

# MEDITERRANEAN INSPIRED

## *Cookbook*

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Every effort has been made to ensure that all ingredient measurements and instructions are as accurate as possible at the time of publication. However, variations in brands, ingredient availability, and kitchen conditions may affect results.

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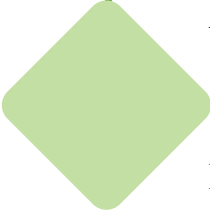
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# Introduction



**J**ired of restrictive fad diets and fast fixes, we all need a dietary approach that is sustainable, joyful, and healthy. Today, going back to the basics seems like a wiser move, to harness a healthy mix of nutrients from fresh fruits and vegetables, hearty grains, creamy dairy, and quality meats. Each meal is prepared with planning and intention. And that's what the Mediterranean diet offers! Zero hassle cooking regime that relies more on organic ingredients, healthy meals, and portion control, than punishing you with impractical calorie restrictions or flavorless, bland meals with the empty promises of improved fitness and quick weight loss.

With my Spanish and Greek roots and a lifelong connection to the Mediterranean lifestyle, I have always believed that food should be both a source of nourishment and a source of joy. My earliest memories are filled with the aroma of roasted peppers, the sound of sizzling olive oil in a pan, and long meals shared with loved ones. Later, as a certified nutritionist, I came to appreciate the science behind the wisdom of this traditional way of eating. The Mediterranean approach isn't just wholesome, it is satisfying and rooted in tradition.

And this is what this cookbook is bringing to your table. It has a collection of 80 simple, flavorful recipes that I have curated to make healthy eating effortless and enjoyable. So, suppose you're starting with Mediterranean cuisine or looking for fresh ideas to keep things exciting. In that case, these dishes are here to celebrate seasonal ingredients, balanced nutrition, and the kind of comfort that only real food can bring.

You will also find a complete 4-week meal plan, smart pantry tips, and time-saving kitchen hacks, everything you need to take the stress out of daily cooking. From wholesome lunches to leisurely weekend meals, this book is here to support you in creating a lifestyle that's full of flavor and free of guilt.

Through these recipes, you will rediscover the joy of eating well every single day. With a bit of planning and a lot of heart, you will find that healthy food can be the most delicious part of your routine.

# Chapter 1: Unlocking the Mediterranean Lifestyle

If there is anything that makes the Mediterranean lifestyle practically sustainable, it is the balance it brings to your life. It is a holistic way of living that doesn't focus on strict rules or fast results. Instead, it encourages you to adopt healthy habits that lead to long-term fitness and happiness. There are a few key principles, such as consuming fresh, whole foods, practicing mindful eating, and fostering a deep connection to the environment and community, that are central to this way of living.

The Mediterranean way is rooted in the concept of enjoying food that nourishes both body and soul. Meals are not rushed or treated as a necessity; they are seen as an opportunity to sit down, relax, and share with loved ones. This represents a significant shift from the fast-paced, convenience-focused culture that has become so prevalent in many places today. In the Mediterranean, food is seen as an experience to savor, not just fuel to get through the day.

Another core aspect is the focus on plant-based foods. Vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, and nuts take center stage, while animal products, like meat and dairy, are enjoyed in moderation. This not only supports better health but also reflects the region's natural food availability.

## *Health Benefits: Why It's More Than Just a Diet*

The Mediterranean diet has earned a solid reputation in the medical and nutrition world thanks to decades of research confirming its benefits. With its reliance on whole foods, healthy fats, lean proteins, and plant-based meals, this lifestyle offers more than just good taste; it supports long-term health and disease prevention.

### **1. It's Great for Your Heart**

If heart disease runs in your family or you're trying to keep your ticker strong, this lifestyle can help lower bad cholesterol, improve the good kind, and keep your blood pressure in check. In the PREDIMED trial (New England Journal of Medicine, 2013), individuals who followed a Mediterranean-style diet with extra-virgin olive oil or nuts experienced a 30% reduction in risk for major cardiovascular events, including heart attacks and strokes.

### **2. Helps with Healthy Weight Loss**

You won't find strict calorie counting here. Instead, this way of eating naturally helps you feel satisfied without overeating. That makes it easier to lose weight and maintain it over the long term. A 2016 study published in The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology found that individuals following this diet lost more weight and belly fat than those on a typical low-fat plan, even without attempting to reduce their calorie intake.

### **3. Supports Blood Sugar and Prevents Type 2 Diabetes**

If you are watching your blood sugar or have a family history of diabetes, this diet can be a real game-changer. It helps regulate insulin levels and reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. A meta-analysis published in Diabetes Care (2011) identified that there is a 21 percent lower risk of developing diabetes (type 2) in people who followed the Mediterranean way of eating.

### **4. Protects Your Brain as You Age**

The foods in this lifestyle, like olive oil, nuts, fish, and greens, are packed with nutrients that help keep your brain sharp. It can even lower your risk of cognitive decline and memory issues as you get older. In a 2015 study, published in JAMA Internal Medicine, it was discovered that senior adults who followed the Mediterranean diet performed better on memory tests over time compared to those on a low-fat diet.

### **5. Fights Inflammation**

Chronic inflammation is tied to everything from joint pain to severe conditions like heart disease and cancer. The Mediterranean diet is rich in anti-inflammatory ingredients that help calm inflammation in the body. A review in Frontiers in Nutrition (2017) confirmed that this way of eating reduces inflammation markers, particularly in individuals with chronic health issues.

## 6. Can Help You Live Longer

Are you looking to add more healthy years to your life? This approach can reduce your risk of serious illness and may even help you live a longer overall life. A 2008 study published in the British Medical Journal found that individuals who adhered closely to this diet had a 23 percent lower risk of dying from any cause during the study period.

## 7. Boosts Your Gut Health

Your gut does more than digest food; it controls your immune system and mood, too. The fiber-rich foods in this diet help build a strong and balanced gut microbiome. A 2020 study in *Gut* found that after one year on the Mediterranean diet, older adults had healthier, more diverse gut bacteria and saw improvements in brain function and inflammation.

## 8. Lowers Your Risk of Certain Cancers

As this diet is rich in antioxidants and fiber, it has the potential to lower your risk of developing certain types of cancer, including colorectal, breast, and prostate. A 2017 meta-analysis in *Nutrients* reported a 13% lower risk of dying from cancer, with powerful protection against colorectal cancer, for those following a Mediterranean-style diet.

### *Key Nutrients to Embrace in Mediterranean Living*



When it comes to Mediterranean living, it is crucial to understand that health does not stem from relying solely on a few popular ingredients. While olive oil, garlic, and tomatoes are often celebrated, true wellness is built on a balanced and diverse mix of various nutrients. The Mediterranean approach emphasizes the consumption of healthy fats, fiber, protein, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals, all of which work together to support the body in various ways. Focusing too much on only one or two foods can leave the body missing essential nutrients, even if those foods are considered healthy. Instead, the key is to pay attention to the body's natural cues, eating when truly hungry, stopping when satisfied, and choosing a variety of foods that nourish and energize. Every meal should aim to include a balance of grains, greens, healthy fats, lean proteins, and fresh produce. By listening carefully to what the body needs and by eating a broad mix of Mediterranean ingredients, it is possible to build real, lasting health from the inside out.

### **Healthy Fats (Monounsaturated & Omega-3s)**

In the Mediterranean way of eating, not all fats are the enemy; some are your best friends. Take monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids, for example; they are responsible for protecting your heart, fighting inflammation, and supporting brain health. The best part? You get these from delicious, everyday foods. Extra virgin olive oil is the star of the show here, and it is used for cooking, dressing, and dipping. Add in nuts like almonds and walnuts, along with fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, and sardines, and you have a heart-healthy combo that tastes amazing and helps you feel full and satisfied.

### **Fiber**

Fiber does more than keep things moving in your digestive system. It also helps lower cholesterol, controls blood sugar levels, and feeds the healthy bacteria in your gut. A fiber-rich diet keeps you feeling full for longer, which can also aid in weight control. You will find a wealth of fiber in Mediterranean staples, such as lentils, chickpeas, white beans, fruits like figs and oranges, and whole grains like barley and farro. Don't forget your veggies, leafy greens, eggplant, and zucchini are not only rich in fiber but packed with flavor.

## **Protein**

Protein is your body's building block. It repairs tissues, supports muscle strength, and helps you stay full longer. Mediterranean living tends to rely more on plant-based protein and lean options rather than heavy red meat. Legumes, such as beans and lentils, are a regular feature in many dishes, and seafood, like tuna and sardines, often appears on the plate. Eggs and poultry (like chicken or turkey) are included in moderation. You will also find high-quality protein in plain Greek yogurt and cheeses like feta, which add a creamy kick without overdoing it.

## **Antioxidants**

Your body is constantly exposed to stress every day, and antioxidants serve as your internal defense team. These powerful nutrients protect your cells from damage, enhance your immunity, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Mediterranean foods are naturally rich in antioxidants, including berries, grapes, tomatoes, olives, leafy greens, and herbs such as oregano and rosemary. Even extra virgin olive oil comes packed with antioxidant polyphenols. These ingredients help your body fight back against aging and inflammation while keeping your meals vibrant and full of flavor.

## **Complex Carbohydrates**

Carbs often get a bad rap, but the Mediterranean approach is all about quality, not eliminating them. Complex carbohydrates serve as a steady source of energy throughout the day and are rich in fiber, B vitamins, and essential minerals. You can obtain them from whole grains, such as brown rice, oats, quinoa, and barley, as well as from beans and lentils. Even starchy veggies like sweet potatoes and beets make a regular appearance. And yes, fruits are part of the plan, too. Eaten whole and fresh, they are a great source of natural sugars and fiber that support overall health.

## **Calcium and Vitamin D**

These two nutrients are necessary for strong bones and teeth, and they also support nerve and muscle function. While dairy is often the go-to source, the Mediterranean diet offers a mix of options. You will find calcium in leafy greens like kale and spinach, as well as in small fish (especially when eaten with the bones). Plain Greek yogurt and cheese also help boost calcium intake. Vitamin D, which absorbs calcium in the body, is a bit trickier to get from food alone; fatty fish and egg yolks help, but don't underestimate the power of getting a little sunshine every day.

## **Potassium**

Potassium is responsible for maintaining healthy blood pressure, balancing body fluids, and supporting the function of the heart and muscles. The Mediterranean diet offers tons of potassium-rich choices that are naturally low in sodium. Bananas, avocados, tomatoes, and leafy greens like chard are all top contenders. Legumes also contribute a substantial amount, making meals both hearty and heart-healthy. Getting enough potassium helps counter the effects of salt in your diet and keeps your body's systems running smoothly.

## **Magnesium**

Magnesium plays its role in over 300 different processes in your body, from producing energy to helping muscles relax and nerves function properly. If you ever feel sluggish, anxious, or tense, a diet rich in magnesium may help alleviate these symptoms. You will find magnesium in foods like whole grains, leafy greens, nuts, seeds, legumes, and fish like mackerel. This nutrient works behind the scenes to support calm, balance, and overall well-being, yet it's often one we overlook.

## *The Power of Balance and Moderation*

When it comes to the Mediterranean diet, there's no obsession with cutting out entire food groups or counting every calorie. Instead, the real magic lies in balance and moderation, two things that make this lifestyle both sustainable and enjoyable. The Mediterranean approach encourages you to eat a wide variety of whole, fresh foods, including a wide range of vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, fish, healthy fats, and even a small amount of red wine. Every plate has to be built with intention and simplicity, not excess.

Let's be honest! Overeating, even the healthiest food, can lead to obesity and digestive problems. That's why portion control is a crucial part of unlocking the benefits of a Mediterranean lifestyle. You can enjoy creamy hummus, a drizzle of olive oil, or a chunk of feta, but in sensible amounts. Instead of piling food high on the plate, the Mediterranean diet encourages slower eating, mindful bites, and the ability actually to enjoy the food you are eating.

Balancing your nutritional intake on the Mediterranean diet is pretty simple once you understand the core idea: eat mostly whole, natural foods in the right proportions and enjoy them mindfully. Here's how to do that in a way that keeps your meals nourishing and satisfying without needing to overthink it:

### **1. Build Every Meal Around Vegetables**

Start with veggies as the foundation. Almost half of your plate should be filled with a variety of colorful, non-starchy vegetables, such as spinach, zucchini, eggplant, tomatoes, peppers, or cucumbers. They are loaded with fiber, vitamins, antioxidants, and water, keeping you full and fueling your body.

### **2. Add Whole Grains or Legumes**

For energy and fiber, fill a quarter of your plate with some whole grains such as farro, quinoa, brown rice, or bulgur, or switch it up with lentils, chickpeas, or beans. These complex carbohydrates digest slowly, maintaining steady blood sugar levels.

### **3. Include Lean Protein**

The next quarter of your plate should come from a lean protein source. Consider grilled fish (such as salmon or sardines), skinless chicken, eggs, or plant-based proteins like beans or tofu. Red meat? Keep it occasional, maybe once or twice a month.

### **4. Use Healthy Fats in Moderation**

Healthy fats are key in the Mediterranean diet, but a little goes a long way. Drizzle olive oil on salads, toss in a few olives, or sprinkle a small handful of nuts or seeds. These fats support heart health and let your body absorb fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K).

### **5. Enjoy Fruit Daily**

Eat fresh fruit as your go-to dessert or snack. Berries, oranges, grapes, apples, and figs are packed with fiber, vitamins, and natural sweetness. One or two servings a day keep your sugar cravings in check without overdoing it.

### **6. Choose Dairy Wisely**

Opt for plain Greek yogurt or a small portion of cheese, such as feta or Parmesan. These provide calcium and protein without overloading on saturated fat. Try to stick to one or two servings per day and opt for lower-fat options whenever possible.



## Chapter 2: My Mediterranean Pantry Essentials

A well-stocked pantry can save a significant amount of time, money, and stress, making it easier to prepare balanced meals that are rich in flavor. With essentials like grains, legumes, oils, herbs, and preserved items on hand, you can prepare a variety of dishes without needing to run to the store every time. Your pantry is your secret weapon when it's filled with Mediterranean staples; that way, you are never more than a few minutes away from something delicious and nourishing.

### *Tools and Equipment to Make It Easier*

If you want to make clearing space in your pantry easier, get the right tools; it's as simple as that. Use clear bins to group items together, making it easy to see what you have. Get shelf risers to stop stacking cans on top of each other like a leaning tower. Install an over-the-door rack for snacks, spices, or other items that tend to accumulate on the counter. A Lazy Susan helps you reach items in the back without having to dig through everything. And label everything, no excuses. It keeps things organized and ensures that no one messes up your system.



### **Cookware**

Mediterranean cooking is all about bold flavors, simple ingredients, and cooking methods that bring everything together. You will need versatile cookware that can handle a range of cooking methods, including searing, simmering, roasting, and baking. Think of dishes like ratatouille, shakshuka, or braised lamb shanks; your pans need to transition seamlessly from stovetop to oven.

- Cast-iron skillet: For searing meats, sautéing vegetables, and finishing dishes in the oven.
- Clay pot or tagine: Great for slow-cooked Moroccan and North African dishes.
- Stainless steel or enamel Dutch oven: Ideal for soups, stews, and braised dishes.
- Non-stick or ceramic pan: Perfect for cooking eggs, frittatas, or sautéing delicate fish.
- Saucepan and stockpot: Needed for making sauces, boiling pasta, or simmering legumes.

### **Bakeware**

From baked eggplant dishes to cheesy lasagnas and roasted veggies, Mediterranean food loves the oven. Having quality bakeware helps ensure even cooking and makes presentation easier when serving straight from the dish to the table.

- Baking sheet/tray: For roasting vegetables, chickpeas, or flatbreads.
- Ceramic baking dish: Ideal for dishes such as moussaka, lasagna, or baked fish.
- Pizza stone or steel: Helps achieve crispy, evenly baked Mediterranean-style flatbreads or pizzas.

### **Prep Tools**

Chopping, slicing, grating, and juicing are everyday moves in a Mediterranean kitchen. With fresh herbs, garlic, lemons, and seasonal veggies always in play, having good prep tools saves time and keeps things sharp (literally).

- Chef's knife: A sharp, reliable knife is key for chopping all those fresh veggies and herbs.
- Paring knife: For more minor, more precise cuts.
- Mandoline slicer: Helpful for making super-thin slices of cucumbers, zucchini, or eggplant.

- Cutting boards: Preferably one for veggies and one for meats to avoid cross-contamination.
- Mortar and pestle: For crushing garlic and herbs or making spice blends like za'atar.
- Citrus juicer or reamer: You will use a lot of lemon and orange juice in Mediterranean cooking.
- Garlic press: Because almost every dish starts with garlic.
- Box grater or Microplane: For grating cheese, use a Parmesan grater; for zesting citrus, use a Microplane.

### Mixing and Serving

Mediterranean meals are often shared, so big bowls for tossing and pretty platters for serving are a must. Whether you are tossing a Greek salad or serving a mezze spread, the right bowls and utensils help everything come together beautifully.

- Large mixing bowls: For tossing salads or mixing dough.
- Salad spinner: Keeps all your greens fresh and crisp.
- Wooden spoons and spatulas: Gentle on cookware, ideal for stirring sauces and soups.
- Serving platters and bowls: Mediterranean food is often served family-style, so presentation matters.

### Specialty Tools

These are the extras that give Mediterranean dishes their signature style. From grilling meats and halloumi to blending hummus or pressing olive oil, these tools aren't essential for beginners, but they take your game to the next level.

- Olive oil dispenser or cruet: Easy pouring and proper storage for your most frequently used ingredient.
- Mezzaluna knife: For finely and quickly chopping herbs.
- Grill pan or outdoor grill: Mediterranean food loves a good char (think grilled veggies, lamb, or halloumi).
- Pasta roller or machine: If you are making fresh pasta or flatbreads.
- Food processor: For hummus, dips, pesto, or dough.
- Blender or immersion blender: Smoothies, soups, or sauces like toum.

## *Creating an Organized, Efficient Space*



Every time I try to carve out some space in my pantry, it often feels like trying to crack a puzzle with way too many pieces and not enough room to fit them all. Between half-used pasta boxes, forgotten cans of soup, and those random snacks you swore you would eat, it's easy for the shelves to become a cluttered mess. The real challenge lies in determining what to keep, what to discard, and how to organize it all so that you don't have to dig through chaos every time you need a spice or a can of beans. And if your pantry's small to begin with, it takes serious creativity to make everything fit without turning it into a Jenga tower of groceries.

### 1. Create a Pantry Inventory System

Keeping a digital inventory of your pantry helps you stay on top of what you have, what you need, and what's expiring soon. Apps like Notion, Google Sheets, or AnyList can track everything from olive oil to chickpeas. Note down quantities, expiration dates, and the date of

your last restock. This makes shopping quicker and prevents you from buying duplicates. For an extra edge, place a QR code on your pantry door that links directly to your inventory, scan and update as you go. It turns your pantry into an innovative kitchen hub.

### 2. Use the FIFO System (First In, First Out)

To avoid wasting food, always use the oldest items first. Arrange your shelves so that the items with the earliest purchase dates or the closest expiration dates are at the front. This technique, known as First In, First Out (FIFO), is widely used in restaurants to minimize waste. A little trick that works wonders? Use any permanent marker to write the date of purchase on every package, jar, or can when you get home. It's fast, easy, and saves you money in the long run.

### 3. Install Pull-Out Drawers or Lazy Susans

If your pantry has deep shelves, things can get lost in the back and forgotten. Solve that with pull-out drawers or rotating Lazy Susans. These tools let you see and reach everything without having to shuffle through stacks. Use Lazy Susans for smaller, round items, such as spice jars, oils, or vinegar bottles. Pull-out baskets are perfect for canned goods or snack bins. These additions make your pantry feel like a well-organized mini-market.

### 4. Freeze Pantry Staples in Small Portions

Whole grains, nuts, and seeds can go bad if they sit for too long, especially in warm or humid climates. To extend their shelf life, portion them into airtight bags or containers and keep them in the freezer. For even more convenience, pre-cook beans or grains and freeze them in muffin tins or silicone trays for later use. This provides ready-to-go single servings that you can defrost as needed, reducing prep time while maintaining food freshness and nutritional value.

### 5. Themed Bins for Recipe Types

Bored of digging through your pantry every time you cook? Use small baskets to create themed bins for different meal types. For instance, a “Quick Pasta Night” bin might contain whole-wheat pasta, sun-dried tomatoes, and jarred pesto. A “Tapas Board” bin could hold olives, roasted red peppers, artichokes, and crackers. This makes meal planning faster and keeps your cooking fun and flexible, especially on busy weeknights.

### 6. Pre-Measure Bulk Items into Jars

Buying in bulk is budget-friendly, but dealing with giant bags of rice or lentils isn't. Divide them into pre-measured jars so you can grab, pour, and cook. For example, keep jars that each hold one cup of brown rice or half a cup of quinoa, ready to use without extra measuring. Use chalkboard labels or dry-erase stickers so you can easily change what's in each jar. It keeps things tidy and speeds up your prep.

### 7. Set a Restock Rhythm

Just like scheduling oil changes or dentist appointments, having a regular pantry check-in helps you stay consistent. Choose one day a month to take stock of what you have used, what's low, and what needs restocking. This habit not only keeps your Mediterranean staples stocked but also helps with more innovative grocery budgeting. Tie this into your meal planning sessions to make sure your pantry and fridge always complement each other.

### 8. DIY Flavored Oils and Vinegar

Want to take your Mediterranean recipes to the next level? Make your flavored oils and vinegars. Garlic-infused olive oil, lemon thyme vinegar, or chili oil can transform simple meals into restaurant-level dishes. Store them in small glass bottles with pour spouts, label them with the creation date, and keep them on your “flavor shelf.” Not only do they add gourmet flair, but they also reduce your need to buy overpriced specialty products.

## *The Essential Ingredients Every Mediterranean Pantry Needs*

When you think of the Mediterranean, you probably picture warm beaches, sunny skies, and incredible food that's somehow simple and packed with flavor. That's because Mediterranean cooking isn't about fancy tricks; it's about having the right, fresh ingredients ready to go. Stocking your pantry right can turn even the most boring Tuesday night into a mini-Greek or Italian escape. Imagine coming home tired, opening your pantry, and within minutes whipping up pasta tossed in olive oil, garlic, and sun-dried tomatoes or throwing together a fresh chickpea salad drizzled with lemon. Sounds good, right? That's the magic of a Mediterranean pantry.

### 1. Oils and Vinegar

Oils and vinegar are the heart of Mediterranean flavor. Olive oil brings a rich, fruity taste that ties everything together, while vinegar adds brightness and balance to



dishes such as salads, marinades, and sauces. A well-stocked kitchen always has these ingredients stored in adequate quantities because they are used almost daily.

- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Red Wine Vinegar
- Balsamic Vinegar

You should store oils away from heat and sunlight, with dark cupboards being the ideal spot. Vinegar should be kept tightly sealed in the pantry. When properly stored, olive oil can last between six and twelve months.

## 2. Grains and Legumes

Grains and legumes are the backbone of Mediterranean cuisine, providing nutrition, texture, and a comforting, hearty base. Whether you're whipping up a simple pasta, a refreshing bulgur salad, or a rich lentil stew, these pantry staples will always support your culinary efforts.

- Pasta (spaghetti, penne, orzo)
- Couscous
- Farro
- Bulgur
- Chickpeas (canned and dry)
- White Beans (cannellini, navy)
- Lentils (brown, green, red)

Dry grains and legumes should be kept in airtight containers in a superb, dry location. They can last up to a year or even longer. Canned beans stay fresh in the pantry but must be refrigerated after opening and used within a few days.

## 3. Herbs and Spices

Herbs and spices give Mediterranean cuisine its distinctive aroma and flavor. A sprinkle of oregano can transport you to a Greek taverna, while a dash of cumin brings the vibrant flavors of North Africa alive. Maintaining a well-stocked spice rack means you will always be just a few steps away from a delicious meal.

- Oregano (dried)
- Basil (dried)
- Rosemary (dried)
- Thyme (dried)
- Cumin seeds
- Coriander seeds
- Paprika (sweet or smoked)

Please keep them in airtight containers away from heat and light. They generally remain flavorful for up to a year, but if they lose their scent, it is time to replace them.

## 4. Vegetables (Pantry Staples)

A Mediterranean pantry is incomplete without a few essential vegetables. Garlic, onions, and tomatoes are vital ingredients in countless recipes, as they add depth, sweetness, and richness to dishes. These ingredients are simple but necessary.

- Garlic
- Onions
- Canned Tomatoes
- Sun-Dried Tomatoes
- Potatoes
- Shallots
- Eggplant
- Ginger
- Zucchini
- Cauliflower

You can store garlic and onions in a cool, dry, well-ventilated space, rather than the fridge, and use them within several weeks. Canned tomatoes should be stored in the pantry until opened, after which they should be refrigerated and used within 5 to 7 days. Oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes should also be refrigerated after opening.

## 5. Olives and Pickled Items

Briny, tangy, and full of character, olives and pickled ingredients are essential in Mediterranean cooking. They add instant flair to salads, pastas, and platters and are incredibly good when stored properly. Some good options include:

- Kalamata Olives
- Green Olives
- Capers

Unopened jars can be safely stored in the pantry. After opening, keep the olives and pickled items submerged in their brine and refrigerate them, where they will remain fresh and tasty for several weeks.

## 6. Nuts and Seeds

Nuts and seeds bring texture, nutrition, and subtle flavor to Mediterranean dishes. They frequently appear in recipes ranging from pesto sauces to sprinkled toppings over salads and roasted vegetables. It is best to keep the following stored in your pantry:

- Pine Nuts
- Almonds
- Sesame Seeds
- Flaxseeds
- Sesame seeds
- Sunflower seeds
- Cashews
- Pecans

Store nuts and seeds in airtight containers to protect them from moisture. For longer freshness, up to six months, it is best to refrigerate or freeze them to prevent the oils from going rancid.

## 7. Dairy and Cheeses

Mediterranean meals often feature a small amount of cheese, just enough to boost the dish without overpowering it. A crumble of feta over a crisp salad or a grating of Parmesan over warm pasta can elevate a meal beautifully. You can store:

- Feta Cheese
- Parmesan Cheese
- Halloumi Cheese

Feta cheese should be kept submerged in its brine in the fridge. Parmesan lasts longer when wrapped tightly in parchment paper and plastic. Halloumi remains good when stored in its brine or vacuum-sealed packaging.

## 8. Seafood (Pantry Stable)

Mediterranean cooking often features small, preserved seafood like anchovies and sardines, which pack a ton of umami flavour into simple dishes. They are perfect for quick pasta sauces, salads, or appetizers. You can try:

- Anchovies (in oil)
- Canned Tuna or Sardines

When unopened, these seafood items can last for months or even a year in the pantry. After opening, anchovies should be kept submerged in their oil and refrigerated, and they should be used within one to two weeks.

## 9. Fresh Fruits (Quick Use)

Fresh citrus fruits, especially lemons, are key to capturing Mediterranean freshness. A squeeze of lemon juice brightens everything from seafood to salads to grains. Other great options include:

- Lemons
- Oranges
- Grapefruits
- Limes
- Figs (fresh and dried)
- Dates
- Pomegranates
- Apples
- Grapes

Whole lemons last longer when refrigerated, keeping fresh for up to three weeks. Sliced lemons should be kept in an airtight container in the fridge and used within a few days.

## *How to Shop Smart and Stick to Your Budget?*

Smart shopping can make living the Mediterranean way feel effortless. When you plan and focus on versatile, high-quality ingredients, you are setting yourself up for easy, stress-free meals all week long. Instead of making random grocery runs, you'll have a fridge and pantry full of essentials that work together, such as olive oil, lentils, canned tomatoes, herbs, and fresh vegetables. Shopping innovatively means you waste less, spend less, and always have the basics ready to whip up everything from a quick salad to a hearty stew. It's about building a lifestyle that's simple, healthy, and full of flavor without overcomplicating things.

### **1. Plan Your Meals & Make a Shopping List**

It is best to cook the ingredients in batches or prepare most of them in advance. By cooking larger portions of meals, such as stews, soups, or grains, you can freeze leftovers for future meals, saving both time and money. This also reduces the temptation to order takeout. Use meal-planning apps like Mealtime or Yummly to create shopping lists based on your meal selections automatically. This will save time and help prevent impulse buys.

### **2. Buy in Bulk**

Purchase dry goods, such as grains, pasta, and lentils, in bulk at health food stores or supermarkets, which are often cheaper than pre-packaged versions. Look for co-ops or food shares in your area. Many co-ops offer the opportunity to purchase bulk items at wholesale prices, resulting in significant savings compared to regular stores.

### **3. Choose Frozen Over Fresh (When It Makes Sense)**

Opt for flash-frozen fruits and vegetables that are picked at their peak ripeness. They are often more nutritious than the fresh ones that may have been sitting on the shelf for days. Certain frozen foods, like frozen spinach, peas, and mango, can be cheaper and more nutrient-dense than their fresh counterparts, especially when they are out of season.

### **4. Shop Local Farmers' Markets**

Visit late in the day when vendors are more likely to offer discounts to avoid taking home leftover produce. You can snag great deals on seasonal items. Farmers' markets often sell "ugly produce" (delicious but cosmetically imperfect produce) at a discount. This is an excellent opportunity to buy fresh, nutrient-rich veggies for less.

### **5. Embrace Canned & Jarred Goods**

Stock up on canned fish, rich in omega-3s, as it can be used in a variety of meals, such as sardines, tuna, mackerel, or anchovies. Canned tomatoes are harvested and canned at the peak of their ripeness, which makes them more flavorful and nutritious than fresh, out-of-season tomatoes.

### **6. Seasonal Shopping = Big Savings**

Freeze seasonal fruits and vegetables (like berries in the summer or squash in the fall) so you can enjoy them year-round without paying premium prices. Buy in bulk when a specific item is in season and preserve it for later use. For example, buy a bunch of fresh basil in the summer and make your pesto to freeze for winter meals.

### **7. Look for Sales and Coupons**

Use apps like Ibotta or Flipp to find coupons and cash-back offers on Mediterranean staples, such as olive oil, nuts, and canned beans. Many grocery stores have an end-of-month sale to clear out stock before the new month's inventory arrives. Time your shopping trips accordingly to take advantage of deep discounts on pantry staples.

### **8. Focus on Whole Foods**

Buying fresh, whole foods like produce, grains, legumes, and nuts doesn't have to mean splurging on premium products. Look for farm-direct or community-supported agriculture (CSA) options that sell fresh produce directly to you at a lower cost. If you have the space, consider investing in a vegetable garden or joining a community garden. Even a small herb garden can provide you with a year-round supply of fresh basil, parsley, thyme, and rosemary for pennies.

## **9. Buy Meat & Fish Sparingly (But smartly)**

You can get cheaper cuts of meat like chicken thighs, turkey legs, or pork shoulder at a more affordable price. They are perfect for Mediterranean slow-cooked stews or grilled dishes. Canned fish, like sardines and mackerel, are not only budget-friendly but also packed with omega-3s and calcium. It's a pantry staple in Mediterranean cooking, and it can be used in pasta, salads, or as a spread.

## **10. DIY Herb and Spice Garden**

Dried herbs often cost more than fresh, but you can grow your herb garden with seeds that cost just a few dollars. Herbs like basil, rosemary, oregano, thyme, and mint grow well in small pots, making it a low-cost investment. Herbs like oregano and thyme can be dried easily at home. Harvest, bundle, and hang them in a warm area to dry naturally. This allows you to save on store-bought dried herbs and make your own.

## **11. Utilize Leftovers Creatively**

Leftover grains, such as quinoa or rice, can be transformed into Mediterranean-inspired grain bowls with roasted vegetables, olive oil, and fresh herbs. Leftover hummus (which is so easy to make) can be used in creative ways, like in wraps, on sandwiches, or as a dressing for salads. There is no waste here!

## **12. Shop Online for Bulk Ingredients**

Online shopping often offers better deals on Mediterranean pantry essentials. Websites like Thrive Market, Amazon, and Vitacost often offer Mediterranean staples at prices lower than in-store prices. Bulk-buying clubs or co-ops typically provide exclusive discounts on products such as olive oil, spices, and vinegar. Check if there are any local groups you can join for discounts.

## **13. Opt for Store-Brand Products**

Many store brands offer products that are equivalent to premium Mediterranean items (like olive oil or balsamic vinegar). Often, the taste and quality are nearly identical to the name-brand products. Store brands of olive oil and vinegar are sometimes made by the same manufacturers that produce premium labels. If you are skeptical about quality, check the label for the country of origin; chances are it's sourced from the same place.

## Chapter 3: 30-Day Mediterranean Meal Plan



Over the years, I have learned that regardless of the diet you are trying to follow, whether it's Mediterranean or another approach, meal planning significantly increases your chances of success. When you have a solid plan laid out for the week (or the month), it's so much harder to get distracted by unhealthy, tempting options. You're not standing in front of the fridge, wondering what to eat, or grabbing fast food because you're too tired to think. You already have everything sorted for each day, and that makes sticking to your goals way easier and less stressful. That's precisely why I have included a complete 30-day meal plan in this chapter, to help you utilize all the recipes in a meaningful and organized way. You will get to enjoy all the variety the Mediterranean diet has to offer without getting bored or overwhelmed.

### *How to Plan for Success: Weekly Meal Prep Tips*

It felt overwhelming at first to stick to the Mediterranean diet, especially with my busy schedule. Between work, errands, and life happening nonstop, the idea of making fresh meals every day didn't seem realistic. But once I started meal prepping — chopping veggies ahead of time, cooking grains in bulk, and marinating proteins over the weekend — everything changed. It made Mediterranean cooking super stress-free and straightforward. Now, I can throw together a beautiful, balanced meal in minutes without feeling rushed or tempted to order takeout. Meal prepping turned what felt like a «chore» into a lifestyle that fits my routine, and it's made eating healthy much easier and a lot more enjoyable.

#### **Pick 3–4 Core Recipes**

Instead of trying to prepare a different meal every day, start with three or four base recipes that you enjoy. For example, you could pick a Mediterranean chickpea salad, a hearty lentil stew, baked salmon with herbs, and a tray of roasted vegetables. These meals are flexible, can be mixed and matched, and most importantly, they are simple to make in batches without getting boring.

#### **Prep Ingredients, Not Just Meals**

Meal prepping doesn't have to mean full, packaged meals lined up in containers. It's smarter (and easier) to focus on prepping ingredients. Chop up veggies like cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers. Wash your greens thoroughly and dry them properly. Cook grains like quinoa, bulgur, or brown rice. When these pieces are ready, throwing together a fresh salad or grain bowl becomes super quick.

#### **Batch Cook Protein**

Cooking your proteins ahead of time can be a significant time-saver. Grill or bake a whole batch of boneless chicken breasts, fish fillets, or even a tray of falafel at once. Season them simply with olive oil, lemon, salt, and pepper so that you can reuse them throughout the week. Toss them into a salad one day and wrap them in a pita the next. Having protein ready keeps your meals balanced and satisfying.

#### **Stock Up on Fresh Herbs**

Fresh herbs are magic in Mediterranean cooking. Parsley, mint, basil, dill, and oregano can transform a basic dish into something special. Wash and dry your herbs when you return home from the store, then wrap them in a slightly damp paper towel and store them in a container with a lid. This keeps them fresh for the week and makes it easy to add a handful to whatever you're cooking.

## **Make Your Sauces and Dressings**

The Mediterranean diet is all about big flavors, and a lot of them come from homemade sauces. Instead of buying bottled dressings, blend up a simple vinaigrette, pesto, tzatziki, or hummus at home. These sauces add flavor and variety to your meals, and having a few jars ready in the fridge makes it easy to upgrade any basic meal in seconds.

## **Use Glass Containers**

Invest in a set of clear glass containers for storage. They are safer for food than plastic, they don't hold onto smells, and most importantly, you can see everything you have prepped at a glance. No more mystery leftovers shoved to the back of the fridge!

## **Keep Snacks Ready**

Mediterranean eating isn't just about big meals; it's also about having smart snacks on hand. Pre-slice cucumbers, carrots, and bell peppers, and keep tubs of olives, roasted nuts, hummus, or Greek yogurt ready. This way, when you're hungry, you're reaching for something nourishing instead of junk food.

## **Plan for Leftovers**

When you cook, make a little extra intentionally. Tonight's grilled veggies can easily be tomorrow's salad ingredients. A batch of marinated chickpeas can fill a pita wrap the next day. Leftovers mean less cooking later and easier-to-build meals.

## *Tips for Eating Out Mediterranean-Style*

Eating out doesn't mean you have to ditch your Mediterranean lifestyle; you have to be smart about it. In the spirit of the Mediterranean way of life, food is meant to nourish both body and soul, no matter where you are. Eating out shouldn't be a source of stress but a continuation of that joyful, mindful approach to meals. With a few conscious choices, you can keep your plate fresh, vibrant, and accurate to the Mediterranean tradition, even when dining away from home.

### **Scan the menu for grilled, roasted, or baked dishes**

When you're eating out, the way your food is cooked matters extensively. Grilled, roasted, and baked options usually use less oil and fewer processed ingredients compared to fried or breaded dishes. Look for menu descriptions like "grilled chicken," "oven-roasted fish," or "baked eggplant" to keep your meal light, healthy, and packed with natural Mediterranean flavour.

### **Load up on veggies**

Vegetables are the heart of Mediterranean eating. Always ensure that at least half of your plate is filled with a variety of colorful vegetables. If your main dish doesn't have enough, consider ordering a vegetable side or a fresh salad to complement it. The more variety and color on your plate, the better you are sticking to true Mediterranean principles.

### **Start with healthy appetizers**

A key trick to Mediterranean dining is to fill up on the good stuff first. Order starters like hummus, baba ghanoush, tzatziki, marinated olives, or a fresh tomato and cucumber salad. These foods are loaded with healthy fats, fiber, and nutrients that help you feel full and satisfied before the heavier part of the meal even arrives.

### **Choose seafood when possible**

Seafood is a significant component of the Mediterranean diet, thanks to its heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids. Whenever possible, choose fish like salmon, sardines, sea bass, or shrimp. Bonus points if it's grilled or roasted! Seafood is a light but satisfying protein source that fits perfectly into the Mediterranean way of eating.

### **Swap sides smartly**

Many restaurants automatically pair meals with fries, mashed potatoes, or other high-carb options. Don't be shy about swapping! Ask for a side salad, sautéed greens, grilled vegetables, or brown rice instead. Small swaps like this keep your plate lighter, more nutritious, and in line with Mediterranean habits.

## Watch the dressings and sauces

A salad can go from healthy to heavy with just the wrong dressing. Creamy, sugary sauces can add extra calories and unwanted fats to your meal. Ask for dressings and sauces on the side so you can control how much you use. Olive oil, vinegar, and lemon are your best friends for keeping flavors fresh and Mediterranean-approved.

## Go easy on the breadbasket

It's okay to enjoy bread, especially if it's whole-grain or rustic country-style. But don't fill up on bread before your meal even starts. Stick to one or two small pieces and, if available, dip them in olive oil instead of slathering on butter. Remember, the Mediterranean diet includes bread, but it's eaten thoughtfully, not mindlessly.

## Stick with water, wine, or unsweetened tea

Sugary sodas and heavy cocktails don't fit the Mediterranean lifestyle. If you drink alcohol, a glass of red wine with your meal is more traditional. Otherwise, water with lemon, sparkling water, or unsweetened iced tea are refreshing choices that keep you hydrated and healthy.

## 30-Day Meal Plan

Days	Breakfasts	Lunches	Snacks	Dinner	Desserts
01	Salmon Sandwiches with Tomato	Couscous-Stuffed Tomatoes with Chickpeas and Zucchini	Pita Chips with Roasted Garlic and Za'atar Labneh	Clam Chowder	Honey Cake with Pistachios
02	Feta and Radish Toast	Calamari Marinara with Spaghetti	Mediterranean Caprese Skewers	Halibut with Roasted Red Pepper Coulis	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti
03	Sheet Pan Egg Tacos	Tomato Basil Pasta	Crispy Popcorn Chicken	Rustic Seafood Paella with Brown Rice	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
04	Blueberry Breakfast Parfait	Chicken Sausage and Feta Pasta	BBQ Roasted Chickpeas	Poached Whitefish in Tomato-Fennel Broth	Fig Cake with Honey
05	Salmon Hash with Eggs	Chicken Pesto Pasta with Asparagus	Blueberry Energy Bites	Parmesan Cod with Arugula	Crema Catalana
06	Herb Frittata with Crème Fraiche and Chives	Herbed Chicken Gyro Pita Pizza	Banana Blueberry Muffins	Black Rice with Shrimp and Zucchini	Honey Cake with Pistachios
07	Cheesy Avocado Omelet	Turkey Burgers with Tzatziki Sauce	Roasted Cashews	Swordfish a la Siciliana	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti
08	Greek Omelet with Zucchini	Spinach and Mushroom Tortellini Bake	Pinwheel Roll Ups	Tomato-Braised Cod with Bell Peppers	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
09	Salmon Sandwiches with Tomato	Spiced Chicken with Artichoke and Olive Ragout	Pita Chips with Roasted Garlic and Za'atar Labneh	Pesto-Crusted Grouper	Fig Cake with Honey
10	Feta and Radish Toast	Balsamic-Glazed Chicken Thighs with Roasted Red Peppers	Mediterranean Caprese Skewers	Lemony Shrimp Risotto	Crema Catalana
11	Sheet Pan Egg Tacos	Cumin-Roasted Beef Skewers	Crispy Popcorn Chicken	Baked Chicken Pie with Cheese	Honey Cake with Pistachios
12	Blueberry Breakfast Parfait	Sun-Dried Tomato and Basil Turkey Stir-Fry	BBQ Roasted Chickpeas	Eggplant Cheese Bake	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti

Days	Breakfasts	Lunches	Snacks	Dinner	Desserts
13	Salmon Hash with Eggs	Hasselback Caprese Chicken	Blueberry Energy Bites	Chicken Chimichangas	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
14	Herb Frittata with Crème Fraiche and Chives	Turkey Stuffed Pita	Banana Blueberry Muffins	Roasted Whole Chicken with Brown Gravy	Fig Cake with Honey
15	Cheesy Avocado Omelet	Chicken Kebabs	Roasted Cashews	Baked Ziti	Crema Catalana
16	Greek Omelet with Zucchini	Couscous-Stuffed Tomatoes with Chickpeas and Zucchini	Pinwheel Roll Ups	French Ratatouille	Honey Cake with Pistachios
17	Salmon Sandwiches with Tomato	Calamari Marinara with Spaghetti	Pita Chips with Roasted Garlic and Za'atar Labneh	Spanish Garlic Shrimp (Gambas al Ajillo)	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti
18	Feta and Radish Toast	Tomato Basil Pasta	Mediterranean Caprese Skewers	Lebanese Grilled Halloumi	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
19	Sheet Pan Egg Tacos	Chicken Sausage and Feta Pasta	Crispy Popcorn Chicken	Spanish Chorizo and Potatoes	Fig Cake with Honey
20	Blueberry Breakfast Parfait	Chicken Pesto Pasta with Asparagus	BBQ Roasted Chickpeas	Fattoush Nachos	Crema Catalana
21	Salmon Hash with Eggs	Herbed Chicken Gyro Pita Pizza	Blueberry Energy Bites	Baked Chicken Pie with Cheese	Honey Cake with Pistachios
22	Herb Frittata with Crème Fraiche and Chives	Turkey Burgers with Tzatziki Sauce	Banana Blueberry Muffins	Eggplant Cheese Bake	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti
23	Cheesy Avocado Omelet	Spinach and Mushroom Tortellini Bake	Roasted Cashews	Chicken Chimichangas	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
24	Greek Omelet with Zucchini	Spiced Chicken with Artichoke and Olive Ragout	Pinwheel Roll Ups	Roasted Whole Chicken with Brown Gravy	Fig Cake with Honey
25	Salmon Sandwiches with Tomato	Balsamic-Glazed Chicken Thighs with Roasted Red Peppers	Pita Chips with Roasted Garlic and Za'atar Labneh	Baked Ziti	Crema Catalana
26	Feta and Radish Toast	Cumin-Roasted Beef Skewers	Mediterranean Caprese Skewers	French Ratatouille	Honey Cake with Pistachios
27	Sheet Pan Egg Tacos	Sun-Dried Tomato and Basil Turkey Stir-Fry	Crispy Popcorn Chicken	Spanish Garlic Shrimp (Gambas al Ajillo)	Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti
28	Blueberry Breakfast Parfait	Hasselback Caprese Chicken	BBQ Roasted Chickpeas	Lebanese Grilled Halloumi	Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup
29	Salmon Hash with Eggs	Turkey Stuffed Pita	Blueberry Energy Bites	Spanish Chorizo and Potatoes	Fig Cake with Honey
30	Herb Frittata with Crème Fraiche and Chives	Chicken Kebabs	Banana Blueberry Muffins	Fattoush Nachos	Crema Catalana

## *Chapter 4: Wholesome Morning Meals*



# Salmon Sandwiches with Tomato

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. Brush bread slices with 2 teaspoons of olive oil.
3. Take a rimmed baking sheet of suitable-size and place the slices in it.
4. Toast the bread slices in the oven for 5 minutes until they are crispy and golden brown.
5. Place 4 toasted bread slices on the 4 servings plates.
6. Divide arugula over the toast then add 2 tomato slices, 2 salmon slices, and ¼ onion over each bottom half of the sandwich.
7. Add black pepper and salt on top, then place the remaining halves of bread slices over this filling.
8. Serve fresh and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
7 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 8 multigrain bread slices
- 4 tsps. olive oil
- 4 slices of smoked salmon
- 2 cups of fresh arugula leaves
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 medium tomato, cut into 8 thin slices
- ⅛ tsp. kosher salt
- Black pepper, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 401 | Total Fat: 13g | Sodium: 576mg | Total Carbohydrates: 47.5g | Fibers 8.1g | Sugars: 4.4g | Protein: 16.6g

# Feta and Radish Toast

## Instructions

1. Set a large-sized skillet over high heat.
2. Brush the bread slices with olive oil and toast them in the skillet for 2-3 minutes per side until golden brown.
3. Add feta cheese and milk to a blender and blend for 30 seconds until smooth.
4. Spread this feta mixture over the toast slices.
5. Top these slices with radishes, radish or broccoli sprouts, olive oil, salt, and black pepper.
6. Serve and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
6 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 3 oz. of reduced-fat feta cheese, cut into pieces
- 2 tbsps. low-fat milk
- 4 thick slices of sourdough bread
- 2 tsps. olive oil
- 1 medium watermelon radish, very thinly sliced
- 2 red radishes, thinly sliced
- ½ cup radish or broccoli sprouts
- Olive oil, for serving
- Kosher salt, for serving
- Black pepper, for serving

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 278 | Total Fat: 9.4g | Sodium: 995mg | Total Carbohydrates: 40.2g | Fibers 8.7g | Sugars: 13.4g | Protein: 37g

# Sheet Pan Egg Tacos

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to broiler settings.
2. Mix tomatillos and jalapenos with a pinch of salt and oil on a rimmed baking sheet.
3. Broil the tomatillos for 10 minutes on the top rack of the oven, then transfer them to a blender.
4. Add cilantro, ¼ tsp. salt, and lime juice to the blender, then blend this mixture until smooth.
5. Meanwhile, place the tortillas on another large-sized baking sheet.
6. Top each of these tortillas with ¼ cup of cheese and create a small well at the center of this cheese.
7. Crack one egg in each well, then broil the tortillas for 6 minutes on the middle rack of the oven.
8. Divide the tomatillo salsa on top of the tortillas and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
16 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 8 oz. tomatillos (10 small), husks discarded
- 1 jalapeño, halved and seeded
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 8 small corn tortillas
- 6 oz. reduced-fat Cheddar cheese, grated
- 8 large eggs
- 2 cups of fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsps. lime juice

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 435 | Total Fat: 19.7g | Sodium: 469mg | Total Carbohydrates: 27.7g | Fibers 5g | Sugars: 2.3g | Protein: 26.9g

# Blueberry Breakfast Parfait

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 360° F.
2. Toss all the granola ingredients in a bowl and spread the mixture on a baking tray.
3. Bake this granola for 10 minutes until golden brown.
4. Remove it from the oven, then allow it to chill.
5. For parfaits, divide the granola into 6 parfait bowls.
6. Add a layer of yogurt by dividing half of it on top of the granola layer in the bowls.
7. Top the granola with blueberries by dividing amongst the bowls.
8. Add the remaining yogurt to the top of the berries then garnish with the remaining berries.
9. Serve and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
25 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

### For the nut granola

- 2 cups of mixed nuts
- 1 tbsp. flax seed linseeds
- 1 tbsp. sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp. chia seeds
- 2 tbsps. pumpkin seeds
- 2 tsps. coconut oil melted
- 1-2 tbsps. honey
- A pinch of salt
- 2 cups of frozen blueberries
- 3 cups plain Greek yogurt
- Fresh blueberries, to garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 443 | Total Fat: 33.5g | Sodium: 176mg | Total Carbohydrates: 31.3g | Fibers 5.7g | Sugars: 5g | Protein: 10.2g

# Salmon Hash with Eggs

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400° F.
2. Toss diced potatoes with olive oil, smoked paprika, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper.
3. Roast in the oven for 25-30 minutes, flipping halfway, or pan-fry for 10-15 minutes until golden and crispy.
4. Heat butter or olive oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat.
5. Crack the eggs and cook until the whites are set but the yolk remains runny.
6. Place crispy potatoes on a plate.
7. Top with chopped smoked salmon.
8. Gently place the fried eggs on top.
9. Garnish with fresh dill or parsley and capers if using.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 medium potatoes, diced into small cubes
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 3 ½ oz. smoked salmon, roughly chopped
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tbsp. butter or olive oil (for frying eggs)
- 1 tbsp. fresh dill or parsley, chopped (optional)
- 1 tbsp. capers (optional, for extra flavour)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 378 | Total Fat: 12.9g | Sodium: 696mg | Total Carbohydrates: 35.2g | Fibers 2.1g | Sugars: 5.2g | Protein: 20.3g

# Herb Frittata with Crème Fraiche and Chives

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Mix the crème fraiche with chives in a bowl and chill it.
3. Blend scallions, parsley, cilantro, and dill with two tablespoons of oil in a blender until finely chopped.
4. Beat eggs in a bowl and stir in the parsley mixture.
5. Add black pepper and salt to the eggs and mix well.
6. Place a medium-sized skillet over medium heat and grease it with 2 tablespoon oil.
7. Pour in the egg mixture and cook for 2 minutes.
8. Cover the frittata and bake it in the oven for 20 minutes.
9. Slice and serve warm with crème fraiche mixture.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
22 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- ¼ cup crème fraiche
- 2 tbsps. chopped chives
- 6 large eggs
- 6 scallions, cut into 1-in. pieces
- 2 cups flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
- 2 cups cilantro leaves and tender stems, chopped
- ½ cup dill fronds, chopped
- 4 tbsps. olive oil
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 255 | Total Fat: 23.3g | Sodium: 154mg | Total Carbohydrates: 3g | Fibers 0.6g | Sugars: 1.2g | Protein: 10.4g

# Cheesy Avocado Omelet

## Instructions

1. Sauté the onion in oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium heat for 5 minutes.
2. Add black pepper, salt, tomatoes, and mushrooms, then cook for 4 minutes.
3. Stir in spinach and cook until the leaves are wilted.
4. Add the eggs and egg whites to this skillet and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly.
5. Stir in the avocado and cook for 3 minutes without stirring.
6. Spread cheese over the omelet.
7. Garnish the omelet with parsley.
8. Serve and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
13 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- 6 cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup baby spinach
- 4 large eggs
- 2 egg whites
- 2 oz. Reduced-fat sharp Cheddar, grated
- 1 cup tomatoes, sliced
- ½ small avocado, peeled, pitted, and sliced
- ¼ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 352 | Total Fat: 22g | Sodium: 300mg | Total Carbohydrates: 10g | Fibers 4.4g | Sugars: 7g | Protein: 32g

# Greek Omelet with Zucchini

## Instructions

1. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil to a suitable-sized skillet and place it over medium heat.
2. Stir in zucchini slices and sear them for 2-3 minutes per side until golden brown.
3. Transfer the zucchini slices to a plate.
4. Beat eggs with black pepper, mint, and salt in a bowl.
5. Pour the remaining oil and eggs into the skillet, then add the zucchini slices on top.
6. Cook for 1-2 minutes, until the eggs are set. Then, flip and cook for an additional 2 minutes.
7. Garnish with feta cheese and serve.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 2 small or 1 large zucchini
- 4 eggs
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 5 leaves of fresh mint, chopped
- ¼ cup feta cheese

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 333 | Total Fat: 17g | Sodium: 344mg | Total Carbohydrates: 5.4g | Fibers 1.3g | Sugars: 3.5g | Protein: 15.2g

## *Chapter 5: Light & Wholesome Lunches*



# Couscous-Stuffed Tomatoes with Chickpeas and Zucchini

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375° F.
2. Slice the tops off the tomatoes and scoop out the pulp, leaving the shells intact.
3. Chop the pulp and set aside.
4. Place the couscous in a bowl and pour the boiling vegetable broth over it.
5. Cover and let sit for 5 minutes, then fluff with a fork.
6. In a pan, heat olive oil over medium heat.
7. Sauté zucchini and garlic for 3 minutes until softened.
8. Stir in the chickpeas, chopped tomato pulp, oregano, salt, and black pepper, and cook for another 5 minutes.
9. Remove from heat and mix in couscous and parsley.
10. Stuff each tomato with the couscous mixture and place in a baking dish.
11. Bake for 15 minutes. If using feta cheese, sprinkle it over the tops in the last 5 minutes of baking.
12. Serve warm, garnished with extra parsley if desired.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 large tomatoes
- ½ cup couscous
- ½ cup boiling vegetable broth
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ small zucchini, finely diced
- 1 can (14 oz.) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 287 | Total Fat: 6.4g | Sodium: 460mg | Total Carbohydrate: 48.2g | Dietary Fiber: 8.9g | Total Sugars: 9.7g | Protein: 11.6g

# Calamari Marinara with Spaghetti

## Instructions

1. Set a medium-sized saucepan over medium-high heat and add oil to preheat.
2. Add onions, anchovy filets, chili pepper, garlic, red pepper flakes, and salt.
3. Sauté this mixture for 4 minutes.
4. Add wine to the veggies and cook on a simmer for 5 minutes.
5. Stir in tomatoes, clam juice, and oregano, then cook to a boil.
6. Reduce the stove's heat to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes.
7. Add calamari and cook for 45 minutes on a simmer.
8. Meanwhile, bring salted water to a boil in a large pot.
9. Add spaghetti to this water and cook for 12 minutes, then drain.
10. Divide the boiled spaghetti into the serving bowls.
11. Add parsley to the calamari marinara, mix well, and divide it on top of the spaghetti.
12. Garnish with grated cheese and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
1 hr. 24 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 serrano chili pepper, thinly sliced
- 3 garlic cloves, crushed or minced
- 1 anchovy fillet
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 cup clam juice
- 6 cups crushed or pureed tomatoes
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- 2 lbs. of frozen calamari, thawed, sliced into ½-inch pieces
- ¼ cup Italian parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 (16 oz.) pack dried pasta

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 373 | Total Fat: 9.3g | Sodium: 470mg | Total Carbohydrates: 55.9g | Dietary Fiber: 3.4g | Sugars: 6.5g | Protein: 15.1g

# Tomato Basil Pasta

## Instructions

1. Add pasta, broth, water, tomatoes, Italian seasoning, oil, garlic powder, onion powder, red pepper, and salt to a large pot.
2. Place this pot over high heat and cook the pasta to a boil.
3. Reduce the stove's heat to medium-high and cook for 10 minutes.
4. Stir in and cook for an additional 7 minutes.
5. Garnish with basil and parmesan.
6. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
27 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 8 oz. whole-wheat rotini
- 1 cup of water
- 2 cups of low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 (15 oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 1½ tsps. Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper
- ½ cup basil
- Grated low-fat Parmesan cheese for garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 375 | Total Fat: 12.9g | Sodium: 1067mg | Total Carbohydrates: 49.8g | Dietary Fiber: 4.4g | Sugars: 6.5g | Protein: 16.3g

# Chicken Sausage and Feta Pasta

## Instructions

1. Set a large-sized skillet over medium-high heat and add oil to preheat.
2. Toss in onion, garlic, and sausage, then sauté for 6 minutes.
3. Stir in tomato sauce, spinach, pasta, and olives. Cook for 5 minutes.
4. Add 2 tbsps. of water, then garnish with feta and basil.
5. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
11 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 3 links (9 oz.) cooked chicken sausage, sliced
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 (8 oz.) can low-sodium tomato sauce
- 4 cups of lightly packed baby spinach
- 6 cups whole-wheat rotini pasta, cooked
- ¼ cup pitted Kalamata olives, chopped
- ½ cup low-fat feta cheese, finely crumbled
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 527 | Total Fat: 17.6g | Sodium: 741mg | Total Carbohydrates: 73.3g | Dietary Fiber: 10.7g | Sugars: 7.5g | Protein: 18.8g

# Chicken Pesto Pasta with Asparagus

## Instructions

1. Add pasta to a large pot filled with water and cook for 10 minutes until tender.
2. Stir in asparagus during the last 2 minutes of cooking. Keep  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of cooking water aside.
3. Drain the pasta and asparagus in a strainer, then return them to the pot.
4. Add reserved cooking water, chicken, pesto, black pepper, and salt, and cook for 1 minute.
5. Garnish with Parmesan and basil.
6. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
11 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 8 oz. whole-wheat penne
- 1 lb. fresh asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 3 cups cooked chicken breast, shredded
- 1 (7 oz.) jar basil pesto
- 1 tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. black pepper
- 1 oz. Parmesan cheese, grated
- Small fresh basil leaves for garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 466 | Total Fat: 17.8g | Sodium: 845mg | Total Carbohydrates: 52.8g | Dietary Fiber: 10g | Sugars: 2.1g | Protein: 36.2g

# Herbed Chicken Gyro Pita Pizza

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 425°F. Place pita breads on a baking sheet.
2. In a bowl, mix shredded chicken with olive oil, oregano, cumin, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper.
3. Spread mozzarella cheese over each pita, then top with seasoned chicken, feta cheese, and cherry tomatoes.
4. Bake for 10-12 minutes until the cheese is bubbly and the pita is crispy.
5. Remove from oven and top with red onion, and a drizzle of tzatziki sauce. Garnish with fresh parsley.
6. Slice and serve warm!



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
12 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 2 pita breads (or naan)
- 1 cup cooked, shredded chicken
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup tzatziki sauce
- 1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 437 | Total Fat: 16.8g | Sodium: 580mg | Total Carbohydrate: 38.4g | Dietary Fiber: 3.1g | Total Sugars: 4.6g | Protein: 28.2g

# Turkey Burgers with Tzatziki Sauce

## Instructions

1. Heat your grill pan over a medium-high heat.
2. In a suitable mixing bowl, combine the ground turkey, oregano, thyme, garlic powder, salt, pepper, olive oil, and lemon juice.
3. Mix the ingredients until well combined and then shape the mixture into a burger patty.
4. Grill the turkey burger for 3-4 minutes per side or until fully cooked.
5. Toast the hamburger bun and prepare the toppings with cucumber slices, tomato slices, and a leaf of lettuce.
6. Once the turkey burger is cooked, assemble the burger with the toppings.
7. Serve hot and enjoy!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
8 minutes



**Serves:**  
1

## Ingredients

- ¼ lb. ground turkey
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano
- ¼ tsp. dried thyme
- ¼ tsp. garlic powder
- ⅛ tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 small whole-wheat hamburger bun
- 2 slices of cucumber
- 2 slices of tomato
- 1 leaf of lettuce

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 557 | Total Fat: 23.4g | Sodium: 660mg | Total Carbohydrates: 57.6g | Dietary Fiber: 8.7g |  
Total Sugars: 16.7g | Protein: 41.2g

## *Chapter 6: Evening Meals for Comfort and Balance*



# Spiced Chicken with Artichoke and Olive Ragout

## Instructions

1. Pat the chicken dry and rub with cumin, paprika, coriander, salt, and pepper.
2. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium-high heat. Sear the chicken thighs skin-side down for 5 minutes until golden brown. Flip and cook for another 3 minutes, then transfer to a plate.
3. In the same pan, heat olive oil and sauté the onion until soft. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Stir in tomatoes, chicken broth, artichokes, olives, oregano, and red pepper flakes. Simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Return the chicken to the pan, cover, and simmer for 25 minutes until cooked through. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### For the Chicken:

- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. olive oil

### For the Artichoke and Olive Ragout:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 can (14 oz) diced tomatoes
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 1 can (14 oz) artichoke hearts, drained and halved
- ½ cup mixed olives, pitted and sliced
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 tbsps. fresh parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 397 | Total Fat: 22.6g | Sodium: 680mg | Total Carbohydrate: 18.2g | Dietary Fiber: 5.3g | Total Sugars: 5.8g | Protein: 34.7g

# Balsamic-Glazed Chicken Thighs with Roasted Red Peppers

## Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Season the chicken thighs with salt and pepper.
2. Heat olive oil in an oven-safe pan over medium heat. Sear the chicken skin-side down for 5 minutes until golden brown, then flip and cook for another 3 minutes.
3. In a bowl, mix balsamic vinegar, honey, garlic, thyme, and red pepper flakes. Pour over the chicken and arrange sliced red peppers around it.
4. Transfer the pan to the oven and roast for 20 minutes until the chicken is cooked through and the glaze is slightly thickened.
5. Remove from the oven, garnish with fresh basil, and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp. honey
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 large red bell peppers, sliced
- 1 tbsp. fresh basil, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 415 | Total Fat: 17.8g | Sodium: 420mg | Total Carbohydrate: 18.9g | Dietary Fiber: 3.1g |  
Total Sugars: 12.2g | Protein: 32.4g

# Cumin-Roasted Beef Skewers

## Instructions

1. In a bowl, mix olive oil, cumin, paprika, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Toss the beef cubes in the mixture, ensuring they are well coated. Cover and marinate for 30 minutes.
2. Preheat the grill or broiler to medium-high heat. Thread the marinated beef onto the soaked skewers.
3. Grill for 8–10 minutes, turning occasionally, until the beef is nicely charred and cooked to your desired doneness.
4. Serve the beef skewers hot.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 lb. of beef sirloin, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 8 wooden skewers (soaked in water for 30 minutes)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 317 | Total Fat: 17.4g | Sodium: 420mg | Total Carbohydrate: 5.2g | Dietary Fiber: 0.8g | Total Sugars: 3.1g | Protein: 32.9g

# Sun-Dried Tomato and Basil Turkey Stir-Fry

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook until softened, about 2 minutes.
2. Add turkey slices and cook for 4–5 minutes until lightly browned. Stir in garlic, sun-dried tomatoes, balsamic vinegar, chicken broth, red pepper flakes, salt, and black pepper.
3. Simmer for 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the turkey is fully cooked and the flavors are well combined.
4. Remove from heat and stir in fresh basil. Serve immediately.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 lb. of turkey breast, sliced
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ small onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- ½ cup chicken broth
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ cup fresh basil leaves, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 381 | Total Fat: 9.6g | Sodium: 450mg | Total Carbohydrate: 10.3g | Dietary Fiber: 2.1g | Total Sugars: 6.5g | Protein: 38.2g

# Hasselback Caprese Chicken

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. Using a sharp knife, make several deep slits across each chicken breast, being careful not to cut all the way through.
3. Stuff each chicken slit with a slice of mozzarella cheese, a slice of Roma tomato, zucchini and a fresh basil leaf.
4. In a suitable bowl, whisk minced garlic, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, dried oregano, salt, and black pepper.
5. Brush the prepared garlic mixture evenly over the top of each chicken breast, ensuring a thorough coating on all of them.
6. Bake the prepared chicken breasts in the preheated oven for 30 minutes.
7. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 4 oz. fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced into four rounds
- 1 Roma tomato, sliced into four rounds
- 6 fresh basil leaves
- 1 zucchini, sliced (optional)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- Black pepper and salt, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 492 | Total Fat: 14.3g | Sodium: 645mg | Total Carbohydrates: 17.8g | Dietary Fiber: 5.4g | Sugars: 9.1g | Protein: 43.4g

# Turkey Stuffed Pita

## Instructions

1. In a bowl, mix olive oil, garlic powder, paprika, salt, pepper, and lemon juice.
2. Coat the turkey breast fillets with this marinade and let them sit for at least 15 minutes.
3. Heat a grill pan or outdoor grill over medium-high heat.
4. Cook the turkey for about 5-7 minutes per side until golden brown and fully cooked.
5. Let it rest for a few minutes, then slice into strips.
6. Lightly heat the pita bread in a dry pan or microwave for a few seconds, then cut in half to create pockets.
7. Fill each pita with lettuce, cucumber, tomato, red onion, and the grilled turkey strips.

Drizzle with Greek yogurt or tzatziki and savor the flavor!



**Prep Time:**  
30 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
16 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 large turkey breast fillets (boneless, skinless)
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika (for extra flavour)
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 4 pita breads
- 1 cup lettuce, chopped
- 1 medium cucumber, sliced
- 1 medium tomato, sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup Greek yogurt or tzatziki (for serving)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 320 | Total Fat: 8.2g | Sodium: 450mg | Total Carbohydrates: 35g | Dietary Fiber: 3.2g | Sugars: 4.1g | Protein: 32g

# Chicken Kebabs

## Instructions

1. Mix all the marinade ingredients in a small bowl.
2. Toss chicken with onion and peppers in a bowl.
3. Pour the prepared marinade over the chicken, mix well, cover, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
4. Thread the chicken on the skewers.
5. Preheat a grill or grill pan on medium-high heat.
6. Grease the grill or grill pan, then grill for 15 minutes, flipping once halfway through cooking.
7. Serve the skewers with your favorite sauce.
8. Enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
40 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 2 boneless chicken breasts cut into cubes

### Marinade

- 2 tsps. sweet paprika
- 1 tsp. Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp. cardamon
- 1 tsp. salt
- 3 garlic cloves chopped
- 1 lemon juiced
- ½ cup olive oil

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 412 | Total Fat: 13.1g | Sodium: 1377mg | Total Carbohydrates: 20.3g | Dietary Fiber: 3.4g | Sugars: 13.4g | Protein: 49.4g

## *Chapter 7: Fresh & Flavorful Salads*



# Heirloom Tomato and Burrata Basil Salad

## Instructions

1. Arrange the heirloom tomato slices on a serving platter.
2. Gently tear the burrata and place it over the tomatoes.
3. Scatter the fresh basil leaves on top.
4. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic glaze, then sprinkle with salt and black pepper.
5. Serve immediately with crusty bread or as a refreshing side dish.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 3 large heirloom tomatoes, sliced
- 1 ball (8 oz.) burrata cheese
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- 2 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. balsamic glaze
- ½ tsp. flaky sea salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 210 | Total Fat: 16.8g | Sodium: 320mg | Total Carbohydrate: 6.9g | Dietary Fiber: 1.5g | Total Sugars: 4.1g | Protein: 8.3g

# Lemony Artichoke and Olive Salad

## Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine the artichokes, olives, capers, red onion, parsley, and feta.
2. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, garlic, oregano, and black pepper.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.
4. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving to allow the flavors to meld.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 can (14 oz.) artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- 1/3 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
- 1/3 cup green olives, pitted and halved
- 2 tbsps. capers, drained
- 1/4 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled

### For the Dressing:

- 3 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsps. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 187 | Total Fat: 13.4g | Sodium: 420mg | Total Carbohydrate: 10.2g | Dietary Fiber: 3.8g | Total Sugars: 2.7g | Protein: 4.2g

# Spinach & Grilled Chicken Salad with Pomegranate

## Instructions

1. Season chicken breasts with salt, black pepper, and oregano.
2. Grill over medium heat for 4-5 minutes per side or until fully cooked.
3. Let rest for a few minutes, then slice into strips.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, Dijon mustard, salt, and black pepper.
5. Place baby spinach in a large bowl.
6. Add sliced grilled chicken and sprinkle with pomegranate seeds.
7. Drizzle dressing over the salad and toss gently.
8. Optionally, sprinkle toasted sesame seeds on top for extra crunch.
9. Serve immediately and enjoy!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh baby spinach
- 2 chicken breasts, sliced
- 1/3 cup pomegranate seeds
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. honey
- 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp. Toasted sesame seeds (optional)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 280 | Total Fat: 14g | Sodium: 160mg | Total Carbohydrate: 10g | Dietary Fiber: 3g | Total Sugars: 2.3g | Protein: 30g

# Crispy Chickpea and Kale Caesar

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Toss chickpeas with olive oil, garlic powder, smoked paprika, and salt.
2. Spread the mixture on a baking tray and roast for 20 minutes, shaking the tray halfway through.
3. In a large bowl, massage the chopped kale with a drizzle of olive oil for 2 minutes to soften the leaves.
4. In a small bowl, mix Greek yogurt, olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, garlic, Worcestershire sauce, and black pepper to make the dressing.
5. Toss the kale with the dressing, then top with crispy chickpeas, shaved Parmesan, and seeds. Serve immediately!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### For the Crispy Chickpeas:

- 1 can (14 oz.) chickpeas, drained, rinsed, and patted dry
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp. salt

### For the Salad:

- 6 cups of kale, chopped and tough stems removed
- ½ cup shaved Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds

### For the Dressing:

- ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 267 | Total Fat: 14.5g | Sodium: 340mg | Total Carbohydrate: 22.9g | Dietary Fiber: 5.8g | Total Sugars: 3.4g | Protein: 11.2g

# Avocado and Citrus Mediterranean Salad

## Instructions

1. Arrange orange and grapefruit slices on a serving plate. Add avocado, red onion, and olives.
2. Sprinkle with crumbled feta and fresh mint.
3. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, honey, salt, and black pepper.
4. Drizzle dressing and almonds over the salad and serve immediately!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 large oranges, peeled and sliced
- 1 large grapefruit, peeled and sliced
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- ⅓ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tbsps. fresh mint or basil, chopped

### For the Dressing:

- 3 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. honey or maple syrup
- ¼ tsp. sea salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- Almonds, to garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 237 | Total Fat: 17.1g | Sodium: 290mg | Total Carbohydrate: 18.6g | Dietary Fiber: 5.1g | Total Sugars: 12.2g | Protein: 4.5g

# Watermelon, Feta, and Mint Refresher

## Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine watermelon, feta, mint, red onion, and olives.
2. Drizzle with balsamic glaze and olive oil.
3. Gently toss to combine and serve immediately!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 cups watermelon, cubed
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved
- 2 tbsps. balsamic glaze (for drizzling)
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 157 | Total Fat: 9.2g | Sodium: 290mg | Total Carbohydrate: 14.7g | Dietary Fiber: 1.2g | Total Sugars: 11.3g | Protein: 4.3g

# Stuffed Grape Leaves Salad

## Instructions

1. Arrange mixed greens on a serving platter and top with stuffed grape leaves, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, feta, and olives.
2. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, red wine vinegar, oregano, and black pepper.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and serve immediately!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 6 stuffed grape leaves (dolmades), sliced
- 2 cups mixed greens (arugula, romaine, or spinach)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved

### For the Dressing:

- 3 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 318 | Total Fat: 13.6g | Sodium: 320mg | Total Carbohydrate: 17.4g | Dietary Fiber: 3.8g | Total Sugars: 5.1g | Protein: 5.2g

# Smoked Salmon and Endive Salad

## Instructions

1. Arrange endive leaves on a serving platter.
2. Place a small piece of smoked salmon onto each leaf and top with red onion, capers, and fresh dill.
3. If using, add a small dollop of cream cheese or crème fraîche.
4. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, and black pepper.
5. Drizzle the dressing over the endive and salmon, then garnish with lemon zest. Serve immediately!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 endive heads, leaves separated
- 6 oz smoked salmon, thinly sliced
- ¼ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp. capers
- ¼ cup fresh dill, chopped
- ¼ cup cream cheese or crème fraîche
- 1 tsp. lemon zest

### For the Dressing:

- 2 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp. Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 196 | Total Fat: 13.4g | Sodium: 450mg | Total Carbohydrate: 5.8g | Dietary Fiber: 1.6g | Total Sugars: 2.4g | Protein: 13.2g

# Carrot, Orange, and Olive Salad

## Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine carrots, orange segments, olives, parsley, and toasted almonds.
2. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, orange juice, red wine vinegar, cumin, salt, and black pepper.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss gently to combine.
4. Serve immediately or chill for 10 minutes for enhanced flavor.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 3 large carrots, shredded or julienned
- 2 oranges, peeled and segmented
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tbsps. toasted almonds (optional, for crunch)

### For the Dressing:

- 3 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. fresh orange juice
- 1 tsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 189 | Total Fat: 12.4g | Sodium: 260mg | Total Carbohydrate: 16.2g | Dietary Fiber: 4.1g | Total Sugars: 9.7g | Protein: 2.8g

# Herbed Bulgur Salad with Pomegranate Molasses

## Instructions

1. Add bulgur to a cooking pot and pour in water to cover it.
2. Boil the water and let the bulgur cook for 15 minutes. Drain and transfer to a bowl.
3. Mix bulgur with parsley, mint, pomegranate seeds, walnuts, and red onion.
4. In a small bowl, mix olive oil, pomegranate molasses, lemon juice, cumin, salt, and black pepper.
5. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss to combine.
6. Serve immediately or chill for enhanced flavor.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup of bulgur wheat
- 1 ½ cups boiling water
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
- ½ cup pomegranate seeds
- ¼ cup toasted walnuts, chopped
- ¼ small red onion, finely diced

### For the Dressing:

- 3 tbsps. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsps. pomegranate molasses
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 411 | Total Fat: 12.1g | Sodium: 120mg | Total Carbohydrate: 29.8g | Dietary Fiber: 5.2g | Total Sugars: 6.3g | Protein: 5.4g

## *Chapter 8: Smart Snacks for Busy Days*



# Pita Chips with Roasted Garlic and Za'atar Labneh

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Slice the top off the garlic head, drizzle with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, wrap in foil, and roast for 30 minutes, or until soft. Let them cool, then squeeze out the roasted garlic.
2. For the pita chips, toss pita triangles with olive oil, salt, and sumac.
3. Arrange on a baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes until golden and crispy.
4. In a bowl, mix labneh, roasted garlic, lemon juice, and salt until smooth.
5. Transfer labneh to a serving dish, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with za'atar.
6. Serve with warm pita chips for dipping.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
40 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### For the Pita Chips:

- 2 large pita breads, cut into triangles
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. ground sumac

### For the Roasted Garlic Za'atar Labneh:

- 1 head of garlic
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup labneh (or thick Greek yogurt)
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. za'atar spice blend
- 1 tbsp. olive oil (for drizzling)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 227 | Total Fat: 11.4g | Sodium: 300mg | Total Carbohydrate: 22.8g | Dietary Fiber: 2.7g | Total Sugars: 2.9g | Protein: 6.2g

# Mediterranean Caprese Skewers

## Instructions

1. Thread the ingredients onto skewers in the following order: a green olive, a basil leaf, a mozzarella ball, a cherry tomato, a radish slice, and a red bell pepper. Repeat until the skewer is full.
2. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic glaze (if using).
3. Sprinkle with salt and black pepper.
4. Serve & Enjoy:



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
0 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 16 mini mozzarella balls (bocconcini)
- 16 cherry tomatoes (red and yellow)
- 8 radishes, sliced
- 16 fresh basil leaves
- 8 pitted green olives
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped into squares
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. balsamic glaze (optional)
- Salt & black pepper to taste
- 8 small wooden skewers

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 120 | Total Fat: 8g | Sodium: 380mg | Total Carbohydrate: 5g | Dietary Fiber: 2.3g | Total Sugars: 1.6g | Protein: 6g

# Crispy Popcorn Chicken

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
2. Place a cooling rack on a baking sheet and grease it with non-stick spray.
3. Mix chicken with garlic, buttermilk, basil, oregano, cayenne pepper, thyme, black pepper, and salt in a large bowl.
4. Cover this chicken and marinate it for 30 minutes.
5. Remove the chicken from this marinade and coat the chicken pieces with crushed potato chips.
6. Spread the coated chicken pieces onto a baking sheet and drizzle butter on top.
7. Bake the chicken for 25 minutes in your preheated oven until golden brown.
8. Garnish with parsley and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
40 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- 1½ lbs. of skinless, boneless chicken thighs cut into 1-inch chunks
- 2 cups reduced-fat buttermilk
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt and black pepper, to taste
- 3 cups crushed potato chips.
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tbsps. fresh parsley leaves, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 307 | Total Fat: 17.7g | Sodium: 262mg | Total Carbohydrates: 2.8g | Dietary Fiber: 0.7g | Sugars: 1.1g | Protein: 33.1g

# BBQ Roasted Chickpeas

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Rinse, drain, and pat dry the chickpeas, then toss them with avocado oil, maple syrup, paprika, chili powder, garlic powder, salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper in a bowl.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the chickpeas on the baking sheet.
4. Bake these chickpeas for 45 minutes in the preheated oven.
5. Allow the chickpeas to cool and serve.
6. Enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
45 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- 1 (15 oz.) can chickpeas, drained and dried
- 1 tbsp. avocado oil
- 2 tsps. maple syrup
- 1½ tsps. smoked paprika
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- ¾ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. sea salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 271 | Total Fat: 4.7g | Sodium: 100mg | Total Carbohydrates: 45.5g | Dietary Fiber: 12.9g | Sugars: 9.1g | Protein: 13.9g

# Blueberry Energy Bites

## Instructions

1. Mix oats with flaxseed, chia seeds, salt, and cinnamon in a large bowl.
2. Melt almond butter in a small bowl by heating it for 60 seconds in the microwave on medium-low heat.
3. Stir in vanilla, honey, and coconut extract and mix well.
4. Pour this mixture over the oat mixture and mix again.
5. Fold in blueberries and coconut, then mix well.
6. Take two tablespoons of this mixture at a time and roll it into a ball.
7. Make more coconut balls in the same way.
8. Keep them in an airtight container until ready to serve.
9. Serve.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
1 minutes



**Serves:**  
8

## Ingredients

- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¼ cup ground flaxseed meal
- 2 tbsps. chia seeds
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- A pinch of sea salt
- ½ cup creamy almond butter
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. coconut extract
- ¼ cup dried blueberries
- ¼ cup sweetened flaked coconut

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 198 | Total Fat: 12.3g | Sodium: 90mg | Total Carbohydrates: 20.5g | Dietary Fiber: 6.3g | Sugars: 10.5g | Protein: 6.2g

# Banana Blueberry Muffins

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Grease a medium-sized muffin tin with cooking spray or line it with muffin cups.
3. Mix the whole-wheat flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon in a bowl.
4. Combine the mashed banana, honey, applesauce, egg, and vanilla extract in another bowl.
5. Stir in the dry flour mixture and mix until just combined.
6. Fold in the blueberries and mix evenly
7. Pour the batter evenly into the muffin tin, filling each cup about  $\frac{2}{3}$  full.
8. Bake the muffins for 20 minutes, then let them cool.
9. Serve once cooled.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole-wheat flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 ripe banana, mashed
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh blueberries

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 335 | Total Fat: 8.6g | Sodium: 856mg | Total Carbohydrates: 6.9g | Dietary Fiber: 3.4g | Sugars: 1.5g | Protein: 9.1g

# Roasted Cashews

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Toss the cashews with coconut oil, curry powder, cumin, turmeric, salt, and black pepper in a bowl.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread the cashews on the baking sheet.
4. Bake the cashews for 12 minutes in the preheated oven.
5. Allow the cashews to cool and serve.
6. Enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
12 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup raw cashews
- 1 tbsp. coconut oil
- 1 tsp. curry powder
- ½ tsp. cumin
- ¼ tsp. turmeric
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 239 | Total Fat: 4.9g | Sodium: 302mg | Total Carbohydrates: 19.2g | Dietary Fiber: 2.4g | Sugars: 2.2g | Protein: 3.9g

# Pinwheel Roll Ups

## Instructions

1. Set a large skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Toast the whole-wheat wraps in this skillet for 2 minutes per side.
3. Place both the whole-wheat wraps on your working surface and spread hummus on top.
4. Add ½ of the cucumber, olives, tomatoes, and red pepper to one side of both wraps, leaving a 1-inch border around the edges.
5. Wrap each roll tightly and cut it into slices 1-2 inches thick. Garnish with dill.
6. Serve.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
4 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- 2 medium whole-wheat wraps
- ½ cup hummus
- 1 medium cucumber, sliced
- ¼ cup black olives, sliced
- ½ cup grape tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup roasted red peppers, sliced
- Fresh dill, chopped, for garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 206 | Total Fat: 1.1g | Sodium: 302mg | Total Carbohydrates: 17.2g | Dietary Fiber: 1.2g | Sugars: 0.2g | Protein: 2.9g

*Chapter 9: Guilt-Free Desserts with a Mediterranean Twist*



# Honey Cake with Pistachios

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Grease a suitable 9 x 13-inch baking pan with butter and dust it with flour.
3. Mix all the cake ingredients in a large mixing bowl.
4. Spread the batter evenly into the prepared baking pan and bake for 30 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, toast pistachios in a dry skillet over medium heat for 1 minute.
6. Stir in honey, lemon, and orange juice, then cook for 2 minutes on a boil.
7. Once the cake is baked and cooled, spread the pistachios and honey syrup over the cake.
8. Slice and serve.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
33 minutes



**Serves:**  
12

## Ingredients

### For the Cake

- 5 large eggs
- 1 cup low-fat Greek yogurt
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 5 tbsps. ground almonds
- zest of 1 Meyer lemon
- zest of 1 orange
- 1 ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup coarse semolina
- 2 tpsps. baking powder
- ¾ cup 1 tbsp. olive oil
- A handful of shaved almonds for topping

### Honey Pistachio Syrup

- 1 ¼ cup shelled salted pistachios
- 1 ¼ cup honey
- Juice of 2 oranges
- Juice of 1 lemon

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 437 | Total Fat: 6.8g | Sodium: 75mg | Total Carbohydrates: 91g | Dietary Fiber: 2.4g | Sugar: 68.4g | Protein: 8.6g

# Chocolate-Dipped Biscotti

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 300°F.
2. Line two large baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. Spread almonds on one sheet and toast for 15 minutes. Keep the almonds aside.
4. Chop the toasted almonds in a blender to a coarse consistency, then set aside 1 cup of the chopped almonds.
5. Pulse the remaining almonds for a finer powder and set them aside to use as garnish.
6. Mix flour with baking powder, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a mixing bowl.
7. Cut in the butter and mix until the mixture gets crumbly.
8. Add 1 cup of coarsely chopped almonds and mix until evenly distributed.
9. Beat the eggs with vanilla and oil, then pour them into the crumbly flour mixture and mix well.
10. Knead this dough on a lightly floured surface for 10 minutes. Add more flour if the dough is too sticky.
11. Divide this dough into two halves and shape each half into a 9-inch-long roll.
12. Press each roll to a thickness of ½ inch and cut each roll into 1-inch slabs.
13. Place those slabs on the baking sheet and brush them with egg wash.
14. Bake the biscotti slabs for 25 minutes, then flip them and bake for an additional 9 minutes. Allow this biscotti to cool.
15. Meanwhile, melt the chocolate in a medium-sized bowl in the microwave.
16. Stir well, dip half of each biscotti in the chocolate, and place on a cooling tray.
17. Drizzle the reserved almond mixture over the chocolate coating and allow the chocolate to cool.
18. Serve and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
20 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
49 minutes



**Serves:**  
12

## Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cups whole almonds
- 2 cups 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, cold and cubed
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 8 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped

### Egg wash:

- 1 large egg, beaten with 1 tbsp. low-fat milk

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 305 | Total Fat: 16.1g | Sodium: 168mg | Total Carbohydrates: 35.6g | Dietary Fiber: 2.1g | Sugar: 28.2g | Protein: 6.2g

# Custard Pie with Lemon Honey Syrup

## Instructions

### For syrup:

1. Add sugar, water, lemon peel, cinnamon stick, and lemon to a small pan and cook this mixture to a boil.
2. Stir in the honey, remove the pan from the heat, and set this syrup aside. Discard the cinnamon stick and lemon peel from this syrup.

### For custard:

1. Add milk, cream, and 5 ½ oz. of sugar to a saucepan, then bring to the boil.
2. Stir in semolina and vanilla extract, then mix well.
3. Remove the pan from the stove and add a knob of butter. Then, allow the mixture to cool.
4. Divide the eggs into yolks and whites into a separate bowl.
5. Beat egg whites with 1 oz. Sugar in a mixing bowl until foamy, then keep it aside.
6. Beat the yolks with 1 oz of sugar in another bowl for 5 minutes.
7. Fold in the semolina mixture and the egg whites' mixture, then mix evenly.
8. Grease a large baking tray with butter and spread one filo sheet on it.
9. Brush the top with butter and repeat using five more filo sheets with butter in between each sheet.
10. Pour the prepared custard mixture into the pan and repeat the filo layering process using the remaining 6 sheets, with butter in between each layer.
11. Bake the layered dessert for 60-75 minutes at 350°F in the oven.
12. Allow the dessert to cool, then pour the prepared syrup on top.
13. Slice and serve.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
1 hr. 25 minutes



**Serves:**  
8

## Ingredients

### Base

- 12 sheets (14 Oz.) filo pastry
- 8 oz. butter

### Custard

- 6 oz. ground semolina
- 7 ½ oz. sugar
- 18 oz. low-fat milk
- 4 eggs, separated into whites and yolks
- 1 oz. butter
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 18 oz. low-fat cream

### For the Syrup

- 11 oz. water
- 20 oz. sugar
- 1 large tbsp. honey
- Peel of 1 lemon
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 10 drops of lemon juice

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 366 | Total Fat: 15.1g | Sodium: 445mg | Total Carbohydrates: 53.8g | Dietary Fiber: 2.4g | Sugar: 9g | Protein: 6g

# Fig Cake with Honey

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Grease a 9-inch fluted tart pan with oil and line it with parchment paper.
3. Mix almond flour with all-purpose flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon in a mixing bowl.
4. Beat eggs with honey, olive oil, and yogurt in another bowl, then stir in the dry flour mixture.
5. Mix this batter with a spatula until it is smooth.
6. Spread the batter evenly into the pan and sprinkle slices of almonds, sugar, and figs over the top.
7. Bake the cake for 40 minutes, then let it cool.
8. Slice and serve.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
40 minutes



**Serves:**  
8

## Ingredients

### Cake

- 1 cup almond flour
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- ⅓ cup Greek yogurt
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- ½ cup honey
- 2 large eggs

### Topping

- 8 fresh figs, quartered
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- 1 tbsp. granulated sugar

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 289 | Total Fat: 13.1g | Sodium: 136mg | Total Carbohydrates: 38.8g | Dietary Fiber: 3g | Sugar: 28.8g | Protein: 5.2g

# Crema Catalana

## Instructions

1. Place a fine-mesh sieve in a large mixing bowl and set it aside.
2. Grease 6 (6 oz.) ramekins with cooking spray and set them aside.
3. Beat  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sugar, cornstarch, salt, and egg yolks in a large bowl until smooth.
4. Set a medium-sized saucepan over medium heat.
5. Add milk, lemon zest, cinnamon, and orange zest, then simmer over medium-low heat until the mixture reaches a simmer.
6. Remove and discard the cinnamon stick and zest from the milk.
7. Pour  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of the milk mixture into the egg yolk mixture and mix until well combined.
8. Return this mixture to the saucepan with milk and cook over medium-low heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
9. Pass this custard through the mesh sieve into the large mixing bowl.
10. Divide the custard among the ramekins, cover them with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.
11. Sprinkle 2 tsps. sprinkle sugar over each ramekin and use a kitchen torch with a 4-inch flame to caramelize the sugar on top of the custard
12. Serve.



**Prep Time:**  
20 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar
- 3 tbsps. cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt
- 8 egg yolks
- 4 cups low-fat milk
- 1 strip of lemon zest
- 1 strip of orange zest
- 1 cinnamon stick

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 278 | Total Fat: 11.3g | Sodium: 270mg | Total Carbohydrates: 36.8g | Dietary Fiber: 0g | Sugar: 33.7g | Protein: 8.9g

## Chapter 10: Nutritious Fish & Seafood Dishes



# Clam Chowder

## Instructions

1. In a pot, melt butter over medium heat. Add onions, garlic, and celery, sautéing for 3 minutes until soft.
2. Stir in the flour and cook for an additional minute to remove the raw taste.
3. Pour in clam juice and add diced potatoes. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer for 10 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.
4. Add chopped clams, milk, heavy cream, thyme, salt, and pepper. Stir well and let it simmer for an additional 5 minutes.
5. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve hot, accompanied by crusty bread.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh clams, scrubbed and chopped
- 1 cup bottled clam juice
- 1 tbsp. butter
- ½ small onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black peppers
- 1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 375 | Total Fat: 21.8g | Sodium: 690mg | Total Carbohydrates: 28.4g | Dietary Fiber: 2.3g | Sugars: 4.2g | Protein: 19.7g

# Halibut with Roasted Red Pepper Coulis

## Instructions

1. Blend all the coulis ingredients until smooth. Adjust seasoning and set aside.
2. Pat the halibut fillets dry and season with salt, black pepper, and smoked paprika. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Place halibut skin-side down and press gently for 30 seconds to prevent curling. Cook for 4–5 minutes, until the skin is crisp. Then, flip and cook for an additional 2–3 minutes.
3. Spoon the red pepper coulis onto plates and top with the crispy halibut. Serve immediately.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 2 halibut fillets (6 oz each), skin on
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika

### Roasted Red Pepper Coulis:

- 1 roasted red bell pepper, peeled and chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- Salt and black pepper to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 401 | Total Fat: 20.1g | Sodium: 430mg | Total Carbohydrate: 7.4g | Dietary Fiber: 1.6g | Total Sugars: 3.2g | Protein: 45.3g

# Rustic Seafood Paella with Brown Rice

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, and red bell pepper for 3–4 minutes.
2. Stir in smoked paprika, saffron, peas and diced tomatoes, cooking for another 2 minutes.
3. Add short-grain rice and toast for 1 minute. Pour in the broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 30 minutes until rice is tender.
4. Nestle the shrimp, mussels, and fish into the rice. Cover and cook for 7–8 minutes until seafood is cooked through and mussels open. Stir in parsley, and lemon juice. Adjust seasoning and serve hot.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
45 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup of short-grain rice
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. saffron threads
- 1 cup of diced tomatoes
- 2 ½ cups seafood broth
- ½ lb. shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ lb. mussels, scrubbed
- ¼ cup green peas
- ½ lb. white fish fillet, cut into chunks
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt and black pepper to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 523 | Total Fat: 12.7g | Sodium: 620mg | Total Carbohydrate: 55.3g | Dietary Fiber: 6.4g | Total Sugars: 7.1g | Protein: 45.6g

# Poached Whitefish in Tomato-Fennel Broth

## Instructions

1. Set a large-sized skillet over medium heat and add oil to preheat.
2. Toss in fennel bulbs, olives and onion, then sauté for 5 minutes.
3. Place white fish in this skillet and add saffron, fennel seeds, water, and tomatoes on top.
4. Cook this fish to a boil, then cover and remove it from the heat.
5. Leave it covered for 10 minutes then add lemon slices.
6. Garnish with parsley and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 bulbs of fennel, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1½ lbs. of whitefish fillets
- 1 pinch saffron
- 1 tbsp. fennel seeds
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup green olives
- 1 cup water
- 1 lemon, sliced
- Parsley, to garnish

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 571 | Total Fat: 25.2g | Sodium: 282mg | Total Carbohydrates: 27.3g | Dietary Fiber: 10.7g | Sugars: 4.7g | Protein: 60.3g

# Parmesan Cod with Arugula

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
2. Take a rimmed baking sheet and grease it lightly with cooking spray.
3. Place the cod fillets on the baking sheet with their skin side down.
4. Mix mustard with butter in a bowl and brush it liberally over the fish fillets.
5. Bake the cod for 5 minutes, then flip the fillet and brush the mustard butter on top.
6. Continue baking the fish for another 6 minutes.
7. Spread arugula on the serving platter and place the baked cod on top.
8. Add Parmesan cheese over the fish fillets.
9. Serve warm and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
40 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
11 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 1 lb. cod fillets
- 4 tsps. Dijon mustard
- 4 tsps. almond butter, melted
- 1 bunch arugula
- ¾ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- Cooking spray

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 494 | Total Fat: 43.3g | Sodium: 623mg | Total Carbohydrates: 10.2g | Dietary Fiber: 2.8g | Sugars: 5.4g | Protein: 19.6g

# Black Rice with Shrimp and Zucchini

## Instructions

1. Bring salted water to a boil in a large pot to cook the rice.
2. Add rice to this pot and cook for 18 minutes on medium heat, until tender.
3. Drain the excess water and keep the rice aside.
4. Set a large-sized skillet over medium heat and add 3 tablespoons olive oil.
5. Toss in the shallot and sauté for 3 minutes.
6. Add zucchini, shrimp, and white wine, then cook to a boil.
7. Reduce the stove's heat to medium-low and cook for 5-10 minutes, or until the shrimp are cooked through.
8. Add rice and chopped chives to the shrimp mixture and mix evenly.
9. Cook for 4 minutes, then drizzle 1tspn. Olive oil on top.
10. Stir again and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1½ cups black rice
- 3 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 zucchini, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 5 oz. peeled shrimp
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 bunch of chives
- 1 tsp. olive oil

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 331 | Total Fat: 12.8g | Sodium: 267mg | Total Carbohydrates: 17.3g | Dietary Fiber: 0.9g | Sugars: 1.3g | Protein: 26g

# Swordfish a la Siciliana

## Instructions

1. Add raisins to a small bowl and cover them with lukewarm water.
2. Leave the raisins to soak for 30 minutes, then drain and keep them aside.
3. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
4. Set a large saucepan over high heat and add olive oil to preheat.
5. Add garlic and onion, then sauté for 5 minutes until tender.
6. Stir in tomatoes, raisins, pine nuts, olives, and capers.
7. Cover this pan, reduce its heat to medium, and cook for 15 minutes.
8. Season the fish steaks with black pepper and salt, then place them in a greased baking dish.
9. Pour the prepared sauce over the fish and bake for 20 minutes.
10. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
40 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 3 oz. raisins
- 5 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ lb. ripe tomatoes, diced
- 10 green olives, pitted and minced
- 2 oz. pine nuts
- ¼ cup capers
- 2 lbs. of swordfish steaks
- Salt and black pepper to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 406 | Total Fat: 23.8g | Sodium: 491mg | Total Carbohydrates: 14.5g | Dietary Fiber: 2.1g | Sugars: 8.8g | Protein: 35.2g

# Tomato-Braised Cod with Bell Peppers

## Instructions

1. Sauté onion and bell peppers in olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat for 5-10 minutes, until the onion is softened.
2. Stir in ouzo and cook for 3 minutes on a simmer.
3. Add plum tomatoes and crush them with the back of a spoon.
4. Stir in the mint, black pepper, salt, and water, then simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Increase the stove's heat to medium-high and add cod fillet to the sauce.
6. Spoon some sauce over the dish and cook for 10 minutes. Flip the fish once cooked halfway through.
7. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
28 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 3 tbsps. olive oil
- ½ large red onion, sliced
- 3 cups of frozen sliced mixed peppers
- ¼ cup Ouzo or dry vermouth
- 1 (18 oz.) can whole plum tomatoes
- ¼ cup water
- 3 tbsps. fresh mint, chopped
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 4 (4 oz.) frozen cod fillets, thawed

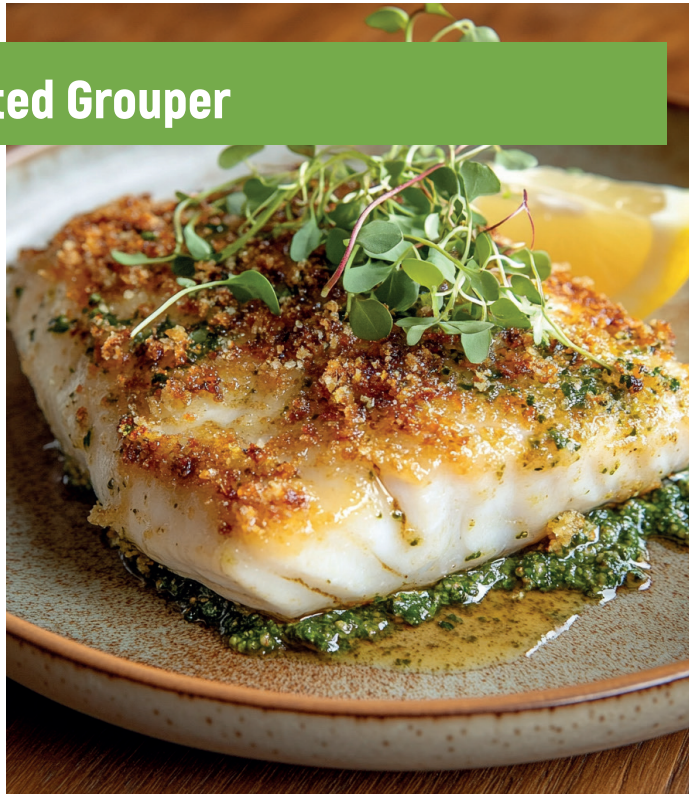
## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 337 | Total Fat: 13.1g | Sodium: 189mg | Total Carbohydrates: 13.1g | Dietary Fiber: 4.4g | Sugars: 6.8g | Protein: 42.6g

# Pesto-Crusted Grouper

## Instructions

1. Liberally rub black pepper and salt over the grouper fillet to season it well.
2. Mix Greek seasoning with breadcrumbs in a bowl.
3. Brush the pesto all over the grouper fillet, and then coat it with breadcrumbs.
4. Set a skillet over medium heat and add butter to melt.
5. Sear the crusted grouper fillet for 4 minutes per side.
6. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
1

## Ingredients

- 1 (9 oz.) grouper fillet
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsps. panko breadcrumbs
- ¼ tbsp. Greek seasoning
- 2 tsps. pesto
- 2 tbsps. almond butter

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 408 | Total Fat: 31.5g | Sodium: 579mg | Total Carbohydrates: 11.5g | Dietary Fiber: 0.8g | Sugars: 1.5g | Protein: 66.6g

# Lemony Shrimp Risotto

## Instructions

1. In a suitable size saucepan, bring chicken or vegetable broth to a simmer, then keep it warm.
2. In a wide frying pan, melt butter over medium heat.
3. Add finely chopped onion and minced garlic, and sauté for about 3-4 minutes or until softened.
4. Add Arborio rice to the saucepan and stir well to coat the rice with the butter.
5. Pour in the white wine and continue cooking until the wine has been absorbed by the rice.
6. Add a ladleful of warm chicken or vegetable broth along with saffron to the rice.
7. Continue adding the broth, one ladleful at a time, and stirring continuously until the rice is tender and the risotto is creamy (20-25 minutes).
8. Season the shrimp with black pepper and salt.
9. In a separate pan, cook the seasoned shrimp in a little bit of olive oil over medium-high heat for about 3-4 minutes per side or until cooked through and pink.
10. Remove the risotto from the heat, stir in grated Parmesan cheese, freshly squeezed lemon juice, and lemon zest.
11. Divide the prepared risotto between two plates and top each plate with cooked shrimp.
12. Enjoy your delicious and healthy lemony shrimp risotto!



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
36 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 1 cup Arborio rice
- 2 tbsps. butter
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 pinches saffron
- 1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsps. freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. lemon zest
- Black pepper and salt, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 561 | Total Fat: 20.5g | Sodium: 2160mg | Total Carbohydrates: 22.5g | Dietary Fiber: 1.1g | Total Sugars: 3.9g | Protein: 62.9g

## *Chapter 11: Hearty Legume Recipes for Lasting Fullness*



# Bulgur and Lentil Pilaf

## Instructions

1. In a pot, cover lentils with water and bring them to a boil. Simmer for 15-18 minutes until just tender. Drain and set aside.
2. In a separate saucepan, bring vegetable broth to a boil. Stir in bulgur, cover, and remove from heat. Let sit for 10 minutes, then fluff with a fork.
3. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium-low heat. Add onions and cook for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until deeply caramelized.
4. Stir in salt, black pepper, cumin, and cinnamon. Cook for another minute.
5. Add cooked lentils and fluffed bulgur to the pan, mixing well to combine.
6. Sprinkle with toasted pine nuts, fresh parsley, and lemon juice before serving.
7. Serve warm and enjoy!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- ½ cup dry green or brown lentils, rinsed
- 1 cup of bulgur wheat
- 2 cups of vegetable broth
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted
- 1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- Juice of ½ lemon

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 327 | Total Fat: 9.8g | Sodium: 340mg | Total Carbohydrate: 48.6g | Dietary Fiber: 10.2g | Total Sugars: 5.3g | Protein: 11.7g

# Spiced Red Lentil and Vegetable Curry over Brown Rice

## Instructions

1. Heat coconut oil in a large pan over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, and ginger for 2-3 minutes.
2. Stir in cumin, coriander, turmeric, and garam masala. Cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Add lentils, diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, sweet potato, zucchini, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes, or until the lentils and vegetables are tender.
4. Stir in the coconut milk and cook for an additional 5 minutes.
5. Serve over cooked brown rice, garnish with fresh cilantro, and top with a squeeze of lime juice.
6. Enjoy warm!



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup dry red lentils, rinsed
- 1 tbsp. coconut oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-inch piece ginger, grated
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- ½ tsp. garam masala
- 1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
- 2 cups of vegetable broth
- 1 small sweet potato, diced
- 1 zucchini, chopped
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 can (400ml) coconut milk
- 2 cups of cooked brown rice
- Fresh cilantro, for garnish
- Juice of ½ lime

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 397 | Total Fat: 12.8g | Sodium: 410mg | Total Carbohydrate: 56.2g | Dietary Fiber: 12.3g | Total Sugars: 8.9g | Protein: 14.7g

# Lentil and Bulgur Meatballs in Spicy Tomato Sauce

## Instructions

1. In a large bowl, mash the cooked lentils with a fork. Add bulgur, onion, garlic, breadcrumbs, tomato paste, olive oil, oregano, paprika, salt, and pepper. Mix well until it forms a dough-like consistency. Roll the mixture into small balls and place them on a lined baking tray. Refrigerate for 15 minutes to firm up.
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Bake the meatballs for 20-25 minutes, turning them halfway through, until they are browned.
3. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Sauté garlic for 1 minute, then add crushed tomatoes, red pepper flakes, basil, salt, and black pepper. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce has thickened. Add the baked lentil-bulgur meatballs to the sauce, coat well, and simmer for 5 minutes.
4. Serve warm with pasta, rice, or crusty bread.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### For the Meatballs:

- 1 cup cooked lentils
- ½ cup bulgur, cooked
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- 1 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

### For the Spicy Tomato Sauce:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 can (14 oz.) crushed tomatoes
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 323 | Total Fat: 8.6g | Sodium: 410mg | Total Carbohydrate: 48.2g | Dietary Fiber: 10.4g | Total Sugars: 8.7g | Protein: 14.8g

# Spiced Lentil and Roasted Eggplant Dip

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Prick the eggplant with a fork and roast it on a baking sheet for 30-35 minutes, or until it is soft. Let cool, then scoop out the flesh.
2. While the eggplant roasts, cook the lentils in water until soft, about 15 minutes, then drain.
3. In a pan, heat olive oil over medium heat and sauté onion and garlic until golden. Stir in the cumin, paprika, coriander, and cayenne, cooking for an additional minute.
4. In a blender or food processor, combine the roasted eggplant, lentils, sautéed onion mixture, lemon juice, tahini, salt, and pepper, and blend until smooth. Adjust seasoning to taste.
5. Transfer to a bowl, drizzle with olive oil, and garnish with parsley. Serve warm or at room temperature with pita or veggie sticks.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
45 minutes



**Serves:**  
6

## Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant
- ½ cup red lentils, rinsed
- 2 cups of water
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. tahini
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)
- Pita bread or veggie sticks, for serving

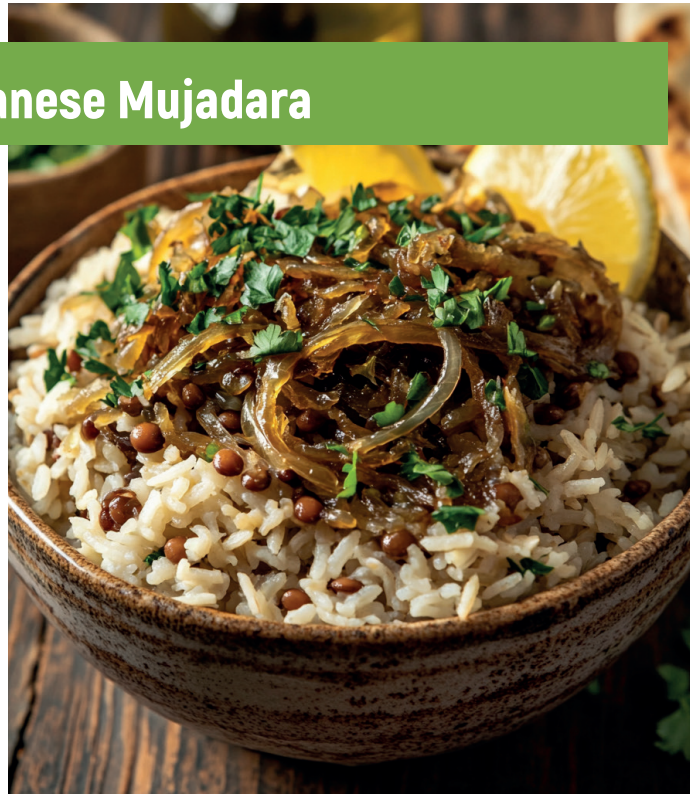
## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 148 | Total Fat: 6.2g | Sodium: 190mg | Total Carbohydrate: 18.5g | Dietary Fiber: 5.2g | Total Sugars: 3.4g | Protein: 5.7g

# Traditional Lebanese Mujadara

## Instructions

1. In a pot, combine lentils and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Drain and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a large pan and sauté the onions over medium-low heat until they are deeply caramelized, about 25-30 minutes. Remove half for garnish.
3. Add rice, cumin, cinnamon, salt, black pepper, and allspice to the pan. Stir to coat the rice in the onions and spices.
4. Pour in vegetable broth and bring it to a simmer. Cover and cook on low heat for 15 minutes.
5. Stir in the cooked lentils, cover, and let them sit for an additional 5 minutes.
6. Fluff with a fork and serve with caramelized onions on top.
7. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve with lemon wedges.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
50 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup brown lentils, rinsed
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups water
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup basmati rice, rinsed
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. black pepper
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups vegetable broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. ground allspice
- Fresh parsley and lemon wedges, for serving

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 328 | Total Fat: 6.5g | Sodium: 470mg | Total Carbohydrate: 54.3g | Dietary Fiber: 8.2g | Total Sugars: 6.1g | Protein: 11.2g

## *Chapter 12: Vegetable Dishes: Roasted, Grilled & Sautéed*



# Spinach Stuffed Crepes

## Instructions

1. Mix the flour, salt, and sugar in a bowl.
2. Beat eggs with half of the milk and add to the flour mixture.
3. Stir well until smooth, then pour in the remaining milk and mix again.
4. Grease an 8-inch non-stick skillet with butter and place it over medium heat.
5. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the crepe batter into the skillet and cook for 1-2 minutes per side until golden brown.
6. Make seven more crepes using the same batter.
7. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
8. Line a suitable baking sheet with parchment paper.
9. For the filling, sauté the onion with butter in a skillet over medium heat until golden brown.
10. Stir in the spinach and cook for 2 minutes, and season it with black pepper and salt.
11. Add the sour cream and 1 cup of cottage cheese, then mix until well combined.
12. Spread the cooked crepes on the baking sheet.
13. Divide the spinach filling over the crepes and fold them in half.
14. Bake the crepes for 10 minutes in the oven.
15. Cut the crepes in half and garnish with the remaining cottage cheese.
16. Serve warm and enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### Crepes

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1 pinch of salt
- 2 eggs
- 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups milk
- Softened butter for cooking

### Filling

- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 6 cups fresh baby spinach
- 2 cups of crumbled cottage cheese
- 2 tbsps. sour cream
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 454 | Total Fat: 17.1g | Sodium: 517mg | Total Carbohydrates: 30g | Fibers 2.2g | Sugars: 8.3g | Protein: 24.2g

# Spinach and Mushroom Tortellini Bake

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. Cook the tortellini according to package instructions until al dente. Drain and set aside.
3. In a suitable-sized skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat.
4. Add the chopped onion to the skillet and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until softened.
5. Add minced garlic to the skillet and sauté for 1-2 minutes more, or until fragrant.
6. Add sliced mushrooms to the skillet and sauté for 5-6 minutes, or until softened and lightly browned.
7. Add the fresh spinach leaves to the skillet and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
8. Add the cooked tortellini to the skillet, along with the grated Parmesan cheese and heavy cream.
9. Stir until well combined and the cheese is melted.
10. Season with black pepper, salt, and red pepper flakes, to taste.
11. Transfer the prepared mixture to a baking dish and bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden and bubbly.
12. Serve.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
41 minutes



**Serves:**  
2

## Ingredients

- 9 oz. of cheese tortellini
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 oz. mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups of fresh spinach leaves
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- Black pepper and salt, to taste
- Red pepper flakes, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 391 | Total Fat: 21.9g | Sodium: 449mg | Total Carbohydrates: 33.9g | Dietary Fiber: 1.9g | Total Sugars: 2.3g | Protein: 18.4g

# Fava Bean Guacamole with Turnip Chips

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 300° F.
2. Line a suitable baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Cut the turnips into thin slices using a mandoline.
4. Spread the sliced turnips on the baking sheet, cover them with another baking sheet, and bake them for 20 minutes.
5. Uncover the chips and continue baking for an additional 20 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, add water to a small pot and bring to a boil. Keep an ice bath ready in a bowl.
7. Add favas and peas to the boiling water and cook for 4 minutes.
8. Drain and transfer the peas and favas to the ice bath for 2 minutes, then drain.
9. Blend avocado with lemon juice, cilantro, red onion, paprika, peas, black pepper, salt, red pepper flakes, and favas in a mixer for 30 seconds.
10. Mix well and serve this guacamole with turnip chips.
11. Enjoy.



**Prep Time:**  
17 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
44 minutes



**Serves:**  
8

## Ingredients

### For the chips:

- 5 large turnips
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- Salt, to taste

### Fava guacamole:

- 20 frozen peas
- 5-6 fava beans, beans removed from the pod and outer skin removed
- 4 ripe avocados, peeled, pitted, and sliced
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- A handful of cilantro, chopped
- ½ of a small red onion, finely diced
- 1 pinch of smoked paprika
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- A pinch of red pepper flakes

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 279 | Total Fat: 21.5g | Sodium: 349mg | Total Carbohydrates: 20.1g | Dietary Fiber: 10.5g | Sugars: 5.2g | Protein: 5.1g

# Baked Za'atar Beet Chips

## Instructions

1. Trim and scrub the beets under cold running water.
2. Slice the beets into 1/16th-inch thin slices using a mandoline.
3. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
4. Toss the beet slices with olive oil and salt, then spread them on a baking sheet.
5. Ensure the slices are spread in a single layer and cook them in batches.
6. Bake these beet chips for 15 minutes on the bottom rack of your preheated oven.
7. Garnish with dried chives.
8. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 8 large beets
- 2 tbsps. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. flaked sea salt
- 1 tbsp. dried chives

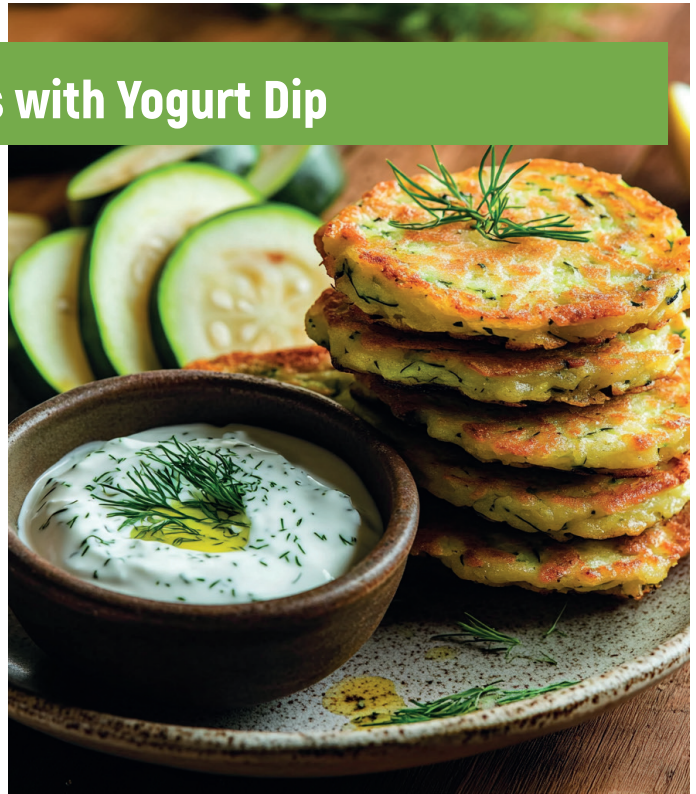
## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 99 | Total Fat: 35.1g | Sodium: 745mg | Total Carbohydrates: 53.8g | Fibers 4.4g | Sugars: 9g | Protein: 6g

# Zucchini Fritters with Yogurt Dip

## Instructions

1. Place the grated zucchini in a colander, sprinkle with salt, and let it sit for 5 minutes. Squeeze out any excess moisture with a clean tea towel.
2. In a bowl, mix the grated zucchini, flour, Parmesan, egg, garlic, black pepper, and oregano until well combined.
3. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Scoop small portions of batter into the pan and flatten slightly.
4. Cook for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown and crispy. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.
5. In a small bowl, mix Greek yogurt, lemon juice, garlic, and dill to make the dip.
6. Serve the fritters warm, accompanied by the yogurt dip on the side.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
15 minutes



**Serves:**  
3-4

## Ingredients

- 2 medium zucchinis, grated
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tbsps. olive oil (for frying)

### For the Yogurt Dip:

- ½ cup Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tbsp. Fresh dill, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 223 | Total Fat: 10.5g | Sodium: 290mg | Total Carbohydrate: 22.4g | Dietary Fiber: 2.6g | Total Sugars: 3.2g | Protein: 8.9g

## Chapter 13: Grains & Whole Foods for Lasting Energy



# Quinoa-Stuffed Zucchini Boats with Cherry Tomatoes and Olives

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. Scoop out the center of each zucchini half, creating a boat shape. Reserve the scooped-out flesh and chop it finely.
3. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 2-3 minutes until fragrant.
4. Add chopped zucchini flesh, cherry tomatoes, and olives. Cook for another 3-4 minutes.
5. Stir in cooked quinoa, oregano, salt, and black pepper. Remove from heat and mix in feta cheese, basil, and lemon juice.
6. Spoon the quinoa mixture into the zucchini halves and place them in a baking dish.
7. Cover loosely with foil and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the zucchini is tender.
8. Serve warm and enjoy!



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 4 medium zucchinis, halved lengthwise
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives, sliced
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tbsps. chopped fresh basil
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 319 | Total Fat: 10.4g | Sodium: 420mg | Total Carbohydrate: 40.6g | Dietary Fiber: 7.2g | Total Sugars: 6.8g | Protein: 10.1g

# Mediterranean Egg Wrap

## Directions

1. Begin by whisking one large egg with a pinch of black pepper and salt in a mixing bowl.
2. Heat a nonstick pan over medium-high heat with a tablespoon of olive oil.
3. Pour in the whisked egg mixture and occasionally stir until it's fully cooked and scrambled to perfection.
4. Once the egg is cooked, remove it from the pan and set it aside.
5. Place a whole-wheat wrap on a plate before adding the scrambled egg to the center.
6. Next, add some red onion, crumbled feta cheese, and fresh parsley on top of the egg.
7. Bring the edges of the wrap inwards, and then roll it up tightly to create a delicious wrap.
8. Serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
7 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
1

## Ingredients

- 1 large egg
- 1 whole-wheat wrap
- ¼ cup chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Black pepper and salt to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories 421 | Total Fat: 35.1g | Sodium: 745mg | Total Carbohydrates: 53.8g | Dietary Fiber: 4.4g | Total Sugars: 29g | Protein: 26g

# Orecchiette with Broccoli Rabe and Cannellini Beans

## Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Add the orecchiette and cook according to package instructions.
3. In the last 2 minutes of cooking, add the broccoli rabe to the pot. Drain and set aside.
4. In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat.
5. Sauté garlic and red pepper flakes for 1 minute until fragrant.
6. Add the cannellini beans, salt, and black pepper, stirring gently.
7. Add the drained pasta and broccoli rabe to the pan, tossing everything together.
8. Cook for an additional 2 minutes, allowing the flavors to blend.
9. Remove from heat and stir in lemon zest.
10. Serve warm, sprinkled with grated Parmesan, if desired.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
20 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 9 oz. orecchiette pasta
- 1 bunch broccoli rabe, trimmed and chopped
- 1 can (14 oz.) cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tbsps. olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- Zest of 1 lemon

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 410 | Total Fat: 10.5g | Sodium: 320mg | Total Carbohydrate: 64.8g | Dietary Fiber: 9.2g | Total Sugars: 3.4g | Protein: 17.1g

# Millet-Stuffed Eggplant with Tomato and Basil

## Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F.
2. Brush the cut sides of the eggplants with 1 tablespoon of olive oil and place them cut-side down on a baking sheet. Roast for 25 minutes until tender.
3. Meanwhile, bring vegetable broth to a boil in a small pot.
4. Add the millet, cover, reduce the heat, and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the liquid is absorbed.
5. Remove from heat and fluff with a fork.
6. In a pan, heat the remaining olive oil over medium heat.
7. Sauté garlic for 1 minute, then add cherry tomatoes, oregano, salt, and black pepper.
8. Cook for 5 minutes, or until the tomatoes have softened. Stir in cooked millet and fresh basil.
9. Scoop out a small portion of the roasted eggplant flesh to create space for the stuffing.
10. Fill each eggplant half with the millet mixture. Return the dish to the oven and bake for an additional 10 minutes.
11. Serve warm, topped with feta cheese if using.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 medium eggplants, halved lengthwise
- 2 tbsps. olive oil, divided
- ½ cup millet, rinsed and drained
- 1 ¼ cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 365 | Total Fat: 12.8g | Sodium: 310mg | Total Carbohydrate: 53.2g | Dietary Fiber: 10.6g | Total Sugars: 9.1g | Protein: 9.8g

# Chickpea and Spinach Stew with Bulgur

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat.
2. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes, until softened. Then, add garlic, cumin, cinnamon, and smoked paprika, and cook for 1 more minute, until fragrant.
3. Stir in chickpeas, diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, and bulgur.
4. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the bulgur is tender.
5. Add the spinach, salt, and black pepper, stirring until the spinach has wilted.
6. Simmer for an additional 3 minutes, then remove from the heat. Stir in lemon juice and fresh parsley.
7. Serve warm with crusty bread or a side of yogurt.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- 1 can (14 oz.) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
- 2 cups of vegetable broth
- ½ cup bulgur wheat
- 3 cups of fresh spinach, chopped
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- Juice of ½ lemon
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 312 | Total Fat: 5.2g | Sodium: 480mg | Total Carbohydrate: 54.6g | Dietary Fiber: 11.3g | Total Sugars: 9.2g | Protein: 14.7g

## *Chapter 14: Baked Dishes & Family Favorites*



# Baked Chicken Pie with Cheese

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat.
3. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes until softened, then add garlic and cook for another minute.
4. Stir in the cooked chicken and mixed vegetables.
5. Sprinkle flour over the mixture and stir well to coat.
6. Slowly add the milk while stirring constantly until the mixture thickens, about 5 minutes.
7. Season with thyme, salt, and black pepper. Remove from heat and stir in the shredded cheese.
8. Transfer the filling into a greased baking dish.
9. Roll out the puff pastry to fit over the dish and place it on top, sealing the edges. Cut a few slits in the top to let steam escape.
10. Brush the top with beaten egg.
11. Bake for 25–30 minutes or until golden brown.
12. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.



**Prep Time:**  
20 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ cups cooked chicken breast, shredded
- 1 cup mixed vegetables (carrots, peas, and corn)
- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg, beaten (for egg wash)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 458 | Total Fat: 25.6g | Sodium: 610mg | Total Carbohydrate: 28.4g | Dietary Fiber: 3.2g | Total Sugars: 5.1g | Protein: 29.3g

# Eggplant Cheese Bake

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 190°C (375°F).
2. Heat 1 tbsp. olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add eggplant slices in batches and cook for 2–3 minutes per side until slightly golden. Set aside.
3. In the same pan, heat the remaining 1 tbsp. olive oil. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes until softened, then add garlic and cook for 1 more minute.
4. Stir in diced tomatoes, oregano, basil, salt, and black pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes to thicken the sauce slightly.
5. In a baking dish, layer half of the eggplant slices, followed by half the tomato sauce and a sprinkle of both cheeses.
6. Repeat with the remaining eggplant, sauce, mozzarella, and Parmesan.
7. Bake for 20 minutes until the top is bubbly and golden.
8. Remove from oven, sprinkle with fresh basil, and let it rest for 5 minutes before serving.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large eggplant, sliced into ½-inch rounds
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. dried basil
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 298 | Total Fat: 18.1g | Sodium: 520mg | Total Carbohydrate: 21.4g | Dietary Fiber: 6.7g | Total Sugars: 8.3g | Protein: 13.2g

# Chicken Chimichangas

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat.
3. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes, until softened. Then, add garlic, cumin, chili powder, smoked paprika, salt, and pepper. Cook for one more minute.
4. Stir in the shredded chicken and salsa. Cook for 2 minutes until well combined.
5. Remove from heat and stir in the shredded cheddar cheese.
6. Lay out the tortillas and spread two tablespoons of refried beans in the center of each.
7. Add a generous scoop of the chicken mixture, then fold in the sides and roll up tightly.
8. Place the chimichangas seam-side down on a baking tray lined with parchment paper. Lightly brush or spray with olive oil.
9. Bake for 15–18 minutes or until golden brown and crispy.
10. Serve hot with sour cream, guacamole, or extra salsa on the side.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1½ cups cooked chicken breast, shredded
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ½ cup salsa
- ½ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup refried beans
- 4 large flour tortillas
- Olive oil spray, for brushing

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 421 | Total Fat: 17.8g | Sodium: 590mg | Total Carbohydrate: 37.2g | Dietary Fiber: 4.9g | Total Sugars: 3.2g | Protein: 28.4g

# Roasted Whole Chicken with Brown Gravy

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F).
2. Rub the chicken with olive oil, then season all over with salt, pepper, thyme, rosemary, and paprika.
3. Stuff the cavity with lemon halves, smashed garlic cloves, and onion quarters.
4. Place the chicken breast-side up in a roasting pan and pour 2 cups of chicken broth into the base of the pan.
5. Roast uncovered for 1 hour and 30 minutes, basting halfway through, until the skin is golden and crispy, and juices run clear when pierced.
6. Remove the chicken and let it rest for 10 minutes before carving.
7. Meanwhile, make the gravy by melting butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour to form a roux, cooking for 1 minute.
8. Slowly add pan drippings or chicken broth, whisking continuously until smooth. Cook for 3–5 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened and reduced in volume. Season to taste.
9. Serve the carved chicken with warm brown gravy on the side.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
1 hr 30 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken (about 1.5 kg), cleaned and patted dry
  - 2 tbsp. olive oil
  - 1 tsp. salt
  - ½ tsp. black pepper
  - 1 tsp. dried thyme
  - 1 tsp. dried rosemary
  - 1 tsp. paprika
  - 1 lemon, halved
  - 4 garlic cloves, smashed
  - 1 onion, quartered
  - 2 cups chicken broth
- For the Brown Gravy:**
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
  - 2 tbsp. plain flour
  - 1½ cups pan drippings or chicken broth
  - Salt and pepper, to taste

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 486 | Total Fat: 28.4g | Sodium: 590mg | Total Carbohydrate: 5.7g | Dietary Fiber: 0.6g | Total Sugars: 1.3g | Protein: 52.1g

# Baked Ziti

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 190°C (375°F).
2. Cook the ziti pasta in a large pot of salted, boiling water according to the package instructions. Drain and set aside.
3. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat.
4. Sauté the onion for 3 minutes, until softened. Then, add garlic, oregano, basil, and red pepper flakes, and cook for one more minute.
5. Stir in crushed tomatoes, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to develop.
6. In a large bowl, mix cooked ziti with ricotta and half of the mozzarella cheese.
7. Pour half of the tomato sauce into a greased baking dish. Add the pasta mixture on top, then pour the remaining sauce over it.
8. Sprinkle with the remaining mozzarella and Parmesan cheese.
9. Bake uncovered for 20 minutes until the cheese is bubbly and golden.
10. Remove the dish from the oven and let it rest for 5 minutes. Garnish with fresh parsley before serving.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
30 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 9 oz. ziti pasta
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. dried basil
- ½ tsp. red pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 can (14 oz.) crushed tomatoes
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp. Fresh parsley, chopped

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 426 | Total Fat: 17.6g | Sodium: 530mg | Total Carbohydrate: 47.2g | Dietary Fiber: 4.3g | Total Sugars: 6.1g | Protein: 21.4g

## *Chapter 15: Classic Mediterranean Recipes Reimagined*



# French Ratatouille

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 1 minute until fragrant.
2. Add eggplant and cook for 5 minutes until slightly softened.
3. Stir in zucchini, bell pepper, and tomatoes. Sprinkle with thyme, salt, and black pepper.
4. Cover and simmer on low heat for 25-30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and the flavors have combined.
5. Remove from heat and let sit for a few minutes before serving. Garnish with fresh basil if desired.



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
35 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, diced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 132 | Total Fat: 7g | Sodium: 220mg | Total Carbohydrate: 15g | Dietary Fiber: 5g | Total Sugars: 7g | Protein: 2g

# Spanish Garlic Shrimp (Gambas al Ajillo)

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add garlic and red pepper flakes, sautéing until fragrant (about 1-2 minutes).
2. Add shrimp, salt, and black pepper, and cook for 2-3 minutes per side, until pink and opaque.
3. Pour in lemon juice and stir well to coat the shrimp.
4. Remove from heat and sprinkle with fresh parsley.
5. Serve immediately with crusty bread or over rice.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 1 lb. of shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 tbsp. olive oil
- 5 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. red pepper flakes (adjust to taste)
- 2 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tbsp. lemon juice

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 236 | Total Fat: 11g | Sodium: 480mg | Total Carbohydrate: 2g | Dietary Fiber: 0.5g | Total Sugars: 0.3g | Protein: 29g

# Lebanese Grilled Halloumi

## Instructions

1. Preheat a grill pan or skillet over medium heat.
2. Brush halloumi slices with olive oil and sprinkle with oregano and black pepper.
3. Grill the halloumi for 2-3 minutes per side until golden brown and slightly crispy.
4. Remove from the heat and drizzle with lemon juice.
5. Garnish with fresh mint and serve warm, accompanied by pita bread or a side salad.



**Prep Time:**  
5 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 8 oz. halloumi cheese, sliced
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. Fresh mint, chopped (for garnish)

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 186 | Total Fat: 14g | Sodium: 600mg | Total Carbohydrate: 1g | Dietary Fiber: 0g | Total Sugars: 0g | Protein: 12g

# Spanish Chorizo and Potatoes

## Instructions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add the chorizo and cook for 3-4 minutes, until it releases its oil.
2. Add the onion and garlic, and sauté until soft and fragrant (about 2 minutes).
3. Stir in diced potatoes, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper. Mix well to coat the potatoes in the chorizo oil.
4. Cover and cook on low heat for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender.
5. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm.



**Prep Time:**  
10 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
25 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

- 8 oz. Spanish chorizo, sliced
- 3 medium potatoes, diced
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2 tbsp. Fresh parsley, chopped

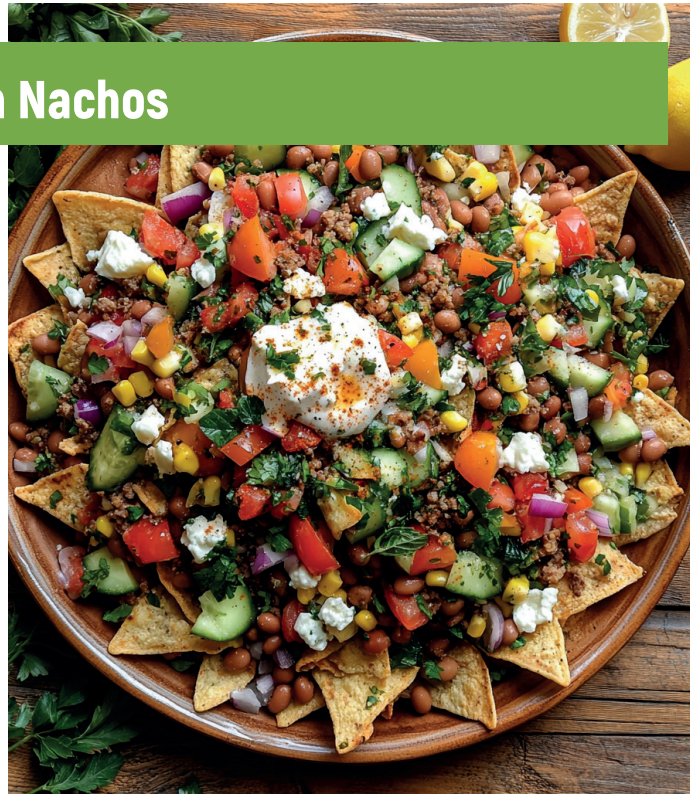
## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 324 | Total Fat: 18g | Sodium: 650mg | Total Carbohydrate: 28g | Dietary Fiber: 4g | Total Sugars: 2g | Protein: 12g

# Fattoush Nachos

## Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180 °C). Toss pita triangles with olive oil, sumac, and salt. Spread the mixture on a baking tray and bake for 8–10 minutes, until golden and crisp.
2. In a bowl, mix cherry tomatoes, cucumber, parsley, mint, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Set aside to let flavors mingle.
3. If using meat, warm it in a pan with a pinch of salt and pepper. Otherwise, gently heat the beans with a splash of olive oil until warmed through.
4. Arrange baked pita chips on a serving platter or shallow dish. Scatter with kidney beans, meat (if using), corn, red peppers, onions, and mozzarella or halloumi.
5. Place under a grill or broiler for 2–3 minutes, until the cheese melts and bubbles slightly.
6. Spoon the fresh salad over the nachos. Add dollops of labneh or tzatziki, a sprinkle of feta, and olives if using.
7. Dig in while it's crisp, creamy, and crunchy!



**Prep Time:**  
15 minutes



**Cook Time:**  
10 minutes



**Serves:**  
4

## Ingredients

### For the Nachos:

- 3 large pita breads, cut into triangles
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp sumac
- ¼ tsp salt

### For the Toppings:

- 1 cup canned kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup cooked ground lamb or beef (optional for fusion flair)
- ½ cup diced red pepper
- ¼ cup chopped red onion
- ¼ cup sweet corn kernels
- 1–2 green onions, sliced
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella or halloumi (optional for melting)

### For the Salad Layer:

- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 small cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp mint, chopped
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Pinch of salt and pepper

### Optional Garnishes:

- Crumbled feta cheese
- Dollop of labneh or tzatziki
- Chopped olives

## Nutritional Information (per serving):

Calories: 325 | Total Fat: 12.5g | Sodium: 410mg | Total Carbohydrates: 42g | Dietary Fiber: 7.8g | Total Sugars: 6.4g | Protein: 11g

# Conclusion

You have come a long way, and now you stand at the beginning of an exciting new chapter. This cookbook was never just about recipes. It was meant to show you that healthy eating can be simple, enjoyable, and full of life. Every page you turned, every recipe you tried, brought you closer to a way of living that nourishes not just your body but your spirit as well.

Growing up in a Spanish household, the Mediterranean lifestyle was an integral part of my everyday life. It was not something we thought of as a special diet or a new health trend. It was just the way we ate. Fresh fruits and vegetables, olive oil, fish, nuts, and whole grains were everyday staples on our table. Sharing meals, celebrating food, and connecting with family were as natural as breathing. Back then, I never realized just how powerful these habits were. It was only when I grew up, studied nutrition, and understood the science behind the Mediterranean approach that I truly appreciated its impact. That realization is what inspired me to create this cookbook and share it with you.

The best part is that the Mediterranean lifestyle doesn't demand perfection; it calls for making the right choices every day to support your well-being. It is about filling your plate with fresh, colorful foods and sharing meals with the people you love. It's about listening to your body, respecting your needs, and giving yourself the space to grow and thrive.

Now you have everything you need to continue this journey with confidence. You have learned how to stock your kitchen, plan your meals, and bring vibrant flavors to your table with ease. You know that real health comes from balance, patience, and a little bit of joy in every bite.

Remember that progress is not always loud or obvious. Sometimes, it's as simple as choosing a homemade meal over fast food or picking fresh fruit instead of processed snacks. These small decisions, repeated every day, will shape a lifestyle that feels good from the inside out. Every healthy choice you make is an investment in your future self.

Along the way, be kind to yourself. Some days will be easier than others, and that is perfectly normal. This is not a race or a competition. It is a lifelong relationship with your health, your happiness, and your connection to the world around you. The Mediterranean lifestyle invites you to slow down, savor the moment, and celebrate the beauty of real food and real living.

You are not just changing the way you eat. You are changing the way you live. By choosing this path, you are embracing a more vibrant and balanced life. You are building habits that will nourish you for years to come, both physically and emotionally.

So, keep cooking, keep exploring, and keep believing in the power of small, consistent steps. Your kitchen is now a place of inspiration, and your meals are moments of love and care for yourself and the ones you share them with. The journey continues, and the best is yet to come.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Measurement Conversion Chart

### Volume Measurements

Metric	US Measure-ment	Imperial
1 milliliter (ml)	0.034 fluid ounces (fl oz)	0.035 Impe-rial fl oz
5 ml	1 tsp. (tsp)	1 tsp
15 ml	1 tablespoon (tbsp)	1 tbsp
30 ml	1 fluid ounce (fl oz)	1 fl oz
240 ml	1 cup	1 Imperial cup
500 ml	2 cups (1 pint)	1.05 pints
1 liter (L)	4.2 cups (1 quart)	1.76 pints

### Weight Measurements

Metric	US Measurement	Imperial
1 gram (g)	0.035 ounces (oz)	0.035 oz
100 g	3.5 oz	3.5 oz
500 g	1.1 pounds (lbs.)	1.1 lb
1 kilogram (kg)	2.2 lb	2.2 lb

### Oven Temperature Conversions

Fahrenheit (degrees F)	Celsius (degrees C)	Gas Mark
250 degrees F	120 degrees C	½
300 degrees F	150 degrees C	2
350 degrees F	180 degrees C	4
400 degrees F	200 degrees C	6
425 degrees F	220 degrees C	7
475 degrees F	240 degrees C	9

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