

# Mediterranean Diet Cookbook for Beginners:

A Science-Based Approach to Healthy Eating with Simple,  
Delicious Recipes for Lifelong Health, a 30-Day Meal Plan  
with Calorie Calculations

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# Introduction

## From the author

I am pleased to welcome you. While writing this book, I aimed to create a collection of recipes and a comprehensive guide for those striving for change. That is why, in addition to ready-made recipes, you will also find sauces, side dishes, and ingredient substitution options. This was done to help you create a personalized meal plan that suits your needs.

For your convenience, each dish includes a calorie count, providing you with the necessary information to make informed choices and stay within your daily caloric intake.

Let me share a few words about why I chose Mediterranean cuisine: these dishes are infused with Italy's sunshine, the sea breeze's freshness, and the cozy atmosphere of a Madrid courtyard. But the main reason is, of course, the incredible variety that is hard to find elsewhere. Prepare for a culinary journey filled with diverse flavors and textures!

So, I invite you on an unforgettable gastronomic journey!

### **Welcome to the Mediterranean Lifestyle**

The Mediterranean diet is more than just a meal plan—it's a way of life. Originating in the culinary traditions of countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, this diet is renowned for its heart-healthy benefits, rich flavors, and emphasis on fresh, natural ingredients. This section will help you learn the key ingredients, cooking techniques, and fundamental principles that define Mediterranean cuisine and reassure you of the health benefits you'll gain.

#### Key Ingredients

A Mediterranean diet contains wholesome, natural ingredients, including fresh produce, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Here are some things to have:

#### **1. Healthy fats**

Extra virgin olive oil (a staple of Mediterranean cuisine)

Nuts and seeds (almonds, walnuts, sesame seeds)

Avocados and olives

#### **2. Whole grains**

Whole grain breads and pasta

Quinoa, bulgur, farro and barley

Brown rice and couscous

#### **3. Fresh fruits and vegetables**

Tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers

Leafy greens like spinach, kale, and arugula

Citrus fruits, figs, grapes, and pomegranates

#### **4. Lean proteins**

Fish and seafood (salmon, sardines, tuna, shrimp)

Poultry (chicken, turkey)

Legumes (chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans)

Eggs and dairy (Greek yogurt, cheese, feta)

#### **5. *Herbs and spices***

Garlic, basil, oregano, and thyme

Rosemary, parsley, mint, dill

Paprika, cumin, and cinnamon

Cooking Techniques and Fundamental Principles of Mediterranean Cuisine

The Mediterranean diet is not just about ingredients—it's a way of cooking and eating that emphasizes fresh, simple, and flavorful meals. Rooted in tradition and time-honored methods, Mediterranean cuisine is defined by techniques that enhance natural flavors while preserving the nutritional integrity of each ingredient. Below are some key cooking techniques and fundamental principles that make Mediterranean food delicious and healthy.

### **Fundamental Principles of Mediterranean Cuisine**

#### **1. Use of Fresh, Whole Ingredients**

Mediterranean cuisine prioritizes seasonal, locally sourced ingredients. Fresh vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes, seafood, and high-quality olive oil form the foundation of the diet, while processed foods and artificial additives are minimized.

#### **2. Healthy Fats as a Staple**

Olive oil is the primary fat in Mediterranean cooking, replacing butter and processed oils. Nuts, seeds, and fatty fish such as salmon and sardines also contribute heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

#### **3. Balance of Macronutrients**

Meals often include a balance of complex carbohydrates (whole grains, legumes), lean proteins (fish, poultry, dairy, plant-based sources), and healthy fats. Red meat is consumed in moderation, while plant-based proteins like beans and lentils play a significant role.

#### **4. Herbs and Spices Over Salt**

Instead of excessive salt, Mediterranean dishes derive deep flavor from aromatic herbs (such as basil, oregano, rosemary, and thyme) and warm spices (like cumin, sumac, and saffron). Fresh garlic, onions, and citrus zest further enhance flavors. A mindful eating approach is one in which food is savored and portion sizes are naturally moderated.

#### **5. Mindful, Social Eating**

Meals are meant to be enjoyed slowly, preferably with family and friends. The Mediterranean diet encourages a mindful eating approach, where food is savored and portion sizes are naturally moderated.

The Mediterranean diet emphasizes fresh, nutrient-rich seafood as a key source of lean protein and omega-3 fatty acids. Here are 10 types of fish, along with their approximate calorie content per 100 grams:

Sardines – 208 kcal

Anchovies – 131 kcal

Mackerel – 205 kcal

Tuna (Bluefin) – 144 kcal

Sea Bass – 97 kcal

Red Mullet – 117 kcal

Hake – 71 kcal

Gilt-head Bream – 96 kcal

Swordfish – 144 kcal

Cod – 82 kcal

The Mediterranean diet focuses on lean meats, emphasizing poultry, small portions of red meat, and minimally processed options. Here are 10 types of meat commonly found, along with their approximate calorie content per 100 grams:

Chicken breast (skinless) – 165 kcal

Turkey breast (skinless) – 135 kcal

Rabbit meat – 173 kcal

Lamb (lean cuts) – 206 kcal

Veal (lean cuts) – 150 kcal

Duck (without skin) – 140 kcal

Beef (sirloin, lean cut) – 180 kcal

Pork tenderloin – 143 kcal

Goat meat – 143 kcal

Quail – 123 kcal

The Mediterranean diet encourages moderation with red meat, favoring lean cuts and grass-fed or free-range options. Poultry, rabbit, and game meats are preferred for their lower fat content and high protein levels.

The Mediterranean diet includes a variety of whole grains and cereals, which provide essential fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Here are 10 types of cereals commonly found, along with their calorie content per 100 grams:

Whole Wheat – 339 kcal

Barley – 354 kcal

Oats – 389 kcal

Farro (Emmer Wheat) – 340 kcal

Brown Rice – 354 kcal

Bulgur (Cracked Wheat) – 342 kcal

Rye – 335 kcal

Corn (Maize, whole grain) – 365 kcal

Millet – 378 kcal

Spelt (Dinkel Wheat) – 338 kcal

These whole grains are a great source of fiber, complex carbohydrates, and essential nutrients. They support digestion, provide sustained energy, and help regulate blood sugar levels.

## **Key Cooking Techniques in Mediterranean Cuisine**

### **1. Sautéing with Olive Oil**

One of the most common cooking methods, sautéing, enhances flavor while preserving nutrients. A quick sauté in extra virgin olive oil with garlic, onions, or tomatoes forms the base of many Mediterranean dishes, from pasta sauces to vegetable medleys.

### **2. Grilling and Roasting**

Grilled meats, fish, and vegetables are a Mediterranean staple. The high-heat cooking method enhances natural flavors while keeping ingredients lean and light. Roasting vegetables with olive oil and herbs creates caramelization and deep, robust flavors.

### **3. Slow Simmering (Stews and Braises)**

Dishes like Moroccan tagines, Greek stews, and Italian ragùs are slowly simmered to develop complex flavors. These dishes often incorporate legumes, tomatoes, and aromatic spices for a comforting, nutrient-rich meal.

### **4. Poaching and Steaming**

Poaching fish in a flavorful white wine, lemon, and herbs broth is a common technique that keeps seafood tender and moist. Steaming vegetables preserves their nutrients while keeping them light and fresh.

### **5. Pickling and Fermentation**

Mediterranean cuisine includes pickled and fermented foods like olives, capers, and preserved lemons. These ingredients add depth and acidity to dishes, enhancing flavors while supporting gut health.

### **6. Incorporating Whole Grains and Legumes**

Cooking with whole grains (such as farro, bulgur, and whole wheat pasta) and legumes (like chickpeas and lentils) provides essential fiber and plant-based protein. Many Mediterranean dishes feature grains as a base, often paired with olive oil and fresh herbs.

### **7. Fresh and Raw Preparations**

Salads, mezze platters, and fresh fruit-based dishes highlight the simplicity of Mediterranean cuisine. Raw tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and citrus are commonly used in salads and appetizers, dressed lightly with olive oil and vinegar.

### **8. Infusing Flavor with Citrus and Vinegars**

Lemon juice, orange zest, and various kinds of vinegar (balsamic, red wine, and sherry vinegar) are frequently used to add brightness and acidity to dishes, enhancing flavors without heavy sauces or excess salt.

### **9. Baking with Minimal Sugar**

Mediterranean desserts rely on natural sweeteners like honey, dates, and figs instead of refined sugar. Nuts, yogurt, and olive oil are often incorporated into baked goods for added moisture and richness. The Mediterranean way of cooking is all about simplicity, freshness, and balance. By embracing these techniques and principles, you can create meals that are not only delicious but also nourishing and satisfying. Whether you're grilling fresh fish, slow-simmering a stew, or drizzling olive oil over roasted vegetables, Mediterranean cooking is an invitation to enjoy food in its purest form—flavorful, wholesome, and meant to be shared.

## How to Stay Consistent and Make Diet a Lifelong Habit

The Mediterranean diet is more than just a temporary eating plan—it's a sustainable way of life that promotes long-term health, longevity, and overall well-being. However, staying consistent with lifestyle changes requires planning, commitment, and practical strategies. Here's how to make the Mediterranean diet a lifelong habit:

### 1. Start Small and Build Gradually

Rather than making drastic changes overnight, ease into the Mediterranean diet. Start by:

- replacing refined grains with whole grains (brown rice, quinoa, whole wheat bread).
- Swapping unhealthy fats for olive oil and nuts.

Incorporating more fruits and vegetables into your meals.

Reducing processed foods and focusing on fresh, natural ingredients.

Small, gradual changes are more sustainable than an all-or-nothing approach.

### 2. Plan and Prepare Your Meals

Consistency comes from preparation. Meal planning ensures that you always have healthy, Mediterranean-friendly options available. Try:

- Meal prepping a batch of whole grains, roasted vegetables, and lean proteins for the week.
- Keep Mediterranean staples such as olive oil, nuts, legumes, and canned fish on hand.

### 3. Make It Enjoyable

Eating healthy shouldn't feel like a chore. Find ways to enjoy the Mediterranean lifestyle by:

Exploring Mediterranean cuisines (Greek, Italian, Spanish, Middle Eastern).

Trying new herbs and spices to enhance flavors.

Cooking with family or friends makes meals more social and fun.

### 4. Allow Flexibility and Balance

One key reason people struggle with consistency is rigid dieting. The Mediterranean diet is flexible, so allow room for occasional indulgences. If you crave a dessert or a less-healthy meal, enjoy it in moderation and return to your healthy habits without guilt.

### 5. Make Dining Out Mediterranean-Friendly

Eating out doesn't have to derail your progress. When dining at restaurants:

Opt for grilled fish or lean meats instead of fried options.

Choose vegetable-based dishes and whole grains when possible.

Ask for olive oil-based dressings instead of creamy ones.

### 6. Incorporate Daily Movement

The Mediterranean lifestyle isn't just about food—it also emphasizes physical activity. Stay consistent by:

Walking more throughout the day.

Engaging in activities you enjoy, like swimming, dancing, or cycling.

Prioritizing movement as part of your routine rather than treating it as a chore.

### 7. Stay Inspired and Keep Learning

To support long-term motivation, keep educating yourself about the benefits of the Mediterranean diet. Try:

Reading books and articles about Mediterranean nutrition. Following Mediterranean-inspired food bloggers for new recipes. Joining a community of like-minded individuals who share your interest in this lifestyle.

## 8. Focus on the Big Picture

Consistency isn't about being perfect—it's about making better choices most of the time. Focus on long-term habits rather than quick fixes and remind yourself why you chose this lifestyle in the first place: for better health, energy, and longevity.

By taking small, sustainable steps and enjoying the journey, you can make the Mediterranean diet an effortless and lifelong habit.

Chapter 1: Mediterranean  
Breakfasts – A Healthy  
Start to the Day

## Greek Yogurt & Honey Parfait with Nuts and Berries

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 0 min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups plain full-fat Greek yogurt
- ½ cup mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- ¼ cup granola (without added sugar)
- 2 tbsp chopped walnuts
- 2 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon

### Directions

1. Spoon Greek yogurt evenly as the first layer in two serving glasses or bowls.
2. Add a layer of mixed berries, granola, and walnuts.
3. Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with cinnamon.
4. Repeat layering if desired, then serve at once or chill for a few minutes.

Nutritional Information: 242.5 calories, 10.5g protein, 31.5g carbohydrates, 10.5g fat, 4.0g fiber, 5.0mg cholesterol, 35.0mg sodium, 220.0mg potassium

## *Avocado & Feta Toast on Whole-Grain Bread*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 slices whole-grain bread
- 1 medium avocado, mashed
- 2 tbsp feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 6 Kalamata olives, chopped
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

- Toast the whole-grain bread until golden brown.
- Spread the mashed avocado evenly over each slice.
- Sprinkle it with crumbled feta cheese, chopped olives, oregano, and black pepper.
- Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, then serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 321.5 calories, 7.5g protein, 23.0g carbohydrates, 24.5g fat, 7.5g fiber, 10.0mg cholesterol, 335.0mg sodium, 433.5mg potassium.

## *Spinach & Feta Scramble with Pita*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 10 min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped.
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 whole-wheat pita (6-inch), warmed.
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ¼ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.
2. Add spinach and cook for 1-2 minutes until wilted.
3. Pour in whisked eggs, season with salt and black pepper, and gently scramble for 3-4 minutes.
4. Once eggs are fully cooked, stir in feta cheese, then remove from heat.
5. Serve warm with whole-wheat pita on the side.

Nutritional Information: 339.0 calories, 18.0g protein, 20.0g carbohydrates, 21.8g fat, 2.5g fiber, 385.0mg cholesterol, 687.5mg sodium, 219.5mg potassium.

## *Mediterranean Chia Pudding with Almonds & Dates*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0 min (requires 4 hours chilling time) | Serves: 2

### Ingredients:

- ¼ cup chia seeds
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 3 dates, chopped
- 2 tbsp sliced almonds
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon

### Directions

1. Mix chia seeds, almond milk, honey, vanilla extract, and cinnamon in a mixing bowl.
2. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours (or overnight) until thickened.
3. Stir well before serving and top with chopped dates and sliced almonds.
4. Serve chilled and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 299.5 calories, 6.0g protein, 47.0g carbohydrates, 11.8g fat, 11.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 78.5mg sodium, 485.5mg potassium.

### *Scrambled Eggs with Spinach & Feta*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 10 min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup fresh spinach, chopped
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add chopped spinach and sauté for 1-2 minutes until wilted.
2. Whisk eggs, salt, and black pepper in a bowl, then pour into the pan.
3. Stir continuously for 3-4 minutes until eggs are softly scrambled.
4. Sprinkle feta cheese on top and remove from heat. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 254.0 calories, 15.0g protein, 2.0g carbohydrates, 21.0g fat, 0.5g fiber, 384.5mg cholesterol, 622.0mg sodium, 244.5mg potassium.

### *Scrambled Eggs with Roasted Peppers & Feta*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- ½ cup roasted red peppers, chopped
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add roasted red peppers and cook for 1-2 minutes until warmed.
2. Whisk eggs, salt, and black pepper in a bowl, then pour into the pan.
3. Stir continuously for 3-4 minutes until eggs are softly scrambled.
4. Sprinkle feta cheese on top and remove from the heat. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 262.0 calories, 15.0g protein, 4.0g carbohydrates, 21.0g fat, 0.5g fiber, 384.5mg cholesterol, 612.5mg sodium, 236.0mg potassium

*Oatmeal with Flax Seeds, Walnuts, and Sliced Bananas*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 10 min | Serves: 2

Ingredients

- 1 cup rolled oats, dry
- 1 tbsp flax seeds
- ¼ cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 medium banana, sliced
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1 tbsp honey

Directions

1. Bring milk to a gentle simmer over medium heat in a saucepan.
2. Stir in oats and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Remove from heat and mix in flax seeds and honey.
4. Top with sliced banana and chopped walnuts before serving.

Nutritional Information: 421.5 calories, 13.0g protein, 59.0g carbohydrates, 16.1g fat, 7.5g fiber, 10.0mg cholesterol, 56.5mg sodium, 585.5mg potassium.

*Whole Grain Toast with Avocado and Poached Eggs*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

Ingredients

- 2 slices whole grain bread
- ½ medium avocado, mashed
- 2 large eggs, poached
- 1 tsp olive oil (optional)
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

Directions

1. Toast the whole grain bread until golden brown.
2. Spread mashed avocado evenly over each slice.
3. Poach the eggs by simmering water and gently cooking them for 3-4 minutes.
4. Place poached eggs on the avocado toast and season with salt, black pepper, and parsley.
5. Drizzle with olive oil if desired and serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 231.0 calories, 10.5g protein, 17.5g carbohydrates, 13.8g fat, 4.5g fiber, 186.0mg cholesterol, 472.5mg sodium, 296.0mg potassium.

### *Chia Pudding with Almonds & Berries*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 0 min (plus chilling time) | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 3 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 2 tbsp sliced almonds
- ½ cup mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

#### Directions

1. Whisk chia seeds, almond milk, honey, and vanilla extract in a bowl.
2. Let sit for 5 minutes, then stir again to prevent clumping.
3. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight for a thicker consistency.
4. Top with sliced almonds and mixed berries before serving.

Nutritional Information: 203.5 calories, 5.8g protein, 22.4g carbohydrates, 10.3g fat, 7.8g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 89.0mg sodium, 182.0mg potassium.

### *Whole Wheat Toast with Almond Butter & Honey*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 5 min | Serves: 1

#### Ingredients

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- 1 tbsp almond butter
- 1 tsp honey
- ¼ tsp cinnamon (optional)

#### Directions

1. Toast the whole wheat bread until golden brown.
2. Spread almond butter evenly over the toast.
3. Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with cinnamon if desired.

Nutritional Information: 200.0 calories, 7.0g protein, 23.0g carbohydrates, 10.0g fat, 4.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 121.0mg sodium, 141.0mg potassium.

*Oatmeal with Raisins & Cinnamon*

Prep. time: 5 min | Cook time: 10 | Serves: 1

Ingredients:

- ½ cup rolled oats, dry
- 2 tbsp raisins
- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1 tsp honey
- ¼ tsp cinnamon

Directions

1. Bring milk to a simmer over medium heat in a saucepan.
2. Stir in rolled oats and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add raisins, honey, and cinnamon, mix well, and let simmer for 1-2 more minutes.
4. Remove from heat and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 384.0 calories, 14.0g protein, 68.3g carbohydrates, 8.0g fat, 5.0g fiber, 20.0mg cholesterol, 110.0mg sodium, 662.0mg potassium.

Chapter 2:  
Energizing  
Mediterranean  
Lunches

### *Classic Greek Salad with Lemon Dressing*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0 min (plus chilling time) | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 1 cucumber, chopped
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Combine cucumber, cherry tomatoes, red onion, and Kalamata olives in a large bowl.
2. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice.
3. Sprinkle with dried oregano, black pepper, and crumbled feta cheese.
4. Toss gently to combine, then serve immediately or refrigerate for 15 minutes to enhance flavors.

Nutritional Information: 118.2 calories, 1.8g protein, 5.5g carbohydrates, 10.5g fat, 0.8g fiber, 6.2mg cholesterol, 164.8mg sodium, 135.5mg potassium.

### *Chickpea & Quinoa Mediterranean Power Bowl*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cucumber, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Combine cooked quinoa, chickpeas, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, and Kalamata olives in a large bowl.
2. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice.
3. Sprinkle with dried oregano, black pepper, and crumbled feta cheese.
4. Toss gently to combine, then serve immediately or refrigerate for 15 minutes to enhance flavors.

Nutritional Information: 245.2 calories, 6.8g protein, 27.2g carbohydrates, 12.8g fat, 4.0g fiber, 6.2mg cholesterol, 242.0mg sodium, 290.0mg potassium.

## *Hummus and Roasted Vegetable Wrap*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 whole-wheat tortillas (8-inch)
- 6 tbsp hummus
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- ½ eggplant, sliced
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Toss red bell pepper, zucchini, and eggplant with olive oil, oregano, salt, and black pepper. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and roast for 12-15 minutes, until tender.
2. Warm the whole-wheat tortillas in a dry skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds per side.
3. Spread 3 tbsp hummus on each tortilla.
4. Divide the roasted vegetables evenly between the tortillas, then roll them up tightly.
5. Slice in half and serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information: 208.5 calories, 5.0g protein, 23.0g carbohydrates, 12.0g fat, 4.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 471.5mg sodium, 293.5mg potassium.

## *Tuna & White Bean Salad with Arugula*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 can (5 oz) tuna in water, drained
- 1 cup canned white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups fresh arugula
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Combine tuna, white beans, cherry tomatoes, and red onion in a large bowl.
2. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, then sprinkle with oregano and black pepper.
3. Toss gently to mix all ingredients evenly.
4. Serve over a bed of fresh arugula and enjoy immediately.

Nutritional Information: 323.5 calories, 21.0g protein, 28.0g carbohydrates, 15.0g fat, 6.5g fiber, 15.0mg cholesterol, 308.5mg sodium, 551.0mg potassium

## Whole-wheat pita Stuffed with Falafel & Tzatziki

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 whole-wheat pitas (6-inch)
- 6 falafel pieces, baked
- 4 tbsp tzatziki sauce
- ½ cup cucumber, chopped
- ½ cup tomato, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- ½ cup shredded lettuce
- 2 tsp olive oil

### Directions

1. Warm the whole-wheat pitas in a dry skillet over medium heat for 30 seconds per side.
2. Slice open each pita and spread 2 tbsp tzatziki sauce inside.
3. Stuff each pita with three falafel pieces, chopped cucumber, tomato, red onion, and shredded lettuce.
4. Drizzle with olive oil, then serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 223.5 calories, 8.0g protein, 30.0g carbohydrates, 8.8g fat, 4.5g fiber, 2.5mg cholesterol, 258.0mg sodium, 214.0mg potassium.

## Sandwiches with Soft Cheese and Tomatoes

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 4 slices whole wheat bread
- 4 oz soft cheese (cream cheese or goat cheese)
- 1 medium tomato, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped

### Directions

1. Spread soft cheese evenly on each slice of whole wheat bread.
2. Layer with tomato slices, then drizzle with olive oil.
3. Sprinkle it with salt, black pepper, and fresh basil.
4. Serve as open-faced sandwiches or press together for a classic style.

Nutritional Information: 412.0 calories, 11.5g protein, 30.5g carbohydrates, 29.0g fat, 4.5g fiber, 60.0mg cholesterol, 673.0mg sodium, 311.

## Vegetable Lasagna

Prep. time: 15 min | Cook time: 45 min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 9 sheets whole wheat lasagna noodles
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 medium bell pepper, diced
- 1 medium carrot, grated
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- 1 cup part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cook lasagna noodles according to package instructions and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a pan and sauté garlic, zucchini, bell pepper, carrot, and mushrooms for 5 minutes. Stir in diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, salt, and black pepper; simmer for 10 minutes.
3. In a baking dish, layer noodles, vegetable mixture, ricotta cheese, and mozzarella, repeating layers. Top with Parmesan cheese.
4. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for 10 minutes until the cheese is bubbly.
5. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutritional Information: 314.8 calories, 16.5g protein, 33.8g carbohydrates, 12.8g fat, 4.5g fiber, 26.7mg cholesterol, 593.0mg sodium, 491.2mg potassium.

## *Mediterranean Lentil Salad*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups cooked lentils
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 medium cucumber, diced
- ½ medium red onion, diced
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- ¼ cup Kalamata olives, sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Combine cooked lentils, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, feta cheese, and olives in a large bowl.
2. whisk olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
3. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to combine.
4. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve chilled or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information: 203.8 calories, 8.8g protein, 20.5g carbohydrates, 10.6g fat, 8.5g fiber, 6.2mg cholesterol, 318.8mg sodium, 444.8mg potassium.

## *Spinach and Feta Stuffed Whole-Wheat Wrap*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time:10min | Serves: 1

### Ingredients

- 1 medium whole-wheat wrap (8-inch)
- 1 cup fresh spinach, cooked
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 5 black olives
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Sauté garlic and spinach for 2-3 minutes, until wilted.
2. Remove from heat and mix in feta cheese, salt, and black pepper.
3. Spread the mixture evenly onto the whole-wheat wrap, then fold and lightly toast if desired.
4. Serve with a side of black olives.

Nutritional Information: 431.0 calories, 15.0g protein, 33.0g carbohydrates, 28.5g fat, 7.0g fiber, 25.0mg cholesterol, 1474.0mg sodium, 976.0mg potassium.

## Caprese Salad

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup sliced tomatoes
- 4 oz fresh mozzarella, sliced
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Arrange sliced tomatoes and fresh mozzarella on a serving plate.
2. Sprinkle with fresh basil and season with salt and black pepper.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar before serving.

Nutritional Information: 223.0 calories, 12.5g protein, 6.0g carbohydrates, 17.0g fat, 1.0g fiber, 30.0mg cholesterol, 544.5mg sodium, 165.0mg potassium.

## Greek Salad

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 6 oz grilled chicken breast, sliced
- 2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- 6 Kalamata olives, sliced
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Combine romaine lettuce, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, and Kalamata olives in a large bowl.
2. Top with grilled chicken slices and sprinkle with feta cheese.
3. Whisk olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl to make the dressing.
4. Drizzle the dressing over the salad, toss gently, and garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 259.0 calories, 22.0g protein, 7.2g carbohydrates, 15.7g fat, 2.0g fiber, 67.0mg cholesterol, 670.0mg sodium, 466.0mg potassium

## Shrimp and Farro Salad

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 6 oz shrimp, cooked and peeled
- ½ cup farro, cooked
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Combine shrimp, farro, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, and feta cheese in a large bowl.
2. Whisk olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl to make the dressing.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad, toss gently, and garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 263.5 calories, 21.0g protein, 16.2g carbohydrates, 13.0g fat, 2.5g fiber, 138.5mg cholesterol, 684.5mg sodium, 301.0mg potassium

## Chickpea Salad with Feta & Olives

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 6 Kalamata olives, sliced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Combine chickpeas, feta cheese, olives, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, and red onion in a large bowl.
2. Whisk olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl to make the dressing.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad, toss gently, and garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 295.0 calories, 9.0g protein, 28.8g carbohydrates, 16.0g fat, 5.0g fiber, 12.5mg cholesterol, 793.0mg sodium, 394.5mg potassium.

## Whole Wheat Pasta with Pesto & Cherry Tomatoes

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole wheat pasta, cooked
- 2 tbsp basil pesto
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Cook whole wheat pasta according to package instructions, then drain.
2. heat olive oil over medium heat and sauté garlic for 1 minute in a large pan.
3. Add cherry tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes, then mix in cooked pasta and pesto.
4. Toss everything together, season with salt and black pepper, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese before serving.

Nutritional Information: 258.0 calories, 7.2g protein, 22.2g carbohydrates, 17.0g fat, 3.5g fiber, 6.5mg cholesterol, 405.0mg sodium, 151.5mg potassium.

## Falafel with Tahini & Mixed Greens

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- ½ tsp cumin
- 2 tbsp whole wheat flour
- 1 tbsp olive oil (for frying)
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 cup mixed greens

### Directions

1. Blend chickpeas, garlic, parsley, cumin, flour, salt, and black pepper until smooth in a food processor.
2. Shape the mixture into small patties.
3. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and fry falafel for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown.
4. Serve over mixed greens with a tahini and lemon juice drizzle.

Nutritional Information: 286.5 calories, 9.0g protein, 33.0g carbohydrates, 13.5g fat, 5.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 459.0mg sodium, 322.0mg potassium.

### *Barley Salad with Chickpeas & Cucumber*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- ½ cup cooked pearl barley
- ½ cup canned chickpeas, drained
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup red onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Combine barley, chickpeas, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, and red onion in a large bowl.
2. Whisk olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl to make the dressing.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad, toss gently, and garnish with parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 199.5 calories, 4.5g protein, 26.8g carbohydrates, 8.4g fat, 4.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 373.5mg sodium, 280.5mg potassium.

### *Whole Wheat Pasta with Sundried Tomatoes & Basil*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- ½ tsp cumin
- 2 tbsp whole wheat flour
- 1 tbsp olive oil (for frying)
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 cup mixed greens

#### Directions

1. Blend chickpeas, garlic, parsley, cumin, flour, salt, and black pepper until smooth in a food processor.
2. Shape the mixture into small patties.
3. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and fry falafel for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown.
4. Serve over mixed greens with a tahini and lemon juice drizzle.

Nutritional Information: 286.5 calories, 9.0g protein, 33.0g carbohydrates, 13.5g fat, 5.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 459.0mg sodium, 322.0mg potassium.

Chapter 3:  
Delicious &  
Satisfying  
Mediterranean  
Dinners

## Grilled Lemon Herb Salmon with Quinoa Tabbouleh

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20 min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 salmon fillets (6 oz each)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- For the Quinoa Tabbouleh:
  - 1 cup cooked quinoa
  - 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
  - ½ cucumber, chopped
  - ¼ cup red onion, sliced
  - ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
  - 2 tbsp fresh mint, chopped
  - 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
  - 1 tbsp lemon juice

### Directions

1. Mix olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, oregano, and black pepper in a small bowl. Brush the mixture onto salmon fillets and let them marinate for 10 minutes.
2. Preheat a grill or grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill salmon fillets for 4-5 minutes per side or until cooked through.
3. Combine quinoa, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, red onion, parsley, and mint in a large bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice, then toss.
4. Serve the grilled salmon over a bed of quinoa tabbouleh, garnished with extra parsley and lemon wedges.

Nutritional Information: 541.0 calories, 26.5g protein, 30.0g carbohydrates, 35.0g fat, 3.5g fiber, 50.0mg cholesterol, 55.0mg sodium, 845.0mg potassium.

## *Baked Eggplant Parmesan with Fresh Basil*

Prep. time: 15min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 large eggplant, sliced
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup low-sodium marinara sauce
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup whole wheat breadcrumbs
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Dip eggplant slices in beaten egg, then coat with breadcrumbs. Place on the baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Bake for 20 minutes, flipping halfway.
3. Spread marinara sauce in a baking dish and layer with baked eggplant slices, mozzarella, and Parmesan cheese. Repeat the layers as needed.
4. Bake uncovered for 10 minutes until the cheese is bubbly. Garnish with fresh basil and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 270.5 calories, 14.2g protein, 22.0g carbohydrates, 15.0g fat, 5.5g fiber, 67.2mg cholesterol, 693.8mg sodium, 420.5mg potassium.

## *Garlic Shrimp with Spinach & Orzo*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 12 oz shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup cooked orzo pasta
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 30 seconds until fragrant.
2. Add shrimp, season with red pepper flakes, black pepper, and salt, and cook for 2-3 minutes per side until pink and opaque.
3. Stir in cherry tomatoes and spinach, cooking for 1-2 minutes until the spinach wilts.
4. Add cooked orzo and lemon juice, tossing everything together. Remove from heat and serve warm

Nutritional Information: 176.8 calories, 11.8g protein, 15.2g carbohydrates, 7.8g fat, 1.2g fiber, 60.0mg cholesterol, 429.5mg sodium, 258.5mg potassium.

### *Traditional Mediterranean Ratatouille*

Prep. time: 15min | Cook time: 35min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium eggplant, diced
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- 1 ½ cups cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup low-sodium tomato sauce
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

#### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 2 minutes until fragrant.
2. Add eggplant, zucchini, and bell pepper, and cook for 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in cherry tomatoes, tomato sauce, oregano, black pepper, and salt. Cover and simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Nutritional Information: 179.8 calories, 3.2g protein, 20.5g carbohydrates, 10.8g fat, 7.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 359.8mg sodium, 631.8mg potassium.

### *Greek-Style Stuffed Bell Peppers*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 4 bell peppers, halved and deseeded
- 1 lb lean ground turkey (93%)
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

#### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly grease a baking dish and place bell pepper halves inside.
2. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Cook onion and garlic for 2 minutes; add ground turkey until browned.
3. Stir in cherry tomatoes, cooked quinoa, oregano, black pepper, and salt. Cook for 5 minutes, then remove from heat.
4. Spoon the mixture into bell pepper halves, top with crumbled feta cheese, and bake for 20 minutes.

Nutritional Information: 371.8 calories, 28.2g protein, 24.2g carbohydrates, 19.0g fat, 5.0g fiber, 62.5mg cholesterol, 499.5mg sodium, 685.0mg potassium.

### *Lemon & Herb Roasted Chicken with Olives*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 35min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 4 bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs (about 1.5 lbs)
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

#### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Mix olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, rosemary, thyme, oregano, black pepper, and salt in a bowl.
2. Rub the mixture over the chicken thighs, ensuring even coverage. Then, please place them in a baking dish.
3. Scatter Kalamata olives around the chicken and roast for 35 minutes or until the internal temperature reaches 165°F.
4. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutritional Information: 340.2 calories, 23.2g protein, 4.0g carbohydrates, 25.8g fat, 0.5g fiber, 90.0mg cholesterol, 510.5mg sodium, 256.5mg potassium.

### *Grilled Lamb Chops with Roasted Eggplant*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 12 oz lamb chops, grilled
- 1 medium eggplant, roasted
- 1 cup cooked bulgur wheat
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

#### Directions

1. Blend chickpeas, garlic, parsley, cumin, flour, salt, and black pepper until smooth in a food processor.
2. Shape the mixture into small patties.
3. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and fry falafel for 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown.
4. Serve over mixed greens with a tahini and lemon juice drizzle.

Nutritional Information: 286.5 calories, 9.0g protein, 33.0g carbohydrates, 13.5g fat, 5.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 459.0mg sodium, 322.0mg potassium.

### *Ratatouille with Grilled Chicken and Quinoa*

Prep. time: 15min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 12 oz chicken breast, grilled and sliced
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 small eggplant, diced
- 1 medium bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped

#### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large pan. Add garlic, zucchini, eggplant, and bell pepper; sauté for 8-10 minutes.
2. Stir in diced tomatoes, salt, and black pepper, then let simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Grill the chicken breast until fully cooked and slice into strips.
4. Serve the ratatouille over cooked quinoa, topped with grilled chicken and fresh basil.

Nutritional Information: 234.2 calories, 18.8g protein, 18.0g carbohydrates, 9.8g fat, 3.8g fiber, 46.5mg cholesterol, 332.5mg sodium, 525.0mg potassium.

### *Baked Sea Bass with Herbs and Vegetables*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 6 oz sea bass fillet
- ½ cup zucchini, sliced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ½ cup red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Arrange zucchini, cherry tomatoes, and red bell pepper on the baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and black pepper.
3. Place the sea bass fillet on top and season with garlic, lemon juice, and parsley.
4. Bake for 18-20 minutes until the fish flakes easily with a fork.

Nutritional Information: 179.0 calories, 19.2g protein, 6.5g carbohydrates, 8.5g fat, 2.0g fiber, 32.5mg cholesterol, 327.5mg Sodium, 456.0mg potassium.

## *Tuscan Chicken with Sun-Dried Tomatoes*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 6 oz chicken breast, boneless, skinless
- ¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup fresh spinach
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Sear chicken breast for 5-6 minutes per side until golden brown. Remove and set aside.
2. In the same skillet, sauté garlic for 1 minute, then add sun-dried tomatoes, spinach, and chicken broth.
3. Stir in heavy cream, Parmesan cheese, salt, and black pepper, and simmer for 2-3 minutes until thickened.
4. Return the chicken to the skillet, cover with sauce, and cook for five more minutes until fully cooked.

Nutritional Information: 326.0 calories, 23.1g protein, 11.0g carbohydrates, 21.8g fat, 1.5g fiber, 100.0mg cholesterol, 426.5mg sodium, 508.5mg potassium.

## *Balsamic Glazed Chicken with Roasted Peppers*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 6 oz chicken breast, boneless, skinless
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup red bell pepper, sliced
- ½ cup yellow bell pepper, sliced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped

### Directions

1. Whisk together balsamic vinegar, honey, garlic, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat, then sear chicken breast for 5 minutes per side.
3. Add bell peppers to the skillet and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Pour the balsamic glaze over the chicken and peppers and simmer for 5 minutes until the sauce thickens.
5. Garnish with fresh basil before serving.

Nutritional Information: 231.0 calories, 19.5g protein, 17.5g carbohydrates, 9.0g fat, 2.0g fiber, 54.5mg cholesterol, 328.5mg sodium, 416.5mg potassium.

## Whole Wheat Pasta with Pesto and Cherry Tomatoes

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole wheat pasta, cooked
- 2 tbsp basil pesto
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Cook whole wheat pasta according to package instructions, then drain.
2. Heat olive oil over medium heat and sauté garlic for 1 minute in a pan.
3. Add cherry tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes, then stir in cooked pasta and pesto.
4. Toss everything together, season with salt and black pepper, and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese before serving.

Nutritional Information: 258.0 calories, 7.2g protein, 22.2g carbohydrates, 17.0g fat, 3.5g fiber, 6.5mg cholesterol, 405.0mg sodium, 151.5mg potassium.

## Mediterranean Barley Risotto

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- ½ cup pearl barley, uncooked
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1.5 cups vegetable broth
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup spinach, chopped
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. In a pan, heat olive oil over medium heat, sauté onion and garlic for 2 minutes.
2. Add barley, stirring for 1 minute, then pour in vegetable broth, cooking for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in cherry tomatoes and spinach, cooking for 2 minutes until softened.
4. Remove from heat, mix in Parmesan cheese, and season with salt and black pepper before serving.

Nutritional Information: 204.5 calories, 6.7g protein, 27.8g carbohydrates, 8.8g fat, 4.6g fiber, 4.0mg cholesterol, 435.0mg sodium, 355.5mg potassium.

## Greek Moussaka (Vegetarian)

Prep. time: 15 min | Cook time: 45 min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, sliced
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 medium potato, sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- ½ cup cooked lentils
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ½ cup whole milk

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly brush eggplant, zucchini, and potatoes with olive oil, and roast for 15 minutes until tender.
2. Heat olive oil, sauté onion, and garlic for 2 minutes in a pan. Then add lentils, tomato sauce, cinnamon, salt, and black pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Layer roasted vegetables and lentil sauce in a baking dish, then sprinkle with feta cheese.
4. Whisk together egg and milk, pour over the moussaka, and bake for 30 minutes until golden brown.

Nutritional Information: 580.5 calories, 21.5g protein, 66.6g carbohydrates, 27.6g fat, 17.8g fiber, 124.0mg cholesterol, 1007.0mg sodium, 1816.5mg potassium.

Chapter 4:  
Healthy  
Mediterranean  
Snacks &  
Appetizers

## Homemade Tzatziki with Pita Chips

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup plain full-fat Greek yogurt
- ½ cup cucumber, grated and drained
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 whole-wheat pita (6-inch)
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil (for pita chips)
- ½ tsp dried oregano

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cut the whole-wheat pita into triangles, brush with olive oil, and sprinkle with oregano. Bake for 8-10 minutes until crispy.
2. Mix Greek yogurt, cucumber, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, dill, salt, and black pepper in a bowl. Stir well.
3. Serve tzatziki chilled with warm pita chips.

Nutritional Information: 290.5 calories, 10.5g protein, 24.0g carbohydrates, 18.8g fat, 2.0g fiber, 5.0mg cholesterol, 386.0mg sodium, 177.0mg potassium.

## Spiced Roasted Chickpeas

Prep. time: 5m in | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 can (15 oz) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper (optional for heat)

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Pat chickpeas dry with a paper towel to remove excess moisture.
2. Toss chickpeas with olive oil, paprika, cumin, garlic powder, salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper in a bowl.
3. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and roast for 20-25 minutes, shaking the pan halfway through until crispy.
4. Let cool slightly before serving.

Nutritional Information: 137.0 calories, 3.0g protein, 12.8g carbohydrates, 8.2g fat, 2.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 221.0mg sodium, 85.5mg potassium.

## *Mediterranean Bruschetta with Tomatoes & Basil*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 small Baguette sliced into eight pieces
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Arrange baguette slices on a baking sheet, brush with olive oil, and toast for 5 minutes until golden.
2. Combine cherry tomatoes, garlic, basil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and black pepper in a bowl. Stir well.
3. Spoon the tomato mixture onto toasted baguette slices.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 153.8 calories, 2.8g protein, 19.0g carbohydrates, 7.5g fat, 1.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 272.5mg sodium, 103.0mg potassium.

## *Marinated Olives & Feta Cheese*

Prep. time: 20min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- ½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted
- ½ cup green olives, pitted
- ½ cup feta cheese, cubed
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Combine Kalamata olives, green olives, and feta cheese in a bowl.
2. Drizzle with olive oil, then add lemon zest, rosemary, thyme, garlic, and black pepper.
3. Toss gently to coat evenly. Let marinate for 15 minutes before serving.

Nutritional Information: 172.0 calories, 2.5g protein, 4.5g carbohydrates, 16.5g fat, 1.0g fiber, 12.5mg cholesterol, 532.8mg sodium, 49.5mg potassium

### ***Stuffed Grape Leaves***

Prep. time: 15min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

#### **Ingredients**

- 20 grape leaves, canned, rinsed
- 1 cup cooked white or brown rice
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

#### **Directions**

1. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 2 minutes, then mix with cooked rice, parsley, dill, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper.
2. Lay out a grape leaf, place 1 tbsp of filling in the center, and roll tightly, tucking in the sides. Repeat with remaining leaves.
3. Arrange the dolmas in a pot, drizzle with the remaining olive oil, and add ½ cup water. Cover and Simmer over low heat for 25 Minutes.
4. Let cool slightly and serve warm or chilled.

Nutritional Information: 164.2 calories, 2.0g protein, 16.2g carbohydrates, 10.8g fat, 1.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 467.0mg sodium, 89.5mg potassium.

### ***Hummus with Carrot & Cucumber Sticks***

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

#### **Ingredients**

- ½ cup chickpeas, canned, drained
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ cup carrots, cut into sticks
- ½ cup cucumber, cut into sticks

#### **Directions**

1. Blend chickpeas, tahini, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt, and black pepper in a food processor until smooth.
2. Transfer hummus to a bowl and drizzle with extra olive oil if desired.
3. Serve with carrot and cucumber sticks for dipping.

Nutritional Information: 197.0 calories, 5.0g protein, 18.0g carbohydrates, 12.2g fat, 4.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 400.5mg sodium, 297.0mg potassium.

### *Fresh Fig & Ricotta*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 2 medium fresh figs, halved
- ¼ cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tbsp chopped walnuts  
⅛ tsp cinnamon

#### Directions

1. Arrange fig halves on a serving plate.
2. Top each fig with a spoonful of ricotta cheese.

Nutritional Information: 127.0 calories, 3.5g protein, 14.2g carbohydrates, 7.2g fat, 1.9g fiber, 15.5mg cholesterol, 26.0mg sodium, 186.5mg potassium.

### *Handful of Walnuts & Dried Apricots*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- ¼ cup chopped dried apricots

#### Directions

1. Mix walnuts and dried apricots in a small bowl.
2. Serve as a quick and nutritious snack.

Nutritional Information: 121.5 calories, 2.5g protein, 9.0g carbohydrates, 9.0g fat, 2.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 0.5mg sodium, 197.5mg potassium.

Chapter 5:  
Mediterranean  
Soups & Stews

## Classic Minestrone Soup

Prep. time: 10 min | Cook time: 30 min | Yield: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 cup canned kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup small, dried pasta (shells or ditalini)
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion, carrot, celery, and garlic for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in zucchini, diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, kidney beans, oregano, black pepper, and salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add pasta and cook for 10 minutes or until tender. Stir in fresh basil.
4. Serve warm and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 206.8 calories, 7.5g protein, 29.5g carbohydrates, 7.4g fat, 6.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 482.8mg sodium, 573.0mg potassium.

## Moroccan Chickpea & Lentil Stew

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ½ cup dry lentils
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, carrot, and celery for 5 minutes.
2. Add diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, chickpeas, lentils, cumin, coriander, cinnamon, paprika, black pepper, and salt. Stir well.
3. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lentils are tender.
4. Server warm and enjoy!

**Nutritional Information:** 235.2 calories, 8.8g protein, 32.2g carbohydrates, 8.4g fat, 7.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 509.0mg sodium, 513.8mg potassium.

## Greek Lemon Chicken Soup

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup cooked shredded chicken breast
- ½ cup dry orzo pasta
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 3 minutes.
2. Add chicken broth, shredded chicken, and orzo. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes until the pasta is tender.
3. In a bowl, whisk eggs and lemon juice. Slowly add ½ cup of hot broth, whisking continuously.
4. Gradually pour the egg mixture into the soup, stirring constantly. Cook for two more minutes without boiling.

**Nutritional Information:** 182.5 calories, 13.8g protein, 14.5g carbohydrates, 7.6g fat, 0.8g fiber, 116.2mg cholesterol, 377.8mg sodium, 190.5mg potassium.

## Hearty Tomato & White Bean Soup

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup canned white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, carrot, and celery for 5 minutes until softened.
2. Stir in diced tomatoes, vegetable broth, white beans, tomato paste, oregano, basil, black pepper, and salt. Bring to a boil.
3. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Nutritional Information: 184.5 calories, 6.5g protein, 24.8g carbohydrates, 7.2g fat, 5.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 511.5mg sodium, 553.0mg potassium.

## Spinach Soup with Potatoes & Sour Cream

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- ¼ cup full-fat sour cream
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion and garlic for 3-4 minutes until fragrant.
2. Add potatoes, vegetable broth, salt, and black pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 15 minutes until potatoes are tender.
3. Stir in spinach and cook for 5 minutes, until wilted.
4. Blend soup until smooth using an immersion blender, then stir in sour cream before serving.

Nutritional Information: 199.8 calories, 4.2g protein, 25.0g carbohydrates, 10.0g fat, 2.5g fiber, 6.0mg cholesterol, 515.5mg sodium, 551.2mg potassium.

## Mediterranean Fisherman's Seafood Stew

Prep. time: 10 min | Cook time: 30 min | Yield: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 4 cups seafood stock
- 224 gr white fish (cod, halibut, or tilapia), cubed
- 224 gr shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 224 gr mussels, cleaned and debearded
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion, garlic, carrot, and celery for 5 minutes until softened.
2. Stir in diced tomatoes, seafood stock, tomato paste, oregano, thyme, black pepper, and salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Add white fish, shrimp, and mussels. Simmer for 10 minutes until the seafood is cooked through and the mussels open.
4. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 249.0 calories, 25.8g protein, 17.5g carbohydrates, 8.8g fat, 2.8g fiber, 97.5mg cholesterol, 722.0mg sodium, 725.5mg potassium.

## Spinach Soup with Potatoes & Sour Cream

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Combine tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, garlic, olive oil, red wine vinegar, salt, and black pepper in a blender
2. Blend until smooth, then chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes for the best flavor.
3. If desired, serve cold and garnish with additional chopped cucumber or bell pepper.

Nutritional Information: 103.0 calories, 1.8g protein, 9.4g carbohydrates, 7.2g fat, 2.9g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 297.0mg sodium, 356.5mg potassium.

## Fish Soup

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 12 oz white fish fillets (cod or halibut), cut into chunks
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
- 4 cups fish stock
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a pot over medium heat. Sauté onions, garlic, carrots, and celery for 5 minutes until softened.
2. Add diced tomatoes, fish stock, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Add fish fillets and cook for 5 minutes or until the fish is tender and flakes easily.
4. Stir in fresh parsley and serve hot.

Nutritional Information: 190.8 calories, 17.0g protein, 13.2g carbohydrates, 7.8g fat, 2.8g fiber, 32.5mg cholesterol, 619.2mg sodium, 708.5mg potassium

## Fasolada (Greek White Bean Soup)

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup white beans, cooked
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup carrots, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion, garlic, carrots, and celery for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in tomato sauce, vegetable broth, and white beans, boil, then simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Season with salt and black pepper and cook for 5 minutes.
4. Garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 317.5 calories, 10.7g protein, 39.5g carbohydrates, 14.6g fat, 9.1g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 734.0mg sodium, 962.0mg potassium.

## *Ribollita (Tuscan Bread and Vegetable Soup)*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup white beans, cooked
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup carrots, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup kale, chopped
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 slice of whole wheat bread, torn
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion, garlic, carrots, and celery for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in crushed tomatoes, vegetable broth, and white beans, boil, then simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Add kale and torn bread, stirring well, and cook for another 5 minutes.
4. Season with salt and black pepper, then serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 346.5 calories, 13.4g protein, 43.5g carbohydrates, 15.4g fat, 9.8g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 534.0 mg sodium, 986.5mg potassium.

## *Zucchini and Basil Soup*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 cups zucchini, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion and garlic for 3 minutes.
2. Add zucchini and cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Pour in vegetable broth, boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
4. Stir in basil, season with salt and black pepper, then blend until smooth before serving.

Nutritional Information: 110.5 calories, 2.9g protein, 10.3g carbohydrates, 7.3g fat, 1.9g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 418.0mg sodium, 425.5mg potassium.

To enhance the flavor of Zucchini and Basil Soup while keeping it healthy, consider the following tips:

### 1. Add More Herbs & Aromatics

Lemon zest or juice – Brightens the soup with a fresh, tangy flavor.

Thyme or oregano – Complements basil and adds depth.

Fresh parsley or chives – Brings a fresh, mild, oniony kick.

### 2. Boost Umami & Depth

Nutritional yeast – Adds a mild, cheesy, nutty flavor.

Miso paste (1 tsp) – Provides umami richness while keeping sodium in check.

A splash of coconut aminos or low-sodium soy sauce – Enhances savouriness.

### 3. Use Roasted or Caramelized Ingredients

Roast the zucchini before adding it to the soup for a deeper, slightly smoky flavor.

Caramelize the onions by simmering them for a naturally sweet richness.

### 4. Improve Texture & Creaminess (Without Dairy)

Blend in half a cooked potato – Add natural creaminess.

Use cashew cream or almond milk – A tremendous dairy-free way to make it silkier.

### 5. Add a Finishing Touch

Toasted pine nuts or pumpkin seeds – Give a crunchy contrast.

A drizzle of high-quality olive oil – Adds richness and aroma.

Crushed red pepper flakes – For a slight heat kick.

## Quinoa and Spinach Soup

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- ½ cup quinoa, uncooked
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups spinach, chopped
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup carrots, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion, garlic, carrots, and celery for 5 minutes.
2. Add quinoa and vegetable broth, boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Stir in spinach, cook for another 5 minutes, and season with salt and black pepper.
4. Garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 178.0 calories, 5.4g protein, 23.1g carbohydrates, 8.0g fat, 4.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 535.5mg sodium, 645.0mg potassium.

You can substitute a different grain for quinoa while maintaining a similar texture to that of quinoa and spinach soup.

### Here are some great alternatives:

#### 1. Bulgur Wheat

Why? It has a slightly chewy texture and mild nutty flavor.

How to use it? Use the same amount as quinoa (½ cup uncooked).

Cook Time: About 12-15 minutes (similar to quinoa).

#### 2. Farro

Why? It has a chewy, hearty texture that holds up well in soups.

How to use it? Use ⅓ cup uncooked farro (it expands more than quinoa).

Cook Time: About 20-25 minutes (a bit longer than quinoa).

#### 3. Millet

Why? Soft, fluffy texture but still light and slightly nutty like quinoa.

How to use it? Use the same amount as quinoa (½ cup uncooked).

Cook Time: About 15-18 minutes.

#### 4. Barley (Pearled or Hulled)

Why? It is chewy, slightly nutty, and absorbs flavors well.

How to use it? Use ⅓ cup uncooked barley (expands more than quinoa).

Cook Time: 25-30 minutes (hulled barley takes longer).

#### 5. Brown Rice

Why? It has a slightly firmer texture but still works well in soups.

How to use it? Use the same amount as quinoa (½ cup uncooked).

Cook Time: About 25-30 minutes.

### Which One is Best?

For a quick-cooking option →, Bulgur or Millet

For a hearty, chewy bite → Farro or Barley

### *Greek Kakavia*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- 6 oz white fish (cod or haddock)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium potato, diced
- ½ cup carrots, sliced
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced
- 2 cups low-sodium fish stock
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

#### Directions

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion, garlic, carrots, and potatoes for 5 minutes.
2. Add tomatoes and fish stock, boil, then simmer for 15 minutes until vegetables are tender.
3. Gently add fish fillets, cooking for 5 minutes until the fish flakes easily.
4. Stir in lemon juice, salt, and black pepper, garnish with fresh parsley, and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 333.5 calories, 20.8g protein, 29.7g carbohydrates, 15.2g fat, 5.0g fiber, 35.0mg cholesterol, 451.0mg sodium, 1202.5mg potassium.

### *Barley and Mushroom Soup*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 30min | Serves: 2

#### Ingredients

- ½ cup pearl barley, uncooked
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1½ cups mushrooms, sliced
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup carrots, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- 3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

#### Directions:

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat; sauté onion, garlic, carrots, and celery for 5 minutes.
2. Add mushrooms and barley, cooking for 3 minutes while stirring.
3. Pour in vegetable broth, boil, then simmer for 20 minutes until barley is tender.
4. Season with salt and black pepper, garnish with fresh parsley and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 210.5 calories, 7.0g protein, 31.7g carbohydrates, 7.5g fat, 6.7g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 514.5mg sodium, 658.0mg potassium.

**Chapter 6:  
Healthy  
Mediterranean  
Sides**

## Lemon Garlic Roasted Vegetables

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 large bell pepper, sliced
- 1 large carrot, sliced
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Whisk olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, black pepper, and salt in a bowl.
2. Toss zucchini, bell pepper, carrot, broccoli, and cherry tomatoes in the marinade.
3. Spread the vegetables on a baking sheet in a single layer and roast for 25 minutes, stirring halfway through.
4. Serve warm and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 146.0 calories, 3.0g protein, 12.2g carbohydrates, 10.8g fat, 3.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 319.0mg sodium, 367.5mg potassium.

## Grilled Zucchini & Eggplant with Herbs

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 medium eggplant, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp salt

### Directions:

1. Mix olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, oregano, black pepper, and salt in a bowl.
2. Toss zucchini and eggplant in the marinade and sit for 5 minutes.
3. Preheat a grill or grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill vegetables for 3-4 minutes per side until tender and slightly charred.
4. Remove from the grill and sprinkle with fresh basil and parsley before serving.

Nutritional Information: 114.2 calories, 0.8g protein, 5.2g carbohydrates, 10.5g fat, 1.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 292.5mg sodium, 154.0mg potassium

## Whole-wheat couscous with Nuts & Dried Fruits

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole-wheat couscous
- 1 cup water
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped almonds
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- ¼ cup chopped dried apricots
- ¼ cup raisins
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt

### Directions

1. In a saucepan, bring water and salt to a boil. Remove from heat and stir in couscous. Cover and let sit for 5 minutes.
2. Fluff couscous with a fork and stir in olive oil, almonds, walnuts, dried apricots, raisins, and cinnamon.
3. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information: 260.2 calories, 5.2g protein, 26.8g carbohydrates, 16.2g fat, 3.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 147.5mg sodium, 234.5mg potassium.

## Authentic Tabbouleh Salad

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- ½ cup bulgur wheat
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh mint, chopped
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- ¼ cup green onions, chopped
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions:

1. In a saucepan, bring water to a boil. Remove from heat, stir in bulgur wheat, cover, and let sit for 5 minutes until fluffy.
2. Combine cooked bulgur, parsley, mint, tomatoes, cucumber, and green onions in a large bowl.
3. Drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil, season with salt and black pepper, and toss well.
4. Serve fresh or chilled.

Nutritional Information: 119.5 calories, 2.2g protein, 13.2g carbohydrates, 7.1g fat, 2.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 151.8mg sodium, 195.8mg potassium.

## Roasted Cauliflower with Tahini Sauce

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 medium head cauliflower, chopped
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp tahini
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp water
- ½ tsp paprika

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a bowl, toss cauliflower, olive oil, garlic, salt, and black pepper.
2. Spread cauliflower on a baking sheet and roast for 25 minutes, stirring halfway through.
3. Whisk together tahini, lemon juice, water, and paprika until smooth in a bowl.
4. Drizzle tahini sauce over roasted cauliflower and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 146.8 calories, 4.0g protein, 10.2g carbohydrates, 11.5g fat, 3.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 173.0mg sodium, 339.0mg potassium.

## Quinoa Tabbouleh

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- ½ cup quinoa, uncooked
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ cup mint, chopped
- 2 tbsp green onion, chopped
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

### Directions:

1. Cook quinoa according to package instructions and let it cool.
2. Combine quinoa, parsley, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, mint, and green onion in a large bowl.
3. Whisk together lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
4. Pour dressing over the quinoa mixture and toss well to combine.
5. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a more intense flavor.

Nutritional Information: 73.5 calories, 1.8g protein, 8.5g carbohydrates, 4.2g fat, 1.8g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 84.5mg sodium, 205.0mg potassium.

## *Spinach & Garlic Sauté*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh spinach
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.
2. Add minced garlic and sauté for 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Add spinach and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until wilted.
4. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice, salt, and black pepper, and serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 40.5 calories, 1.0g protein, 2.0g carbohydrates, 3.6g fat, 0.8g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 97.2mg sodium, 153.8mg potassium.

## *Roasted Bell Peppers with Balsamic & Feta*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 20min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 large bell peppers (red & yellow), sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Toss sliced bell peppers with olive oil, balsamic vinegar, garlic, salt, and black pepper.
3. Spread peppers evenly on the baking sheet and roast for 15-20 minutes until tender and slightly charred.
4. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese before serving.

Nutritional Information: 78.2 calories, 1.7g protein, 5.7g carbohydrates, 5.7g fat, 1.5g fiber, 6.2mg cholesterol, 165.0mg sodium, 161.0mg potassium.

## *Ajvar (Balkan Roasted Red Pepper & Eggplant Spread)*

Prep. time: 15min | Cook time:30min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 3 large red bell peppers, roasted & peeled
- 1 medium eggplant, roasted & peeled
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika

### Directions

1. Roast red bell peppers and eggplant in a 400°F oven for 30 minutes, turning occasionally. Let cool, then peel.
2. Blend roasted peppers, eggplant, garlic, vinegar, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper in a food processor.
3. Slowly add olive oil while blending until smooth.
4. Serve as a spread for bread, dip for vegetables, or side for grilled meats.

Nutritional Information: 72.3 calories, 1.1g protein, 7.5g carbohydrates, 5.0g fat, 2.3g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 99.2mg sodium, 199.2mg potassium.

# Chapter 7: Mediterranean Desserts

## *Baked Apples with Honey & Almonds*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 medium apples, cored and halved
- 2 tbsp honey
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place apple halves in a baking dish and drizzle with lemon juice.
2. Mix honey, almonds, cinnamon, and melted butter in a bowl. Spoon the mixture over the apples.
3. Bake for 25 minutes or until the apples are tender.
4. Serve warm and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 156.8 calories, 1.8g protein, 24.0g carbohydrates, 7.5g fat, 3.2g fiber, 7.8mg cholesterol, 21.8mg sodium, 159.0mg potassium.

## *Greek Yogurt & Walnut Honey Drizzle*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 cup full-fat Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp honey
- ¼ cup walnuts, chopped
- ½ tsp cinnamon

### Directions:

1. Divide Greek yogurt into serving bowls.
2. Drizzle honey evenly over the yogurt.
3. Sprinkle it with chopped walnuts and cinnamon.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 135.2 calories, 6.0g protein, 12.2g carbohydrates, 7.2g fat, 0.5g fiber, 5.0mg cholesterol, 20.5mg sodium, 98.2mg potassium.

## Dark Chocolate-Dipped Figs

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 10min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 8 medium dried figs, halved
- 3 oz dark chocolate (70% cocoa), melted
- 2 tbsp chopped almonds

### Directions

1. Melt dark chocolate in a microwave or over a double boiler, stirring until smooth.
2. Dip each fig half halfway into the melted chocolate, allowing the excess to drip off.
3. Place dipped figs on parchment paper and sprinkle with chopped almonds.
4. Let sit at room temperature or refrigerate for 10 minutes until chocolate hardens.

Nutritional Information: 217.5 calories, 3.5g protein, 32.0g carbohydrates, 10.0g fat, 5.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 6.5mg sodium, 290.0mg potassium.

## Lemon Polenta Cake

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 40min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 1 cup finely ground cornmeal
- ½ cup almond flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- 3 large eggs
- ½ cup honey
- 4 tbsp butter, melted
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9-inch cake pan and line with parchment paper.
2. Whisk eggs, honey, butter, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a bowl. Stir in cornmeal, almond flour, baking powder, and salt until well combined.
3. Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake for 40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
4. Let cool before serving.

Nutritional Information: 289.2 calories, 6.7g protein, 33.3g carbohydrates, 15.2g fat, 2.3g fiber, 113.3mg cholesterol, 270.0mg sodium, 115.0mg potassium

## Date & Walnut Cake

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 45min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup butter, melted
- ½ cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped dates
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9-inch loaf pan and line with parchment paper.
2. Whisk eggs, brown sugar, butter, milk, and vanilla extract in a bowl. Stir in flour, baking soda, and salt until just combined.
3. Fold dates and walnuts, then pour batter into the prepared loaf pan.
4. Bake for 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes clean.
5. Let cool before slicing and serving.

Nutritional Information: 504.0 calories, 7.7g protein, 67.2g carbohydrates, 24.2g fat, 3.3g fiber, 104.3mg cholesterol, 409.0mg sodium, 238.5mg potassium.

## Citrus Salad with Mint and Pistachios

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 large orange, peeled and sliced
- 1 large grapefruit, peeled and sliced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp fresh mint, chopped
- 2 tbsp pistachios, chopped
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

### Directions:

1. Arrange the orange and grapefruit slices on a serving plate.
2. Whisk together lemon juice, honey, and olive oil in a small bowl.
3. Drizzle the dressing over the citrus slices.
4. Before serving, sprinkle it with chopped mint, pistachios, salt, and black pepper.

Nutritional Information: 233.0 calories, 3.4g protein, 35.2g carbohydrates, 10.8g fat, 4.9g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 146.0mg sodium, 433.5mg potassium.

## Italian Ricotta Cheesecake

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 45min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk ricotta cheese
- ½ cup cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- ¼ cup almond flour
- ⅛ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a small baking dish or springform pan.
2. In a mixing bowl, whisk together ricotta cheese, cream cheese, sugar, eggs, vanilla, lemon zest, almond flour, and salt until smooth.
3. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and smooth the top.
4. Bake for 45 minutes until the center is set and the edges lightly golden.
5. Let the cheesecake cool, then refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

Nutritional Information: 255.2 calories, 8.9g protein, 20.0g carbohydrates, 15.9g fat, 0.5g fiber, 102.7mg cholesterol, 164.7mg sodium, 118.2mg potassium.

## Greek Yogurt with Honey and Nuts

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 0 min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp walnuts, chopped
- 2 tbsp almonds, chopped
- ¼ tsp cinnamon, ground

### Directions

1. Divide the Greek yogurt evenly into two bowls.
2. Drizzle honey over the yogurt.
3. Sprinkle chopped walnuts, almonds, and cinnamon on top.
4. Serve immediately or chill for a refreshing snack.

Nutritional Information: 244.0 calories, 13.0g protein, 15.7g carbohydrates, 14.9g fat, 1.7g fiber, 15.0mg cholesterol, 33.5mg sodium, 199.0mg potassium

## *Rice Pudding with Cinnamon (Rizogalo)*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 25min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 cups whole milk
- ½ cup white rice, uncooked
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ tsp cinnamon, ground
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ⅛ tsp salt

### Directions

1. Mix milk, rice, and salt over medium heat in a saucepan, stirring frequently.
2. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat and cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until rice is tender.
3. Stir in sugar, cinnamon, and vanilla extract, then cook for another 5 minutes until thickened.
4. Remove from heat and let cool slightly before serving. Sprinkle with extra cinnamon if desired.

Nutritional Information: 211.8 calories, 5.5g protein, 37.3g carbohydrates, 4.3g fat, 0.3g fiber, 12.0mg cholesterol, 122.8mg sodium, 178.0mg potassium.

## *Italian Panna Cotta with Honey and Berries*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min(plus chilling time) | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp walnuts, chopped
- 2 tbsp almonds, chopped
- ¼ tsp cinnamon, ground

### Directions

1. In a saucepan over medium heat, warm the heavy cream, whole milk, honey, and vanilla extract, stirring until combined (do not boil).
2. In a small bowl, dissolve the gelatin in 2 tbsp of warm water, then stir into the heated cream mixture.
3. Pour the mixture into ramekins or small cups and refrigerate for at least 4 hours until set.
4. Serve chilled, topped with fresh mixed berries and a drizzle of honey.

Nutritional Information: 302.8 calories, 3.0g protein, 23.1g carbohydrates, 23.0g fat, 0.6g fiber, 84.5mg cholesterol, 33.0mg sodium, 126.2mg potassium.

## *Pomegranate and Yogurt Parfaits*

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- ½ cup pomegranate seeds
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ cup granola
- 2 tbsp almonds, chopped

### Directions

1. Layer Greek yogurt, pomegranate seeds, and granola evenly in two serving glasses.
2. Drizzle honey over the top.
3. Sprinkle with chopped almonds for added crunch.
4. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a chilled parfait.

Nutritional Information: 290.0 calories, 14.1g protein, 32.4g carbohydrates, 12.1g fat, 3.8g fiber, 15.0mg cholesterol, 44.5mg sodium, 290.0mg potassium.

# Chapter 8: Mediterranean Beverages & Smoothies

### *Refreshing Mint & Lemon Herbal Tea*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- Ingredients:
- ½ cup fresh mint leaves
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 4 cups boiled water
- 4 thin lemon slices (for garnish)

#### Directions

1. In a teapot, add mint leaves and pour boiled water over them. Let steep for 5 minutes.
2. Stir in lemon juice and honey, then strain the tea into cups.
3. Garnish with lemon slices and serve warm or chilled.

Nutritional Information: 20.0 calories, 0.0g protein, 5.2g carbohydrates, 0.0g fat, 0.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 0.8mg sodium, 11.2mg potassium.

### *Pomegranate & Citrus Detox Water*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- ½ cup pomegranate seeds
- ½ medium orange, sliced
- ½ medium lemon, sliced
- ¼ cup fresh mint leaves
- 4 cups water

#### Directions

1. Combine pomegranate seeds, orange slices, lemon slices, and mint leaves in a large pitcher.
2. Pour water over the ingredients and let infuse for at least 30 minutes in the refrigerator.
3. Serve chilled, stirring gently before pouring.

Nutritional Information: 28.2 calories, 0.6g protein, 6.7g carbohydrates, 0.3g fat, 1.5g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 0.5mg sodium, 84.8mg potassium.

## *Greek Yogurt & Berry Smoothie*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup full-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 cup mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- 1 medium banana
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ cup milk

### Directions

1. Add Greek yogurt, mixed berries, banana, honey, and milk to a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Pour into glasses and serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 260.0 calories, 12.5g protein, 37.5g carbohydrates, 7.4g fat, 4.0g fiber, 15.0mg cholesterol, 67.0mg sodium, 501.0mg potassium.

## *Classic Mediterranean Iced Coffee*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 cups strong brewed coffee, chilled
- ½ cup milk
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 cup ice cubes
- ¼ tsp cinnamon (optional)

### Directions

1. Brew strong coffee and let it cool to room temperature or chill in the refrigerator.
2. Combine chilled coffee, milk, and honey in a tall glass. Stir well.
3. Add ice cubes and sprinkle with cinnamon, if desired.
4. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Nutritional Information: 65.5 calories, 1.5g protein, 11.0g carbohydrates, 1.5g fat, 0.0g fiber, 5.0mg cholesterol, 28.0mg sodium, 201.0mg potassium.

## Smoothie with Spinach

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh spinach
- 1 medium banana
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup plain, non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp honey

### Directions

1. Add spinach, banana, almond milk, Greek yogurt, chia seeds, and honey to a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Pour into glasses and serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 138.0 calories, 7.5g protein, 21.8g carbohydrates, 3.4g fat, 4.5g fiber, 2.5 mg cholesterol, 113.5mg sodium, 412.0mg potassium.

## Mediterranean Smoothie (Banana, Yogurt, Flaxseeds)

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 1 medium banana
- ¾ cup whole milk Greek yogurt
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ tsp cinnamon

### Directions

1. Combine banana, Greek yogurt, milk, flaxseeds, honey, and cinnamon in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Pour into glasses and serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 224.5 calories, 10.8g protein, 29.3g carbohydrates, 8.2g fat, 2.7g fiber, 17.0mg cholesterol, 52.5mg sodium, 417.0mg potassium

# Chapter 9: Mediterranean sauces

### *Extra Virgin Olive Oil & Lemon Dressing*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, Dijon mustard, oregano, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Continue whisking until the mixture is well combined and emulsified.
3. Use immediately or store in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.
4. Shake or whisk before using as a salad dressing or marinade, or drizzle over grilled vegetables or seafood.

Nutritional Information: 125.5 calories, 0.2g protein, 1.5g carbohydrates, 13.6g fat, 0.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 86.5mg sodium, 19.5mg potassium.

### *Spanish Salsa Verde*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup parsley, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp capers, drained
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

#### Directions:

1. Blend or process olive oil, parsley, garlic, lemon juice, capers, red wine vinegar, salt, and black pepper in a food processor until smooth.
2. Blend until smooth or slightly chunky, depending on preference.
3. Transfer to a bowl and let sit for 10 minutes to allow flavors to develop.
4. Use as a sauce for grilled fish, roasted vegetables, or as a dip.

Nutritional Information: 127.8 calories, 0.4g protein, 1.9g carbohydrates, 13.6g fat, 0.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 138.2mg sodium, 64.5mg potassium.

### *Italian Gremolata*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp lemon zest
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Mix parsley, lemon zest, garlic, olive oil, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Mix well to combine and let sit for 5 minutes to allow flavors to blend.
3. Use as a garnish for grilled fish, meats, vegetables, or pasta dishes.

Nutritional Information: 36.0 calories, 0.4g protein, 1.4g carbohydrates, 3.5g fat, 0.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 75.5mg sodium, 54.5mg potassium

### *Garlic Aioli*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

#### Ingredients

- 1 large egg yolk
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

#### Directions

1. Whisk together egg yolk, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, garlic, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Slowly drizzle in olive oil, whisking constantly until the mixture emulsifies into a creamy texture.
3. Adjust seasoning as needed and refrigerate for at least 10 minutes before serving.
4. Use as a dip, sandwich spread, or sauce for seafood and vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 137.2 calories, 0.8g protein, 1.1g carbohydrates, 14.7g fat, 0.1g fiber, 46.0mg cholesterol, 88.5mg sodium, 19.8mg potassium.

## Herbed Olive Oil Dip

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp dried basil
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Mix olive oil, garlic, oregano, basil, red pepper flakes, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Stir well and let sit for 10 minutes to allow flavors to infuse.
3. Serve as a dip for bread, drizzle over roasted vegetables, or use as a salad dressing.

Nutritional Information: 124.5 calories, 0.2g protein, 1.3g carbohydrates, 13.5g fat, 0.3g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 72.8mg sodium, 21.0mg potassium.

## Tzatziki

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 cup Greek yogurt (whole milk)
- ½ cup cucumber, grated and drained
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp fresh dill, chopped
- ⅛ tsp salt
- ⅛ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. In a bowl, combine Greek yogurt, cucumber, garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, dill, salt, and black pepper.
2. Mix well until smooth and let sit for 10 minutes for flavors to meld.
3. Serve as a dip, spread, or sauce for grilled meats, pita, or vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 89.5 calories, 5.2g protein, 3.2g carbohydrates, 6.3g fat, 0.2g fiber, 8.2mg cholesterol, 93.2mg sodium, 89.2mg potassium

## Labneh

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 cups Greek yogurt (whole milk)
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp za'atar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Place Greek yogurt in a cheesecloth-lined strainer over a bowl and let drain for 12-24 hours in the refrigerator for a thick consistency.
2. Transfer the thickened yogurt to a serving dish and drizzle with olive oil.
3. Sprinkle it with za'atar, salt, and black pepper.
4. Serve as a spread with pita bread, fresh vegetables, or as a dip.

Nutritional Information: 171.8 calories, 10.1g protein, 4.5g carbohydrates, 12.5g fat, 0.2g fiber, 16.5mg cholesterol, 185.2mg sodium, 124.5mg potassium.

## Skordalia (Greek Garlic & Potato Dip)

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 2 medium russet potatoes, boiled and mashed
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Boil potatoes until fork-tender, then drain and mash until smooth.
2. Mix mashed potatoes with garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and black pepper in a bowl.
3. Stir well until creamy and smooth.
4. Serve as a dip with pita bread, grilled vegetables, or as a side for seafood.

Nutritional Information: 173.2 calories, 2.0g protein, 19.6g carbohydrates, 10.6g fat, 1.7g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 296.0mg sodium, 360.0mg potassium.

### *Toum (Lebanese Garlic Sauce)*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup garlic cloves (about 40 cloves), peeled
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup cold water

#### Directions

1. In a food processor, pulse garlic and salt until finely minced.
2. While blending, slowly drizzle olive oil and lemon juice in small amounts, alternating between the two, to create a smooth, emulsified sauce.
3. Add cold water to achieve the desired consistency and blend again.
4. Serve as a dip, spread, or condiment for grilled meats, vegetables, and pita bread.

Nutritional Information: 350.2 calories, 1.4g protein, 7.3g carbohydrates, 36.0g fat, 0.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 196.3mg sodium, 109.5mg potassium

### *Tarator Sauce (Yogurt, Tahini, and Garlic – Middle Eastern)*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup Greek yogurt (whole milk)
- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ cup cold water

#### Directions

1. Whisk together Greek yogurt, tahini, garlic, lemon juice, and salt in a bowl.
2. Gradually add cold water, stirring until smooth and creamy.
3. Let sit for 10 minutes to enhance flavors.
4. Serve as a dip, dressing, or sauce for grilled meats, falafel, or roasted vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 98.8 calories, 5.1g protein, 4.4g carbohydrates, 7.2g fat, 0.6g fiber, 5.5mg cholesterol, 113.2mg sodium, 85.7mg potassium.

## Romesco Sauce

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 1 cup roasted red bell peppers, chopped
- ¼ cup almonds, toasted
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. In a food processor, blend roasted red bell peppers, almonds, garlic, red wine vinegar, smoked paprika, salt, and black pepper until smooth.
2. While blending, add olive oil until fully incorporated and creamy.
3. Let the sauce sit for 10 minutes to allow flavors to meld.
4. Serve as a dip, spread, or sauce for grilled meats, fish, or roasted vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 105.5 calories, 1.7g protein, 3.4g carbohydrates, 10.1g fat, 1.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 97.8mg sodium, 89.2mg potassium.

## Shakshuka Sauce (Tomato, Peppers, and Spices)

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups crushed tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add onion and red bell pepper, and sauté until soft (about 5 minutes).
2. Stir in garlic, smoked paprika, cumin, salt, and black pepper, cooking for one more minute.
3. Add crushed tomatoes and tomato paste, stirring well. Simmer for 10 minutes until thickened.
4. Serve as a base for shakshuka (with eggs) or as a sauce for grilled meats, seafood, or vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 68.5 calories, 1.1g protein, 6.1g carbohydrates, 5.0g fat, 1.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 103.8mg sodium, 192.7mg potassium

## Marinara Sauce (Italian Tomato & Herb Sauce)

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups crushed tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook for 3-4 minutes until soft.
2. Stir in garlic and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Add crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, oregano, basil, salt, and black pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Serve over pasta, grilled vegetables, or as a dip for bread.

Nutritional Information: 61.2 calories, 0.9g protein, 4.8g carbohydrates, 4.9g fat, 1.0g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 102.7mg sodium, 152.2mg potassium.

## Pesto

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh basil, packed
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Combine basil, pine nuts, Parmesan cheese, and garlic in a food processor.
2. Pulse a few times, then slowly drizzle in olive oil while blending.
3. Add lemon juice, salt, and black pepper, then blend until smooth.
4. Serve over pasta, grilled vegetables, or as a dip for bread.

Nutritional Information: 133.8 calories, 2.6g protein, 1.8g carbohydrates, 13.4g fat, 0.5g fiber, 3.3mg cholesterol, 172.7mg sodium, 68.7mg potassium

## *Chimichurri (Herbed Sauce with Parsley & Garlic)*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- 1 cup fresh parsley, packed
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, packed
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes

### Directions

1. Finely chop parsley, cilantro, and garlic, or blend in a food processor.
2. Stir in red wine vinegar, oregano, salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes.
3. Slowly drizzle in olive oil while mixing to combine.
4. Serve over grilled meats, fish, roasted vegetables, or as a dip for bread.

Nutritional Information: 88.2 calories, 0.5g protein, 1.6g carbohydrates, 9.1g fat, 0.6g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 103.2mg sodium, 86.0mg potassium.

## *Italian Vinaigrette*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 6

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

### Directions

1. Whisk together red wine vinegar, minced garlic, Dijon mustard, oregano, salt, and black pepper in a small bowl.
2. Slowly drizzle in olive oil while whisking continuously to emulsify the dressing.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.
4. Serve over salads, roasted vegetables, or as a marinade for grilled meats.

Nutritional Information: 84.5 calories, 0.2g protein, 0.8g carbohydrates, 9.1g fat, 0.2g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 115.5mg sodium, 13.0mg potassium.

## Balsamic Reduction

Prep. time: 5min | Cook time: 15min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar (optional)

### Directions

1. Combine balsamic vinegar and brown sugar (if using) in a small saucepan over medium heat.
2. Stir occasionally and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce heat to low and let simmer for about 12-15 minutes until the mixture thickens and reduces by half.
3. Remove from heat and let it cool; it will continue to thicken as it cools.
4. Use immediately or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

Nutritional Information: 56 calories, 0g protein, 12g carbohydrates, 0g fat, 0g fiber, 0mg cholesterol, 5 mg sodium, 35mg potassium.

## Sumac Dressing

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sumac
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

### Directions:

1. In a small bowl or jar, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, red wine vinegar, sumac, honey, Dijon mustard, minced garlic, salt, and black pepper.
2. Mix well until emulsified or shake vigorously if using a jar with a lid.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Use at once or store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Nutritional Information: 92 calories, 0g protein, 2g carbohydrates, 9g fat, 0g fiber, 0mg cholesterol, 60mg sodium, 22mg potassium

## Pomegranate Molasses Dressing

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 0min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon honey (optional)
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

### Directions

1. In a small bowl or jar, whisk together pomegranate molasses, olive oil, lemon juice, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, honey (if using), minced garlic, salt, and black pepper.
2. Mix well until emulsified or shake vigorously if using a jar with a lid.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.
4. Use at once or store in the refrigerator for up to a week.

Nutritional Information: 98 calories, 0g protein, 6g carbohydrates, 9g fat, 0g fiber, 0mg cholesterol, 58 mg sodium, 30mg potassium.

## *Caper and Lemon Butter Sauce*

Prep. time: 10min | Cook time: 5min | Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons unsalted Butter
- 2 tablespoons capers, drained
- 2 tablespoons Lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley (optional)

### Directions:

1. In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter until it bubbles.
2. Add the minced garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds until fragrant.
3. Stir in the capers, lemon juice, lemon zest, salt, and black pepper. Cook for another 1-2 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Remove from heat and stir in chopped parsley if using. Serve immediately over fish, chicken, or vegetables.

Nutritional Information: 102 calories, 0g protein, 1g carbohydrates, 11g fat, 0g fiber, 31 mg cholesterol, 180 mg sodium, 10mg potassium

# Chapter 10: Meal Planning & Mediterranean Lifestyle Tips

# Smart Grocery Shopping List for Beginners

## Tips for Smart Mediterranean Grocery Shopping:

- ✓ Shop the Perimeter – Fresh produce, dairy, and proteins are usually found around the outer aisles of the grocery store.
- ✓ Choose minimally processed foods – Stick to whole, unrefined ingredients.
- ✓ Opt for quality over quantity – Invest in good olive oil, fresh seafood, and organic produce when possible.
- ✓ Plan meals ahead – Have a list of Mediterranean-inspired meals to make shopping efficient and budget-friendly.

This beginner-friendly shopping list sets the foundation for a delicious and nourishing Mediterranean kitchen. Happy cooking!

### Fresh Produce (Fruits & Vegetables)

Prioritize seasonal, colorful produce packed with vitamins and antioxidants.

| Vegetables:  | Fruits:  | Poultry & Eggs:   | Nuts & Seeds:   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tomatoes (fresh &amp; canned)</li> <li>• Cucumbers</li> <li>• Bell peppers (red, yellow, green)</li> <li>• Zucchini</li> <li>• Eggplant</li> <li>• Spinach</li> <li>• Kale or Swiss chard</li> <li>• Arugula</li> <li>• Romaine or mixed greens</li> <li>• Onions (red, yellow)</li> <li>• Garlic</li> <li>• Mushrooms</li> <li>• Carrots</li> <li>• Celery</li> <li>• Broccoli</li> <li>• Cauliflower</li> <li>• Artichokes</li> <li>• Avocados</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lemons</li> <li>• Oranges</li> <li>• Grapes</li> <li>• Apples</li> <li>• Berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries)</li> <li>• Figs</li> <li>• Dates</li> <li>• Pomegranates</li> <li>• Bananas</li> <li>• Peaches</li> <li>• Pears</li> <li>• Melons (cantaloupe, honeydew)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken breast or thighs</li> <li>• Free-range eggs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almonds</li> <li>• Walnuts</li> <li>• Pistachios</li> <li>• Cashews</li> <li>• Pine nuts</li> <li>• Chia seeds</li> <li>• Flaxseeds</li> <li>• Sesame seeds (or tahini)</li> </ul> |

| Whole Grains:   | Legumes & Beans:  | Plant-Based Proteins:   | Dairy (in moderation):   |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat bread (pita, sourdough, or whole grain)</li> <li>• Brown rice</li> <li>• Farro</li> <li>• Bulgur (cracked wheat)</li> <li>• Quinoa</li> <li>• Barley</li> <li>• Whole wheat pasta</li> <li>• Whole grain couscous</li> <li>• Oats</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chickpeas (canned or dried)</li> <li>• Lentils (green, brown, or red)</li> <li>• Black beans</li> <li>• Cannellini beans</li> <li>• Kidney beans</li> <li>• Fava beans</li> <li>• Green peas</li> <li>• Salmon</li> <li>• Sardines</li> <li>• Tuna</li> <li>• Cod</li> <li>• Mackerel</li> <li>• Shrimp</li> <li>• Mussels or clams</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tofu (for vegetarian options)</li> <li>• Tempeh</li> <li>• Seitan</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greek yogurt (plain, full-fat or low-fat)</li> <li>• Feta cheese</li> <li>• Parmesan cheese</li> <li>• Ricotta cheese</li> <li>• Goat cheese</li> <li>• Mozzarella</li> </ul> |
| Vinegars & Acids:   | Pantry Staples:   | Herbs & Spices:   | Herbs & Spices:  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red wine vinegar</li> <li>• Balsamic vinegar</li> <li>• Apple cider vinegar</li> <li>• White wine vinegar</li> <li>• Fresh lemon juice</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olives (Kalamata or green)</li> <li>• Capers</li> <li>• Sun-dried tomatoes</li> <li>• Pomegranate molasses</li> <li>• Hummus</li> <li>• Harissa paste</li> <li>• Mustard (Dijon or whole grain)</li> <li>• Honey</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basil</li> <li>• Oregano</li> <li>• Thyme</li> <li>• Rosemary</li> <li>• Parsley</li> <li>• Mint</li> <li>• Dill</li> <li>• Cumin</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paprika</li> <li>• Turmeric</li> <li>• Coriander</li> <li>• Sumac</li> <li>• Cinnamon</li> </ul>  |

# **Hydration, a fundamental part of the Mediterranean lifestyle, is essential for maintaining health and well-being.**

## **1. Health Drink Choices:**

- Green Tea – Packed with antioxidants, green tea boosts metabolism, supports heart health, and provides a gentle caffeine lift.
- Kombucha – A fermented tea rich in probiotics, Kombucha is excellent for gut health and digestion.
- Lemon Water – A simple, hydrating drink that helps with digestion, detoxification, and vitamin C intake.
- Coconut Water—High in electrolytes, coconut water is a hydrating drink that helps replenish minerals after exercise.
- Beetroot Juice—Beetroot juice is packed with vitamins and minerals and is known for improving stamina and lowering blood pressure.
- Turmeric Latte (golden milk)—Made with turmeric, ginger, and milk (or plant-based milk), this anti-inflammatory drink can support joint and immune health.
- Freshly Squeezed Vegetable Juice—Combining vegetables like kale, spinach, and carrots can provide a nutrient boost full of vitamins and minerals.
- Chia Seed Drink – Chia seeds soaked in water create a gel-like texture that helps with digestion and provides omega-3 fatty acids and fiber.
- Apple Cider Vinegar Drink – Diluted with water and a little honey, this drink can help with digestion, blood sugar levels, and detoxification.
- Almond Milk Smoothie—This creamy, dairy-free drink is made with almond milk and fruits or veggies. It provides healthy fats, protein, and vitamins.

## **2. Sweet & Healthy Treats:**

- Chia Pudding – Made with chia seeds, almond milk, and a touch of honey or maple syrup, chia pudding is high in fiber, omega-3s, and antioxidants.
- Frozen Yogurt Bark: Greek yogurt spread on a baking sheet, topped with fresh fruits, nuts, and a drizzle of honey, then frozen for a refreshing treat.
- Banana "Ice Cream": Blend frozen bananas with a splash of almond milk to create creamy, naturally sweet ice cream that's high in potassium.
- Baked Apple Slices—Slice apples, sprinkle with cinnamon and a bit of sweetener, and bake until soft for a warm, naturally sweet dessert.
- Coconut Macaroons – These coconut-based treats are made with shredded coconut, egg whites, and a little honey or maple syrup for a chewy, low-carb option.
- Dark Chocolate-Covered Almonds – A rich, antioxidant-packed snack that combines heart-healthy almonds with dark chocolate, full of flavonoids.
- Avocado Chocolate Mousse—Blend avocado with cocoa powder, honey, and vanilla for a creamy, indulgent dessert full of healthy fats.
- Greek Yogurt Parfait – Layer Greek yogurt with fresh berries, a sprinkle of granola, and a drizzle of honey for a satisfying, protein-rich treat.

- Carrot Cake Energy Bars—Made with oats, grated carrots, cinnamon, and a sweetener like maple syrup, these bars are a healthier version of carrot cake in a portable form.

# Time-Saving Cooking Tips & Batch Cooking

The Mediterranean diet is all about fresh, wholesome, and flavorful meals, but that doesn't mean you must spend hours in the kitchen. With thoughtful planning and efficient cooking strategies, you can enjoy Mediterranean-inspired meals throughout the week without stress. Below are practical, time-saving cooking tips and batch cooking strategies to help you stay on track while maximizing flavor and nutrition.

## Time-Saving Cooking Tips for the Mediterranean Diet

### 1. Plan Your Meals in Advance

- Create a weekly meal plan that includes breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.
- Stick to a core set of Mediterranean staples to minimize grocery shopping time.
- Plan versatile meals with overlapping ingredients (e.g., roasted veggies can be used in salads, grain bowls, and side dishes).

### 2. Prep Ingredients in Batches

- At the beginning of the week, chop vegetables (peppers, onions, cucumbers, carrots, etc.) and store them in airtight containers.
- Wash and dry greens (lettuce, kale, spinach, arugula) ahead of time for quick salads.
- For enhanced flavor, marinate proteins (chicken, fish, tofu) in olive oil, garlic, and herbs a day in advance.

### 3. Use One-Pan & One-Pot Meals

- Sheet pan meals (roasted chicken with Mediterranean veggies).
- One-pot stews (lentil soup, chickpea stew, or Greek fasolada).
- Stir fries with lean proteins and whole grains.

### 4. Cook Once, Eat Twice (or more)

- Double your portions and use leftovers for future meals.
- Roast extra vegetables, cook extra grains, and grill extra chicken or fish for quick meal assembly.

## 5. Rely on Quick & No-Cook Meals

- Hummus and veggie platters with whole-grain pita.
- Greek yogurt with nuts, fruit, and honey.
- Tuna or salmon salads with olive oil and lemon dressing.
- Caprese salad with tomatoes, basil, and mozzarella.

## 6. Stock a Mediterranean Pantry

- Keep essentials on hand: olive oil, canned beans, whole grains, nuts, and dried herbs/spices.
- Having a well-stocked pantry reduces unnecessary trips to the grocery store.

# Batch Cooking for the Mediterranean Diet

Batch cooking is a game-changer when following the Mediterranean diet. It empowers you to prepare meals beforehand, reducing daily cooking efforts and ensuring that healthy options are always available. This efficient strategy allows you to take control of your meals and make healthy eating a breeze.

### Batch Cooking Strategy: What to Prep in Advance

#### 1. Grains & Legumes (Cook Once for the Week)

- Quinoa, farro, bulgur, brown rice → Store in airtight containers for grain bowls and salads.
- Lentils, chickpeas, black beans → Cook in bulk and refrigerate or freeze in portions.

#### 2. Proteins (Marinate & Cook in Batches)

- Grilled chicken, shrimp, or salmon → Season with Mediterranean spices and cook ahead.
- Hard-boiled eggs → A quick protein source for breakfasts and salads.
- Baked tofu or tempeh → Store in the fridge for plant-based meals.

#### 3. Vegetables (Roast or Prep for the Week)

- Roasted veggies (zucchini, eggplant, bell peppers, sweet potatoes) → Perfect for salads, grain bowls, or side dishes.
- Chopped raw veggies (cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, onions) → Ready to toss into meals.
- Steamed greens (kale, spinach, chard) → Add to omelets, soups, and wraps.

#### 4. Mediterranean Sauces & Dressings (Make in Advance)

- Hummus → Use as a dip or spread for sandwiches, or as a flavorful topping for roasted vegetables. The versatility of this Mediterranean staple can inspire your culinary creativity.
- Tzatziki → A cooling yogurt-based sauce for proteins and wraps.
- Pesto → Blend fresh basil, garlic, pine nuts, Parmesan, and olive oil.
- Tahini dressing → Great for salads and roasted veggies.

## 5. Freezer-Friendly Mediterranean Meals

- Vegetable soup or lentil stew → Store in portions for quick reheating.
- Stuffed peppers or grape leaves → Freeze and bake when needed.
- Homemade falafel or veggie patties → Store in the freezer and pan-fry as needed.
- Baked whole-wheat pita or flatbread → Use for dips, sandwiches, or pizzas.

### Baked Whole-Wheat Pita

**Yield:** 6 servings | **Prep time:** 10 minutes | **Cook time:** 15 minutes

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole-wheat flour
- ¾ cup warm water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp active dry yeast
- 1 tsp honey

#### Directions:

1. Mix warm water, yeast, and honey; let sit for 5 minutes until foamy.
2. Mix whole-wheat flour, salt, and olive oil to form a dough. Knead for 5-7 minutes until smooth.
3. Cover and let dough rise for 1 hour, until doubled in size.
4. Preheat oven to 450°F and divide dough into six equal portions. Roll into circles about ¼-inch thick.
5. Bake for 5-7 minutes until puffed and golden brown. Serve warm.

Nutritional Information: 176.3 calories, 5.2g protein, 32.9g carbohydrates, 3.0g fat, 2.4g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 194.0mg sodium, 118.3mg potassium.

### Homemade Falafel

**Yield:** 6 servings | **Prep time:** 15 minutes | **Cook time:** 20 minutes

#### Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups dried chickpeas, soaked overnight
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp coriander
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tbsp olive oil (for baking)

Directions:

1. Drain and rinse soaked chickpeas, then pulse in a food processor with onion, garlic, parsley, cumin, coriander, salt, and pepper until a coarse paste forms.
2. Mix in baking powder, then shape into small patties or balls.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F and grease a baking sheet with olive oil.
4. Place falafel on the sheet, brush with olive oil, and bake for 20 minutes, flipping halfway.
5. Serve warm with tahini sauce or in a pita wrap.

Nutritional Information: 112.3 calories, 3.7g protein, 12.8g carbohydrates, 5.8g fat, 3.3g fiber, 0.0mg cholesterol, 283.8mg sodium, 197.5mg potassium.

## Sample Batch Cooking Plan (Sunday Meal Prep Guide)

| Meal Component                                 | How to Prepare   | Storage                                    |
|--|--|--|
| Whole Grains (quinoa, farro, bulgur)           | Cooking in large batches is a time-saving strategy that can relieve your busy schedule. By preparing a large quantity of a dish at once, you can enjoy multiple meals without the stress of daily cooking. | Refrigerate (4-5 days) or freeze (1 month) |
| Roasted Vegetables                             | Roast eggplant, zucchini, bell peppers   | Refrigerate (5 days)                       |
| Grilled Chicken or Fish                        | Marinate & cook extra portions   | Refrigerate (4 days)                       |
| Chickpeas or Lentils                           | Cook a large batch or use canned   | Refrigerate (5 days)                       |
| Hard-Boiled Eggs                               | Boil a batch for snacks.   | Refrigerate (7 days, unpeeled)             |
| Mediterranean Sauces (Hummus, Tzatziki, Pesto) | Blend and portion  | Refrigerate (1 week)                       |
| Salad Greens                                   | Wash, dry, and store.  | Refrigerate (3-4 days)                     |

### Quick Meal Assembly Ideas Using Batch Cooked Ingredients

Mediterranean Power Bowl: Quinoa + roasted veggies + chickpeas + tahini dressing

Greek Wrap: Whole wheat pita + grilled chicken + hummus + cucumbers + tomatoes

Lentil Soup: Pre-cooked lentils + vegetable broth + garlic + tomatoes

Caprese Salad: Tomatoes + mozzarella + basil + balsamic glaze

Hummus Snack Plate: Whole wheat pita + hummus + raw veggies + olives

### Final Tips for Efficient Cooking

- ✓ Start small: Begin with batch-cooking grains, proteins, and one sauce/dressing.
- ✓ Use airtight containers: Keep foods fresh and easy to grab.
- ✓ Label & date meals: Especially for freezer-friendly dishes.
- ✓ Make it fun: Play music, cook with family, and enjoy the process!

# 30-Day Mediterranean Meal Plan

## Week 1

Day 1

**Breakfast:** Greek Yogurt with Honey, Walnuts, and Berries

**Lunch:** Mediterranean Chickpea Salad with Feta & Olives

**Dinner:** Grilled Salmon with Lemon & Roasted Vegetables

**Snack:** Hummus with Carrot & Cucumber Sticks

Day 2

**Breakfast:** Whole Wheat Toast with Avocado & Poached Egg

**Lunch:** Lentil Soup with Whole Grain Bread

**Dinner:** Greek Chicken Souvlaki with Tzatziki & Quinoa

**Snack:** Almonds & Dark Chocolate

Day 3

**Breakfast:** Oatmeal with Dates, Almonds, & Cinnamon

**Lunch:** Spinach & Feta Stuffed Peppers with a Side Salad

**Dinner:** Baked Cod with Tomatoes, Olives & Herbs

**Snack:** Fresh Fig & Ricotta

Day 4

**Breakfast:** Smoothie with Banana, Greek Yogurt, & Chia Seeds

**Lunch:** Mediterranean Tuna Salad on Whole Grain Crackers

**Dinner:** Moroccan Chickpea Stew with Couscous

**Snack:** Handful of Walnuts & Dried Apricots

Day 5

**Breakfast:** Scrambled Eggs with Tomatoes & Feta

**Lunch:** Whole Wheat Pasta with Pesto & Cherry Tomatoes

**Dinner:** Grilled Shrimp with Garlic, Lemon & Brown Rice

**Snack:** Hummus with Olives & Pita Chips

Day 6

**Breakfast:** Whole Grain Pancakes with Honey & Greek Yogurt

**Lunch:** Caprese Salad with Fresh Mozzarella & Basil

**Dinner:** Stuffed Eggplant with Quinoa & Herbs

**Snack:** Dark Chocolate with Almond Butter

Day 7

**Breakfast:** Chia Pudding with Almonds & Berries

**Lunch:** Roasted Red Pepper & Lentil Soup with Whole Grain Bread

**Dinner:** Grilled Chicken with Lemon, Garlic & Roasted Potatoes

**Snack:** Fresh Orange Slices with Pistachios

## Week 2

Day 8

**Breakfast:** Greek Yogurt with Granola & Pomegranate Seeds

**Lunch:** Falafel with Tahini & Mixed Greens

**Dinner:** Baked Sea Bass with Garlic & Herbs

**Snack:** Whole Wheat Crackers with Hummus

Day 9

**Breakfast:** Scrambled Eggs with Spinach & Feta

**Lunch:** Barley Salad with Chickpeas & Cucumber

**Dinner:** Lentil & Vegetable Stew with Brown Rice

**Snack:** Dark Chocolate & Nuts

Day 10

**Breakfast:** Whole Wheat Toast with Almond Butter & Honey

**Lunch:** Greek Salad with Olives & Whole Grain Bread

**Dinner:** Shrimp & Quinoa Stir-Fry with Vegetables

**Snack:** Apple Slices with Walnuts

Day 11

**Breakfast:** Mediterranean Smoothie (Banana, Yogurt, Flaxseeds)

**Lunch:** Roasted Vegetable Wrap with Hummus

**Dinner:** Moroccan Lamb Tagine with Couscous

**Snack:** Dates & Cashews

Day 12

**Breakfast:** Oatmeal with Raisins & Cinnamon

**Lunch:** Whole Wheat Pasta with Sundried Tomatoes & Basil

**Dinner:** Grilled Salmon with Lentil Salad

**Snack:** Greek Yogurt with Almonds

Day 13

**Breakfast:** Scrambled Eggs with Roasted Peppers & Feta

**Lunch:** Mediterranean Chickpea Stew with Whole Grain Bread

**Dinner:** Baked Falafel with Tzatziki & Salad

**Snack:** Orange Slices with Dark Chocolate

Day 14

**Breakfast:** Smoothie with Greek Yogurt, Banana & Chia

**Lunch:** Roasted Eggplant & Quinoa Salad

**Dinner:** Grilled Chicken with Zucchini & Brown Rice

**Snack:** Pistachios & Dried Figs

## Week 3

Day 15 - 21 (Repeat a variation of Week 1 with different fish, vegetables, and grains)

## Week 4

Day 22 - 30 (Repeat a variation of Week 2 with new ingredients like sardines, lentils, kale, and tahini-based dressings)

# What to bring with you?

Dear readers, I know from my experience how difficult it is to stick to a proper diet when you are away from home, so I offer a list of snacks that will always be at hand. Good luck to you, and be sure that everything will work out.

## Protein-Rich Snacks

1. Hummus & Veggies – Pack single-serving hummus with sliced cucumbers, bell peppers, and carrots.
2. Greek Yogurt & Honey – A small cup of Greek yogurt with a drizzle of honey and a sprinkle of walnuts.
3. Hard-Boiled Eggs with Za’atar – Sprinkle with sea salt and za’atar for a flavorful boost.
4. Feta-Stuffed Mini Peppers – Sweet mini peppers filled with feta cheese and a drizzle of olive oil.
5. Tuna Salad with Olives – Mix canned tuna with olive oil, lemon, and chopped Kalamata olives, served with whole-grain crackers.
6. Mini Cheese Cubes & Whole-Grain Crackers – A mix of feta, Manchego, or goat cheese with whole-grain crackers.
7. Smoked Salmon & Whole-Grain Crackers – With a squeeze of lemon for extra zest.
8. Mini Caprese Skewers – Cherry tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, and basil drizzled with balsamic glaze.
9. Grilled Chicken Strips with Tzatziki—This is an excellent source of lean protein paired with a creamy Greek dip.
10. Sundried Tomato & Ricotta Spread – Served with whole wheat bread sticks or crackers.

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## Nut & Seed-Based Snacks

11. Mixed Nuts & Dried Fruit – A Mediterranean-style mix of almonds, walnuts, pistachios, and dried figs or apricots.
  12. Tahini Energy Balls – Made with tahini, dates, oats, and sesame seeds.
  13. Roasted Chickpeas – Seasoned with cumin, smoked paprika, and olive oil.
  14. Stuffed Dates with Almond Butter – Medjool dates filled with almond butter for a sweet and satisfying snack.
  15. Dark Chocolate & Almonds – A small portion of 70% dark chocolate with raw almonds.
  16. Sesame-Covered Almonds – A crunchy, nutrient-dense snack.
  17. Halva Bites – A small piece of this sesame-based sweet treat.
  18. Olive Tapenade & Whole-Grain Crackers – A spread made from black olives, capers, and olive oil.
  19. Pine Nut & Basil Pesto Dip – Served with veggie sticks or whole-grain crackers.
  20. Fig & Walnut Bars – Homemade or store-bought Mediterranean-style energy bars.
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## Fresh & Fruity Options

21. Grapes & Cheese – A small container of red grapes with Manchego or goat cheese.
22. Watermelon & Mint Salad – A refreshing, hydrating option in a small container.
23. Apple Slices with Almond Butter – A simple mix of fiber and healthy fats.
24. Pomegranate Seeds & Yogurt – A perfect blend of antioxidants and protein.
25. Cucumber & Feta Rolls – Thinly sliced cucumber wrapped around feta and fresh herbs.
26. Melon Wrapped in Prosciutto – An outstanding balance of sweet and savory flavors.

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## Savory & Satisfying Snacks

27. Mini Whole-Wheat Pita with Hummus – An outstanding balance of fiber and protein.
28. Marinated Olives – A mix of green and black olives with herbs, stored in a small container.
29. Roasted Red Pepper Dip (Muhammara)—This delicious dip is made with walnuts, red peppers, and olive oil and served with whole-wheat crackers.
30. Fava Bean Salad Cups – Cooked fava beans with lemon juice, olive oil, and parsley in a small container.

*Thank you!*