough and place on the prepared baking sheet.
 - Lightly sprinkle Maldon flake salt on top (optional).
4. Bake:
 - Bake for 10-14 minutes, or until firm and lightly golden.
5. Cool & store:
 - Let cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes, then transfer to a wire rack.
 - Store in a tightly covered container in the fridge.

Tips & Variations:

- Swap raisins for chocolate chips for a sweeter version.
- Use chopped walnuts, pecans, or almonds for crunch.
- Add shredded coconut or seeds for extra texture.

OATMEAL COOKIES

These soft, chewy, and naturally sweetened oatmeal cookies are packed with protein from beans and wholesome ingredients—a healthier take on a classic favorite!

Ingredients

Wet Ingredients:

- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups cooked great northern beans, drained & rinsed
- 2 TBSP water
- 1 cup coconut oil, warmed if solid
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups agave nectar
- 3 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract

Dry Ingredients:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups whole wheat flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp baking soda
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp baking powder
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups rolled oats
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chocolate chips or raisins (or chopped dried fruit)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chopped walnuts

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Blend the beans:
 - In a mixing bowl, blend together beans, water, and vanilla until smooth.
3. Prepare dry ingredients:
 - In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and baking powder.
4. Cream the wet ingredients:
 - In a separate bowl, cream together coconut oil and agave nectar.
 - Add eggs, applesauce, and vanilla, and mix until smooth and creamy.
 - Stir in the bean mixture until fully combined.
5. Combine & mix:
 - Add the wet mixture to the dry ingredients and stir until well incorporated.
 - Fold in oats, chocolate chips (or raisins), and chopped walnuts.
6. Bake:
 - Drop heaping tablespoonfuls of dough onto a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet, spacing about 2 inches apart.
 - Bake for 6–9 minutes, or until golden brown.
7. Cool & store:
 - Let cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes, then transfer to a wire rack.

Tips & Variations:

- Use coconut sugar or honey instead of agave.
- Substitute pecans or almonds for walnuts.
- Swap chocolate chips for dried cranberries for a fruity twist.

NO-BAKE PEANUT BUTTER OATMEAL COOKIES

These rich, chocolatey, and peanut buttery no-bake cookies are quick, easy, and irresistibly delicious!

Ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- ½ cup milk
- 1 stick (8 TBSP) butter
- ¼ cup cocoa powder
- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 cup smooth peanut butter
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract
- Large pinch salt

Instructions

1. Prepare the base:
 - In a medium saucepan, combine sugar, milk, butter, and cocoa powder over medium heat.
 - Stir occasionally and bring to a boil.
 - Once boiling, let it cook for 1 minute, then remove from heat.
2. Mix in dry ingredients:
 - Add oats, peanut butter, vanilla, and salt.
 - Stir until fully combined and the mixture thickens.
3. Form the cookies:
 - Spoon heaping tablespoons of the mixture onto a sheet of parchment paper.
 - Let the cookies cool and set at room temperature.
4. Enjoy!
 - Once firm, store in an airtight container at room temperature or in the fridge.

Tips & Variations:

- Use crunchy peanut butter for extra texture.
- Add ½ cup shredded coconut for a twist.
- Substitute almond butter or cashew butter for a different flavor.

PINTO BEAN CARROT CAKE

This carrot cake is moist, naturally sweetened, and nutrient-rich. It's packed with protein from pinto beans but you'd never guess it—it's a delicious twist on a classic dessert!

Ingredients

- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup butter, room temperature
- 1 egg
- 2 cups cooked pinto beans, rinsed, drained, and mashed
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp cloves
- ½ tsp allspice
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 3 cups shredded carrots

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Cream the butter & sugar:
 - In a mixing bowl, beat together brown sugar and butter until smooth.
3. Mix in wet ingredients:
 - Add egg and mashed pinto beans, mixing well until incorporated.
4. Add dry ingredients:
 - Stir in flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, allspice, and vanilla until well combined.
5. Fold in mix-ins:
 - Gently fold in walnuts, raisins, and shredded carrots.
6. Bake:
 - Pour batter into a greased 9×13-inch baking dish.
 - Bake for 35-45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
7. Cool & serve:
 - Let cake cool completely before slicing.
 - Enjoy as is or top with cream cheese or coconut frosting.

Storage Tips:

- Store covered in the fridge for up to 5 days.
- Freeze for longer storage—wrap individual slices for easy grab-and-go treats!

Optional Frosting Ideas:

- Classic cream cheese frosting
- Whipped coconut cream
- Simple powdered sugar glaze

BUTTERMILK GLAZE

This rich, syrupy glaze adds a sweet, buttery finish to cakes, muffins, or quick breads—perfect for soaking into warm desserts!

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup buttermilk (see below for homemade buttermilk option)
- ½ cup butter
- 1 TBSP light agave nectar
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Instructions

1. Prepare the glaze:

- In a saucepan, combine sugar, buttermilk, butter, agave nectar, and baking soda.
- Stir and bring to a boil over medium heat.

2. Thicken:

- Boil for 5-6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the glaze becomes thick and syrupy.

3. Add vanilla & pour:

- Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.
- Poke holes in the warm cake with a toothpick or fork.
- Pour the hot glaze evenly over the top.

HOW TO MAKE BUTTERMILK (Dairy or Non-Dairy Substitute)

1. Pour 1 scant cup of milk (or nut milk) into a measuring cup.
2. Add 1 TBSP lemon juice or white vinegar.
3. Stir and let sit for 5-10 minutes until it curdles.

Ways to Use Buttermilk Glaze:

- Drizzle over cakes, muffins, or quick breads (great on pound cake or banana bread!)
- Use as a topping for pancakes, waffles, or biscuits
- Pour over warm cinnamon rolls for an extra decadent finish

BLONDE BROWNIES

These soft and chewy blondies are so good, no one will believe they're made with beans! They're easy to make and always a hit.

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked white beans
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup honey or maple syrup
- 4 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 1 cup + 4 TBSP rolled oats
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 cup white chocolate chips (or salted caramel chips, or whatever you have)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Blend the wet ingredients:
 - In a blender, combine white beans, baking powder, baking soda, salt, honey/maple syrup, vanilla, and melted butter.
 - Blend until completely smooth.
3. Mix in dry ingredients:
 - Pour the blended mixture into a large mixing bowl.
 - Stir in oats and chopped nuts until well combined.
4. Assemble & bake:
 - Spoon batter into a greased 8×16-inch baking dish and spread evenly.
 - Sprinkle chocolate chips evenly over the top.
 - Bake for about 20 minutes, until the edges are golden brown and the center is set. (Don't undercook, or the center will be too gooey!)
5. Cool & serve:
 - Allow to cool completely before cutting into bars.

Tips & Variations:

- Use dark chocolate chips for a richer flavor.
- Swap pecans or almonds for walnuts.
- Add a sprinkle of flake salt on top for a salty-sweet contrast.
- For extra chewiness, refrigerate after baking before cutting.

ROMANCE BARS

These decadent, chewy, and buttery dessert bars come from an old cookbook. They are not be the healthiest treat, but they are irresistibly delicious. I sometimes make them for parties and celebrations, and it's hard to stop at just one!

Ingredients

Bottom Layer:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups flour
- ¼ cup brown sugar (or coconut sugar)
- 1 tsp salt

Top Layer:

- 2 eggs
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- 2 TBSP flour
- ¾ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup shredded coconut
- 1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

Optional Frosting:

- 1 lb (about 3½ cups) powdered sugar (or DIY organic powdered sugar)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 (8-oz) package cream cheese
- ½ cup chopped nuts (for topping)

Instructions

1. Prepare the Bottom Layer:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. In a mixing bowl, cream butter until soft.
3. Add flour, brown sugar, and salt, mixing until combined.
4. Press the dough evenly into a 10×15-inch baking pan.
5. Bake for 10 minutes. (It will be set but not browned.)

2. Prepare the Top Layer:

1. While the base bakes, beat eggs until light and fluffy.
2. Stir in brown sugar, flour, baking powder, and vanilla.
3. Beat until thick and smooth, then fold in coconut and walnuts.
4. When the bottom layer is done, remove from oven and spread the top layer evenly over it.
5. Return to oven and bake for another 20 minutes, until golden brown and firm. (Do not overbake!)

3. Cool & Finish:

1. Let the bars cool completely before cutting.
2. Optional:
 - Dust with powdered sugar, OR
 - Frost with cream cheese frosting and sprinkle chopped nuts on top.

Storage Tips:

- Keep bars covered at room temperature for 1-2 days.
- Refrigerate for longer freshness (especially if frosted).

DIY POWDERED SUGAR

This is a quick and easy homemade substitute for store-bought powdered sugar—free from additives and perfect for frostings, glazes, and dusting desserts!

- 2 cups organic sugar
- 2 TBSP cornstarch (prevents clumping and improves texture)

Instructions

1. Blend:

- Place sugar and cornstarch in a high-powered blender.
- Blend on high speed until the sugar becomes an ultra-fine powder.

2. Store:

- Transfer to an airtight container and store at room temperature.

Tips & Variations:

- For a cornstarch-free option: Use arrowroot powder instead.
- For flavored powdered sugar: Add ½ tsp vanilla bean powder or a pinch of cinnamon or cocoa powder.
- Use in place of store-bought powdered sugar in any recipe!

NO-BAKE FUDGE

This rich, chocolatey, and naturally creamy fudge is secretly protein-packed with black beans—yet you'd never know!

Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked black beans, rinsed and drained
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup melted butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cocoa powder
- 2 TBSP vanilla extract
- 2 pounds powdered sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup walnuts, chopped

Instructions

1. Mash the beans:

- Place black beans in a mixing bowl.
- Use a hand mixer to mash until smooth.

2. Mix the fudge base:

- Add melted butter, cocoa powder, and vanilla.
- Mix well until fully combined.

3. Incorporate sugar & nuts:

- Gradually stir in powdered sugar and chopped walnuts.
- Mix until smooth and well blended.

4. Set the fudge:

- Spread the mixture into a lightly oiled 9×13-inch baking dish.
- Cover with plastic wrap and chill in the fridge for at least 1 hour.

5. Cut & store:

- Once firm, cut into squares and serve.
- Wrap leftover fudge tightly in plastic wrap and store in the fridge.

Tips & Variations:

- Use pecans instead of walnuts for a different flavor.
- For extra richness, stir in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dark chocolate chips.
- For a dairy-free version, replace butter with coconut oil

COCONUT MILK ICE CREAM

A rich, creamy, and dairy-free ice cream that's easy to make and customizable with your favorite mix-ins!

Ingredients

- 2 cans full-fat coconut milk
- ½ cup organic sugar
- 1 pinch sea salt
- 1 TBSP vanilla extract

Optional Add-Ins:

- Chopped fruit (mango, berries, bananas)
- Chocolate chips or cacao nibs
- Shredded coconut
- Spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom)
- Peanut butter or almond butter
- Caramelized bananas

Instructions

1. Prepare the Base:

- In a mixing bowl, whisk together coconut milk, sugar, salt, and vanilla until fully combined.
- If adding spices or liquid flavorings, mix them in now.

2. Using an Ice Cream Maker:

- Pour the mixture into an ice cream machine.
- Churn according to the manufacturer's instructions until thick and creamy.
- Transfer to an airtight container and freeze until firm.

3. No Ice Cream Maker? No Problem! (Manual Freezing Method)

- Pour the mixture into a bread pan or freezer-safe container.
- Freeze, stirring every 10-15 minutes to prevent ice crystals from forming.
- Once frozen solid, transfer to an airtight container and store in the freezer.

Serving Tips & Variations:

- For softer ice cream, let sit at room temperature for 5-10 minutes before scooping.
- For a swirl effect, mix in peanut butter, caramel, or fruit puree just before freezing.
- Add texture by folding in chocolate chips, chopped nuts, or coconut flakes.



**ALWAYS START OUT
WITH A LARGER POT
THAN WHAT YOU
THINK YOU NEED.**

JULIA CHILD

Now you know what kinds of things we eat at my house. I have a big family, and when they come for Sunday dinner or a party, there can be more than thirty people. I cook differently for a crowd than I do when it's just me. I eat simpler when I'm alone. But if you stop by in the winter, you might find a pot of soup or lentils simmering on the stove, and if so, I'll offer you a bowl along with a slice of homemade sourdough bread. Or I might make a loaded green salad, because I eat those year-round. And while we catch up, we might sip on a hot mug of spicy chai tea.

If it's summer, I'll be in flip-flops, and we'll have fruit smoothies or infused water. I'll make something fresh with whatever's growing in the garden, and you can bet we'll be eating outdoors. There will be a straw in your drink, and maybe a little paper umbrella with a garnish—because why not make your everyday life feel special?!!

If we're celebrating something, expect simple, wholesome foods dressed up beautifully, and desserts on the heartier side. It will all be delicious and arranged to look pretty, because that's what gives meals extra flavor.

I believe food is greatly elevated when shared. Some of the best moments in life happen around the table, and presentation matters! I love setting the table with fresh flowers, placemats, pretty napkins, gold silverware, and dishes that make my heart smile—often treasures found in pottery shops and thrift stores. Whatever calls to me and feels like a celebration of art and beauty.

And that, my friend, is what cooking, eating, and enjoying life is all about.

Find your tribe, invite them over often, and fill your table with flowers and food that's nourishing, satisfying, and deeply fulfilling to both body and soul. That's the real secret to creating a rich, meaningful life and unforgettable meals. I know this from a lot of practice.

Warm hugs from my kitchen to yours—may it always be a deliciously inviting and fulfilling place!

Love, Connie





**THE BIGGEST DINNER PARTY
MISTAKE IS TO SPEND TOO
MUCH TIME COOKING AND
BEING STUCK IN THE KITCHEN
AWAY FROM YOUR GUESTS.**

INA GARTEN



*May your kitchen be full of love,
laughter, and gorgeous delicious
food! I wish you health, happiness,
and blessings galore!*

♥ *Connie*