

The **5**-Ingredient **Mediterranean Diet** for **Beginners**

100+ Easy and Delicious Recipes to Support Simple,
Balanced Everyday Eating, with a Useful 30-Day Meal
Plan Included

Emily Gross



2026 Emily Gross
All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, whether electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author, except for brief quotations used in reviews or for other non-commercial purposes as permitted by applicable law.

DISCLAIMER

This book is intended for informational and educational purposes only. The content is based on general culinary traditions and publicly available information related to Mediterranean cuisine.

Before making any significant changes to your diet or lifestyle, seek the advice of a qualified professional. The information in this book is provided for informational purposes only, and the author and publisher are not responsible for any results or outcomes that may result from the use of the materials in this book.

Any nutritional information provided is approximate and may vary based on ingredients, preparation methods, and serving sizes.

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
How the 5-Ingredient Rule Works	7
Tips for Beginners	8
Chapter 1: Understanding the Mediterranean Diet: Principles and Key Foods	9
Chapter 2 Breakfast Ideas	13
Peach & Cashew Yogurt Bowl	13
Vegetable Egg Muffins	13
Creamy Sweet Corn & Parmesan Scramble	14
Creamy Polenta with Mushrooms & Parmesan	14
Caramelized Apple Baked Oatmeal	15
Caprese-Style Toasts	15
Savory Oatmeal with Tomatoes, Olives & Feta	16
Ricotta Toast with Figs & Almonds	16
Spinach & Feta Egg Wrap	17
Hummus Veggie Wrap	17
Avocado & Poached Egg Bowl	18
Tomato Toast with Sardines	18
Zucchini Fritters	19
Ricotta & Cranberry Bake	20
Green Protein Breakfast Smoothie	24
Mediterranean-Style Granola	21
Greek Yogurt Pancakes	23
Simple Orange French Crepes	22
Chapter 3 Appetizers, Dips & Sauces	25
Mediterranean Zucchini Bites	25
Smoked Paprika Halloumi	25
Simple Avocado Smash	26
Prosciutto & Melon Skewers	26
Bruschetta al Tonno	27
Modern Chorizo, Olive & Corn Tapas	27
Roasted Garlic Cherry Tomatoes	28
Whipped Feta	28
Melitzanosalata (Greek Eggplant Dip)	29
Provencal Olive Tapenade	29
Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing	30

Tzatziki (Classic Greek Yogurt Sauce)	30
Spanish Romesco Sauce.....	31
Simple French Vinaigrette	31
Creamy Classic Hummus	32
Salsa al Pomodoro (Classic Italian Tomato Sauce)	33
Pesto alla Genovese.....	34
Bagna Cauda (Warm Italian Anchovy Sauce).....	35
Chapter 4 Salads	36
Farro Salad with Roasted Vegetables	36
Classic Greek Salad	36
Patatosalata (Classic Greek Potato Salad)	37
Provencal Tomato & Goat Cheese Salad.....	37
Maroulosalata (Greek Lettuce Salad)	38
Spanish Tuna & Egg Salad	38
Quinoa Salad with Corn & Avocado.....	39
Cucumber & Feta Salad.....	39
Mediterranean Tuna & White Bean Salad	40
Caprese	40
Smoked Salmon & Avocado Salad	41
Greek-Style Grilled Chicken Salad.....	41
Warm Lentil & Mushroom Salad	42
Roasted Beet & Feta Salad	42
Broccoli Salad with Herbs & Almonds.....	44
Mediterranean Creamy Chickpea Salad	43
Strawberry & Goat Cheese Salad	43
Roasted Sweet Potato Salad.....	45
Chapter 5 Vegetable, Grain & Legume Sides	46
Roasted Mediterranean Vegetables	46
Moroccan Apricot & Almond Couscous.....	46
Fasolakia (Greek Braised Green Beans)	47
Roasted Cauliflower	47
Bulgur with Spinach & Walnuts.....	48
Greek Lemon Potatoes	48
Mediterranean-Style Lentils	49
Simple Eggplant Caponata.....	49
Savory Paprika Chickpeas.....	50
Quinoa with Green Peas & Goat Cheese	51

Creamy Mushroom Risotto	52
Baked Eggplant with Tomato & Parmesan	53
Stuffed Zucchini with Rice	54
Halloumi-Style Vegetable Skewers	55
Chapter 6 Pasta & Soups	56
Creamy Seafood Pasta	56
Green Pesto Pasta with Peas	56
Pasta alla Norma (Classic Sicilian Eggplant Pasta)	57
One-Pot Tomato & Feta Orzo	58
Greek Cinnamon Meat Sauce Pasta	59
Tunisian Fish Soup	60
Creamy Cauliflower & Lemon Soup	61
Avgolemono (Classic Greek Lemon Chicken Soup)	62
Minestrone (Classic Italian Vegetable Soup)	63
Chapter 7 Meat & Poultry Dishes	64
Quick Lemon Garlic Chicken Bites.....	64
One-Pan Mediterranean Steak Bites with Olives.....	65
Goat Cheese & Sun-Dried Tomato Stuffed Chicken.....	66
Creamy Almond & Yogurt Turkey Skillet.....	67
Easy Chicken Cacciatore.....	68
Saltimbocca alla Romana	68
Provencal Beef Stew	69
Garlic Herb Lamb Chops.....	69
Greek-Style Spinach and Feta Turkey Patties.....	70
Lemon & Ricotta Chicken Meatballs.....	70
Chapter 8 Seafood Dishes	71
Cod Biscay Style.....	71
Oven-Baked Mediterranean Sea Bass	72
Simple Seafood Paella	73
Creamy Spinach and Leek Fish Skillet.....	74
Creamy Greek Yogurt & Pistachio Roasted Salmon.....	75
Mediterranean White Fish with Fresh Peach Salsa	76
One-Pan Salmon with Roasted Vegetables	77
Italian Stewed Calamari	78
Spanish Garlic Shrimp.....	79
Orange & Rosemary Shelled Mussels.....	79

Chapter 9 Desserts	80
Classic Tiramisu	80
Lemon Cake.....	81
Almond Cake	81
Easy 5-Ingredient Baklava Bites	82
Panna Cotta.....	82
Biscotti.....	83
Avocado Chocolate Mousse.....	83
Date & Nut Energy Balls (No sugar)	84
Protein Strawberry Cottage Cheese Ice Cream.....	84
Apple-Carrot Marshmallow Bites (No Sugar)	85
Honey Apple Oat Crumble	86
Honey Berry Sauce.....	87
Chapter 8 - 30-Day Mediterranean Meal Plan	88
Final Thoughts	94

Introduction

Welcome to a simple and accessible way to prepare Mediterranean-inspired dishes.

This book is for those who appreciate delicious food while valuing simplicity and convenience in the kitchen.

Inspired by the traditional Mediterranean way of eating, the recipes focus on fresh ingredients, balanced combinations, and easy cooking. Inside, you'll find over 100 simple and approachable recipes, each made with just five carefully selected ingredients.

This cookbook is suitable for beginners, busy individuals, and anyone looking for everyday meal inspiration without long shopping lists or complicated techniques. To make getting started even easier, the book also includes a flexible 30-day meal plan designed to support meal planning and add structure to your cooking routine.

This approach encourages a calm, enjoyable relationship with food and offers easy-to-prepare ideas that adapt to your personal preferences.

There are no strict rules here - only simple solutions that support balanced, enjoyable everyday eating. Use this book as a guide, a source of inspiration, or a starting point for creating your own Mediterranean-style dishes. Cook at your own pace, enjoy the process, and feel free to adapt each recipe to suit your taste.

How the 5-Ingredient Rule Works



Each recipe in this book is built around five main ingredients to keep cooking simple and approachable. Basic pantry staples such as salt, pepper, baking powder, olive oil, and water are not included in the ingredient count unless stated otherwise. Ready-made sauces and pastes that significantly contribute to a dish's flavor, such as pesto, tahini, hummus, and tomato-based sauces, are counted among the five ingredients. Small amounts of lemon juice or vinegar do not count toward the flavor balance, unless they play a key role in the dish.

Tips for Beginners

If you're new to Mediterranean-inspired cooking or prefer straightforward recipes, these tips will help you feel more confident and comfortable in the kitchen:

- **Choose Quality Ingredients**

With simple recipes, ingredients matter. Whenever possible, choose fresh vegetables, good-quality olive oil, and products you already enjoy. You don't need specialty items — familiar ingredients work perfectly.

- **Prep Before You Cook**

Wash, chop, and measure ingredients before you start cooking. This small step makes the process smoother and helps you focus on cooking rather than rushing from one step to the next.

- **Taste as You Go**

Flavors develop gradually. Tasting while cooking allows you to adjust seasoning and acidity according to your preference, rather than relying strictly on measurements.

- **Adjust to Your Kitchen**

Cooking times may vary depending on your stove, oven, or cookware. Use the instructions as a guide and rely on visual cues, aroma, and texture to determine doneness.

- **Use What You Have**

If an ingredient isn't available, choose a similar alternative. Mediterranean-style cooking encourages flexibility and adaptation based on seasonality and local availability.

- **Keep Cooking Relaxed**

There's no need to rush. Cooking at a comfortable pace helps you enjoy the process and stay connected to the food you're preparing.

- **Build Confidence Through Practice**

The more often you cook, the easier it becomes. Start with recipes that feel familiar, then gradually explore new flavors and combinations.

Chapter 1: Understanding the Mediterranean Diet: Principles and Key Foods



The Mediterranean diet is a style of eating based on the traditional cuisines of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, including Italy, Greece, Spain, France, and others. It is based on simple, natural products, moderation in everything, and the pleasure of eating, emphasizing not only **what** we eat, but also **how** we treat it.

This approach turns nutrition into a natural part of everyday life rather than a set of strict rules. That is why the Mediterranean diet is considered not only as a food system, but as a lifestyle that combines:

- a diet based on plant-based foods, whole grains, seafood, and olive oil
- regular physical activity
- being outdoors
- leisurely eating with loved ones
- a calmer and more balanced pace of life

In the end, it is a holistic approach to nutrition and daily habits that maintains balance and vital energy and helps build a sustainable, healthy lifestyle.

Basic principles

Now let's discuss the basic principles and products in more detail.

In the Mediterranean style of nutrition, it is essential to balance the amounts of protein, fat, and carbohydrates, with a preference for vegetable fats and complex carbohydrates. The general diet consists of 4-5 meals a day (three main meals and two snacks).

Although the choice of foods in different regions of the Mediterranean differs, the diet has several common characteristics, including:

- a large amount of plant foods
- limited consumption of animal products and meat
- regular inclusion of fish and seafood, at least twice a week

Essential Foods

The Mediterranean diet does not rely on strict restrictions. Instead, it encourages simple principles that are easy to adapt to everyday life:

- variety
- seasonality
- use of local products

Below is a list of essential foods that are characteristic of Mediterranean cuisine. At the same time, it is necessary to remember that this eating style is easily adaptable to different regions. Choose the ingredients available to you, and don't be afraid to experiment by creating your own unique combinations.

Thus, the Mediterranean diet mainly includes the following foods:

- **Vegetables:** tomatoes, bell peppers, cucumbers, squash, zucchini, eggplant, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, carrots, celery, onions, garlic
- **Leafy greens:** spinach, arugula, lettuce, Swiss chard
- **Fruits:** apples, bananas, oranges, pears, strawberries, grapes, figs, cantaloupe, watermelon, peaches, grapefruit, persimmons
- **Nuts and nut butters:** almonds, walnuts, pistachios, pine nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, sunflower oil, pumpkin oil, sesame, almond oil, peanut oil.
- **Legumes:** beans, peas, lentils, chickpeas.

- **Whole grains:** oats, brown rice, rye, spelt, whole wheat couscous, barley, farro, corn grits, buckwheat, quinoa, whole wheat bread, and pasta.
- **Fish and seafood:** salmon, sardines, trout, anchovies, dorado, hake, cod, sea bass, tuna, mackerel, shrimp, oysters, squid, clams, crab, mussels
- **Poultry:** chicken, duck, turkey, quail
- **Meat:** beef (lean cuts), veal, lamb (traditional for the region)
- **Eggs:** chicken, quai, and duck.
- **Dairy products:** yogurt, milk, cheese – feta, mozzarella, parmesan, ricotta, goat cheese
- **Herbs and spices:** dried garlic, dried onion, basil, oregano, thyme, mint, cilantro, marjoram, paprika, rosemary, sage, nutmeg, cinnamon, pepper.
- **Healthy fats:** extra virgin olive oil, olives, avocado, and avocado oil.

Mediterranean-style drinks

- **Water** is the main drink. General guidelines - about 1.5–2 liters per day.
- **Coffee and tea** are allowed without added sugar or with minimal amounts.
- **Dry wine** is allowed in minor or moderate amounts (up to 150 ml per day) and only with meals. Wine is not a mandatory element of this eating style.
- **Fresh fruit juices** are allowed without added sugar, in moderate amounts.

Foods to limit in your diet:

The Mediterranean approach does not prohibit foods, but encourages moderation and balanced choices.

- **Red meat (beef, pork)** - no more than 2-3 times a month, a portion of 90-100 g of the finished product.
- **Processed meat:** sausages, hot dogs, smoked meats.
- **Refined grains:** white bread, pastries, soft wheat pasta.
- **Added sugar and sweets:** desserts, candies, sweetened cereals, sweet drinks.
- **Refined oils:** soybean, rapeseed, and similar.

- **Unwanted fats:** margarine, hydrogenated oils, trans fats, and excessive amounts of butter.
- **Sweet and alcoholic beverages:** carbonated drinks, juices with added sugar, strong alcohol.
- **Food additives:** preservatives, artificial colors, and flavor enhancers.

In summary, instead of strict rules, the Mediterranean approach emphasizes balance and conscious product selection, leaving room for the pleasure of eating and focusing on simple, minimally processed foods.

Chapter 2 Breakfast Ideas



Peach & Cashew Yogurt Bowl

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 5 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Plain Greek yogurt — 3 cups (720 g)
- Ripe peaches, sliced — 2 medium peaches (300 g)
- Cashews, roughly chopped — ¼ cup (a30 g)
- Honey — 2 tbsp (40–42 g)

Instructions

Divide the Greek yogurt evenly among four bowls. Top with sliced peaches. Sprinkle with chopped cashews. Drizzle with honey. Serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~270 kcal Protein: ~13 g Fat: ~13 g Carbohydrates: ~27 g



Vegetable Egg Muffins

*Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4
(Makes 8 egg muffins)*

Ingredients

- Eggs — 8 large eggs (about 400 g)
- Bell pepper, diced — 1 medium pepper (150 g)
- Zucchini, grated or finely chopped — 1 small–medium (120 g)
- Red onion, finely chopped — ½ medium (75 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled — ½ cup (80 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly grease a muffin tin with olive oil. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs with salt and black pepper. Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté the diced bell pepper, zucchini, and red onion for about 5 minutes, until slightly softened. Remove from heat and let cool slightly. Add the vegetables and feta to the egg mixture, stirring to combine. Divide the mixture evenly among 8 muffin cups, filling each about ¾ full. Bake for 18–20 minutes, until the egg muffins set and turn lightly golden on top. Remove from the oven and let cool slightly before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate) (2 muffins per serving)

Calories: ~260 kcal Protein: ~17 g Fat: ~18 g Carbohydrates: ~7 g



Creamy Sweet Corn & Parmesan Scramble

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 12 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggs — 8 large eggs (400 g)
- Sweet corn kernels (fresh or canned, drained) - 1 cup (150 g)
- Parmesan cheese, finely grated — 1/2 cup (45 g)
- Milk (optional, for extra softness) - 4 tbsp (60 ml)
- Ground nutmeg — 1/8 tsp (or a slight pinch, to taste)

Instructions

Crack the eggs into a bowl. Add the milk (if using) and whisk until smooth. Heat a non-stick skillet over medium-low heat. Pour in the eggs and cook gently, stirring slowly with a spatula. When the eggs begin to set but remain slightly soft, add the corn and stir to combine. Sprinkle in the nutmeg and Parmesan cheese. Continue cooking for 1–2 minutes, stirring gently, until the eggs turn creamy and just set. Remove from heat and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~16 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~10 g



Creamy Polenta with Mushrooms & Parmesan

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 225 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Polenta (cornmeal) - 1 cup (170 g)
- Champignon mushrooms, sliced — 8 oz (225 g)
- Parmesan cheese, finely grated — 1/2 cup (50 g)
- Olive oil — 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Bring 4 cups (960 ml) of water to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add salt. Gradually whisk in the polenta. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 15–20 minutes, stirring frequently, until creamy and smooth.

Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté for 6–8 minutes until golden and tender—season lightly with salt. Stir in grated Parmesan until melted and creamy. Serve the polenta warm, topped with sautéed mushrooms.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~11 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~38 g



Caramelized Apple Baked Oatmeal

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Rolled oats — 2 cups (180 g)
- Milk or water — 2 cups (480 ml)
- Apples, peeled, cored, and diced — 2 medium apples (about 300 g)
- Ground cinnamon — 1 tsp (3 g)
- Maple syrup or honey 1/4 cup (80 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly grease a small baking dish (about 8×8 inches). Prepare the mixture. In a large bowl, combine the oats, milk, maple syrup (or honey), and cinnamon. Mix well until combined. Caramelize the apples (optional but recommended). In a small skillet over medium heat, cook the diced apples with 1–2 tablespoons of the maple syrup (or honey) for 3–4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until slightly softened and lightly caramelized. Remove from the heat. Add the caramelized apples to the oat mixture and stir to combine. Pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish and spread evenly. Bake for 22–25 minutes, or until the oatmeal is set and the top is lightly golden. Let cool for 5–10 minutes before serving. Serve warm.

Tips

For the best balance of taste and nutrition, use a 1:1 ratio of water to milk. If desired, add seeds or nuts.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~240 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~4 g Carbohydrates: ~45 g



Caprese-Style Toasts

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Whole-grain bread — 4 slices (about 160 g)
- Basil pesto — 4 tbsp (60 g)
- Fresh mozzarella — 4 oz (120 g), sliced
- Fresh tomatoes — 2 small tomatoes/1 medium tomato (150 g), sliced

Instructions

Toast the bread slices until golden brown and crispy. Spread 1 tablespoon of pesto evenly over each slice. Place chopped tomatoes and mozzarella on top. Serve immediately while the toast is warm and the mozzarella is soft.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 310 kcal Protein: 13 g Fat: 18 g Carbohydrates: 26 g



Savory Oatmeal with Tomatoes, Olives & Feta

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Rolled oats — 1 cup (80 g)
- Water and milk (1:1 ratio) 2 cups total (480 ml)
- Cherry tomatoes, halved — 16–18 tomatoes (225 g)
- Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced — 12–15 olives (75 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled — $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (120 g)

Instructions

In a saucepan, bring the water and milk to a gentle boil. Add the oatmeal, reduce the heat, and simmer for 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until creamy. Season lightly with salt and black pepper at the end. While the oatmeal is cooking, heat the olive oil in a small frying pan over medium heat. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook for 2–3 minutes, until slightly softened. Add the olives, remove from the heat. Divide the oatmeal evenly among four bowls. Top with the warm tomato and olive mixture, sprinkle with crumbled feta, and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)a

Calories: ~310 kcal Protein: ~11 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~34 g



Ricotta Toast with Figs & Almonds

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Whole grain bread — 4 slices (about 160 g)
- Ricotta cheese — 1 cup (240 g)
- Fresh figs, sliced — 6–8 figs (about 240 g)
- Almond flakes (sliced almonds) — $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (25 g)
- Honey — 2 tbsp (30 g)

Instructions

Toast the bread slices until lightly golden and crisp. Spread the ricotta evenly over each slice of toast. Arrange the sliced figs on top of the ricotta. Sprinkle with almond flakes. Drizzle with honey just before serving.

Tips

This recipe is a simple template—customize it with your favorite fruits, nuts, seeds, or soft cheeses. Whole-grain bread offers sustained energy, fruit adds fiber, and nuts or seeds provide healthy fats.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~300 kcal Protein: ~12 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~34 g



Spinach & Feta Egg Wrap

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggs — 6 large eggs (about 300 g)
- Fresh spinach — 4 cups, packed (120 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled — $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (120 g)
- Yellow onion, thinly sliced — $\frac{1}{2}$ medium onion (80 g)
- Whole wheat wraps or tortillas — 4 medium (about 240 g total)

Instructions

Heat a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Add the sliced onion and cook for 3–4 minutes, until soft and lightly golden. Add the spinach and cook for about 1 minute, just until softened. In a bowl, whisk the eggs. Feta adds enough saltiness, so additional salt is usually not needed, only pepper or spices to taste. Pour the eggs into the skillet and cook gently, stirring, until almost set. Sprinkle the feta over the eggs and cook for another 30–60 seconds, until the feta softens and melts slightly. Spoon the egg mixture evenly onto the center of each wrap. Roll the wraps tightly, folding in the sides. Place the wraps seam-side down in the skillet and cook over medium heat for 1–2 minutes per side, until lightly golden and crisp. Remove from heat and serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~18 g Fat: ~17 g Carbohydrates: ~26 g



Hummus Veggie Wrap

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 13 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Tortillas — 4 medium (240 g total)
- Hummus — 1 cup (240 g)
- Zucchini, thinly sliced - medium zucchini (240 g)
- Bell pepper, thinly sliced — $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 medium peppers (225 g)
- Olive oil — 1 tbsp (15 g)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the zucchini and bell pepper and sauté for 5–6 minutes, until tender and lightly golden. Spread the hummus evenly over each wrap. Place the sautéed vegetables on one half of each wrap and fold over. Return the filled wraps to the skillet and cook over medium heat for 1–2 minutes per side, pressing gently, until lightly crisp and warmed through. Remove from heat and serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~310 kcal Protein: ~10 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~36 g



Avocado & Poached Egg Bowl

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggs - 4 large eggs (about 100 g)
- Avocado - 2 ripe avocados, pitted and thinly sliced
- Whole-grain bread - 4 slices whole-grain bread, toasted
- Arugula - 4 cups fresh (80 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 2 tbsp (30 g)

Instructions

In a medium bowl, toss the fresh arugula with the extra virgin olive oil and a pinch of salt. Divide the dressed arugula among four serving bowls. Place one warm slice of toasted whole-grain bread in each bowl, positioning it over the greens. Arrange the thin avocado slices (fanned out) on top of the toast or alongside it. Prepare the poached eggs. Fill a deep saucepan with water and bring it to a gentle simmer. Stir the water with a spoon to create a whirlpool. Crack one egg into a small bowl, then carefully slide it into the center of the whirlpool. Cook for about 3 minutes, until the whites are set and the yolk remains runny. Repeat with the remaining eggs. Using a slotted spoon, place one poached egg on each toast. Season the avocado and eggs with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~345 kcal Protein: ~14 g Fat: ~24 g Carbohydrates: ~21 g

Tomato Toast with Sardines

(Classic Spanish toast with a Mediterranean twist)

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Rustic or whole grain bread — 4 slices (about 160 g)
- Ripe tomatoes — 2 medium tomatoes, grated or finely crushed (225 g)
- Garlic, finely grated — 1 small clove (about 3 g)
- Sardines in olive oil, drained — 1 can (about 200 g)
- Fresh herbs (parsley or basil), chopped — ¼ cup (10 g)



Instructions

Toast the bread slices until golden and crisp. In a small bowl, combine the grated tomatoes and garlic to make a fresh tomato pulp. Spoon the tomato-garlic mixture evenly over the warm toast, allowing it to soak slightly into the bread. Arrange the sardines on top of each slice. Finish with chopped fresh herbs and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~18 g Fat: ~15 g Carbohydrates: ~28 g



Zucchini Fritters

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Zucchini - 2 medium (about 400 g)
- Eggs - 2 large (about 100 g)
- All-purpose flour - 5 tbsp (40 g)
- Fresh dill, chopped - 2 cups (60 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 2 tbsp (30 g)

Instructions

Prepare the zucchini. Coarsely grate the zucchini and place it in a clean kitchen towel or cheesecloth. Squeeze out as much excess moisture as possible. This helps the fritters hold their shape and cook evenly. Transfer the drained zucchini to a large bowl. Add the eggs, flour, chopped dill, salt, and pepper. Mix until well combined. Heat the olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Spoon about 2 tablespoons of the mixture for each fritter into the pan and gently flatten with the back of a spoon. Cook for 3–4 minutes per side, until golden brown and cooked through. Work in batches if needed. Serve warm with Greek yogurt or tzatziki sauce.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~170 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~16 g



Ricotta & Cranberry Bake

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 45 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ricotta cheese - 2 cups (500 g)
- Eggs - 2 large (100 g)
- Dried cranberries - 1/3 cup (50 g)
- Honey or maple syrup - 1/4 cup (85 g)
- Semolina or all-purpose flour - 1/2 cup (70 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Lightly grease a small baking dish (about 8×8 inches / 20×20 cm). Place the dried cranberries in a small bowl and cover with hot water. Let stand for 5–10 minutes to soften, then drain well. In a large bowl, combine the ricotta, eggs, honey (or maple syrup), and semolina (or flour). Mix until smooth and well combined. For a smoother texture, blend the mixture until creamy, if desired. Stir in the drained cranberries, distributing them evenly throughout the batter. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish and smooth the top. Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until the center is set and the top is lightly golden. Let cool for about 10 minutes before slicing. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~280 kcal Protein: ~14 g Fat: ~12 g Carbohydrates: ~30 g



Mediterranean-Style Granola

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Rolled oats - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (70 g)
- Nuts (almonds, walnuts, or a mix), roughly chopped - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (30 g)
- Honey or agave/date syrup - $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp (30 g)
- Mild extra-virgin olive oil - 1 tbsp (14 g)
- Dried fruit (raisins, chopped dates, or dried apricots) - 3 tbsp (20 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 340°F (170°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a bowl, combine the rolled oats and chopped nuts. Add the honey (or syrup) and olive oil, mixing well until evenly coated. Spread the mixture in an even layer on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 18–20 minutes, stirring once halfway through, until golden and fragrant. Remove from the oven and cool completely. Stir in the dried fruit after cooling. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

Tips

Use a mild-flavored extra virgin olive oil, such as smooth everyday varieties often labeled “mild” or “balanced”. Use extra virgin olive oil with a mild or light flavor. If needed, substitute it with avocado oil (the best neutral option), coconut oil, or grapeseed oil. Honey can lose some of its natural enzymes when heated, so it is best to add it at the end or replace it with another sweetener, such as agave or date syrup. Granola is best served with plain Greek yogurt and fresh fruit, lightly drizzled with honey. Enjoy it with milk or plant-based milk or sprinkle it over parfaits and desserts for added crunch.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~11 g Carbohydrates: ~29 g



Simple Orange French Crepes

*Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 45 minutes |
Serves: 4 (Makes about 10 thin crepes)*

Ingredients

- All-purpose flour — 1 cup (120 g)
- Milk — 1 cup (240 ml)
- Eggs — 2 large eggs (about 100 g)
- Olive oil or melted butter — 2 tbsp (30 g)
- Orange - 1 medium, fresh orange juice — $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 ml), finely grated orange zest — 1 tsp

Optional: Sugar — 1 tbsp (12 g)

Instructions

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, orange juice, and melted butter (or olive oil) until well combined. Add the orange zest and sugar, if using. Gradually whisk in the flour until the batter is smooth and thin, with no lumps. Add a small pinch of salt, if desired. Let the batter rest for 5–10 minutes. This helps the crepes become more tender and easier to handle. Heat a nonstick skillet over medium heat. Lightly grease the pan if needed. Pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of batter into the skillet, tilting and swirling to coat the bottom with a thin, even layer. Cook for 1–2 minutes, until the edges begin to lift and the bottom is lightly golden. Flip and cook for another 30–60 seconds. Transfer to a plate and repeat with the remaining batter. Serve warm.

Tips

These crepes have a light texture and a fresh citrus flavor. For a healthier version, replace up to half of the all-purpose flour with whole wheat, oat, or other whole-grain flours, using a 1:1 ratio. Serve with yogurt, fresh fruit, honey, nut butter, or Honey Berry Sauce.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~220 kcal Protein: ~8 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~26 g



Greek Yogurt Pancakes

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- All-purpose flour — 1 cup (120 g)
- Plain Greek yogurt — 1 cup (240 g)
- Eggs — 2 large (about 100 g)
- Honey — 2 tbsp (30 g)
- Baking powder — 1½ tsp (6 g)

Instructions

In a bowl, whisk the eggs with honey until smooth. Add Greek yogurt and mix until thoroughly combined. Stir in flour and baking powder. Mix gently until a thick, smooth batter forms. Heat a non-stick pan over medium heat and lightly grease it if needed. Cook small pancakes for 2–3 minutes per side, until golden and cooked through.

Tips

These pancakes are lighter and less sweet than classic American pancakes. Serve them with fresh fruit, yogurt, or a drizzle of honey.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~260 kcal Protein: ~11 g Fat: ~7 g Carbohydrates: ~38 g



Green Protein Breakfast Smoothie

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 5 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Fresh spinach — 4 cups, packed (120 g)
- Banana, sliced — 2 medium bananas (about 240 g)
- Greek yogurt - 2 cups (450 g)
- Nut butter of choice (pistachio butter for best flavor) - 4 tbsp (64 g)

Instructions

Place the Greek yogurt and fresh baby spinach in a blender. Blend until smooth and bright green. Add the bananas and nut butter. Add a small pinch of sea salt (optional but recommended). The salt helps balance the earthiness of the spinach and enhances the natural sweetness of the banana and the richness of the nuts. Blend until the mixture is thick, smooth, and creamy. If the smoothie is too thick, add a splash of water or milk and blend again until you reach your desired consistency. Pour into glasses and serve immediately. A balanced smoothie provides protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats to help keep you energized for hours.

Tips

Use unsweetened yogurt for the best flavor balance. For extra creaminess, add 1/2 avocado.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~8 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~28 g

Chapter 3 Appetizers, Dips & Sauces



Mediterranean Zucchini Bites

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Zucchini – 2 medium (about 500 g)
- Olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Feta cheese – ¾ cup, crumbled (100 g)
- Sunflower seeds – ¼ cup (30 g)
- Lemon juice – 1 tbsp (15 ml)

Instructions

Heat a dry skillet over medium heat and toast the sunflower seeds for 1–2 minutes, stirring constantly, until lightly golden and fragrant. Slice the zucchini into thin rounds. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the zucchini slices, season with salt and pepper, and pan-fry for 3-4 minutes on each side until golden brown and tender. Transfer to a serving plate, drizzle with lemon juice. Sprinkle with crumbled feta and sunflower seeds. Serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~190 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~15 g Carbohydrates: ~8 g



Smoked Paprika Halloumi

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 11 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Halloumi cheese, sliced - 9 oz (250 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil - 1 tbsp (14 g)
- Smoked paprika - 1 tsp (2 g)
- Honey - 1 tbsp (21 g)
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

Pat the halloumi slices dry with a paper towel, then heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the halloumi, sprinkle with paprika on each side, and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side until golden. Drizzle with honey and season with black pepper if desired. Serve the halloumi warm with fresh vegetables or whole-grain bread or pita.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~195 kcal Protein: ~9 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~6 g



Simple Avocado Smash

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Avocados, mashed - 2 ripe (\approx 300 g)
- Fresh lemon juice - 1 tbsp (\approx 15 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil - 1 tbsp (\approx 14 g)
- Whole-grain crackers or crispbreads - 8 crackers (80 g)
- A pinch of black pepper or chili flakes (optional)

Instructions

In a bowl, mash the avocados until mostly smooth. Stir in the lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Spread the avocado mixture evenly over the whole-grain crackers. Serve immediately. Enjoy this avocado spread fresh to maintain its color and flavor.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: 210 kcal Protein: 4 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 20 g Fiber: 6 g



Prosciutto & Melon Skewers

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ripe melon (cantaloupe or honeydew), cut into cubes – about 21 oz (600 g)
- Prosciutto – 4 oz (120 g)
- Fresh basil, whole leaves – $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (10 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 1 tbsp (15 ml)
- Balsamic glaze – for drizzling

Instructions

Cut the melon into evenly sized, bite-sized cubes. Tear or fold the prosciutto into small ribbons. Thread the ingredients onto skewers in this order: melon \rightarrow prosciutto \rightarrow basil leaf. Repeat once if space allows. Place the assembled skewers on a serving platter. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with black pepper. Just before serving, drizzle with balsamic glaze for extra flavor (optional).

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: \sim 230 kcal Protein: \sim 13 g Fat: \sim 14 g Carbohydrates: \sim 15 g



Bruschetta al Tonno

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Rustic bread or baguette – 8 slices (200 g)
- Canned tuna (in water, drained) – 7 oz (200 g)
- Red onion, finely chopped – 1/2 small (50 g)
- Fresh lemon juice – 1 1/2 tbsp (22 ml)
- Capers drained, finely chopped – 1 1/2 tbsp (15 g)

Instructions

Toast or grill the bread slices until golden brown and crispy. Prepare the filling. In a bowl, combine the drained tuna, finely chopped red onion, capers, and lemon juice. Gently mix with a fork, leaving the tuna slightly flaky, then season with salt and black pepper to taste. Evenly spread the tuna mixture over the warm, toasted bread and serve.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~210 kcal Protein: ~20 g Fat: ~3 g Carbohydrates: ~20 g



Modern Chorizo, Olive & Corn Tapas

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Spanish chorizo (cured), sliced – 5 oz (140 g)
- Mixed olives – 1 cup (150 g)
- Cooked or canned corn, drained – 1 cup (160 g)
- Cherry tomatoes, halved – 1 cup (150 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil – 1 tbsp (15 ml)

Instructions

Place the sliced chorizo, halved olives, corn, and cherry tomatoes in a serving bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and gently toss to combine. Serve immediately, or let stand for 10–15 minutes to allow the flavors to blend.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~260 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~15 g Carbohydrates: ~12 g



Roasted Garlic Cherry Tomatoes

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Cherry tomatoes — 2 cups (300 g)
- Garlic — 3 cloves, thinly sliced
- Extra virgin olive oil — 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Dried oregano or thyme — 1 tsp
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper — to taste

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Place the cherry tomatoes in a baking dish. Add the sliced garlic, olive oil, and dried herbs. Season with salt and black pepper, then toss to coat evenly. Spread the tomatoes in a single layer. Roast for 18–20 minutes, until the tomatoes are softened, slightly blistered, and releasing their juices. Serve warm or at room temperature. Serve with toasted bread, alongside cheese, or as a topping for grilled vegetables, eggs, or pasta.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~90 kcal Protein: ~1 g Fat: ~7 g Carbohydrates: ~6 g



Whipped Feta

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Feta cheese — 7 oz (200 g)
- Greek yogurt — 1/2 cup (120 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil — 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Garlic — 1–2 small cloves
- Lemon — 1 medium (about 1 tbsp juice and 1 tsp finely grated zest)

Instructions

Place the feta, Greek yogurt, olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and lemon zest in a food processor or blender. Blend until smooth and creamy, scraping down the sides as needed. The mixture should be light, fluffy, and spreadable. Transfer to a serving bowl. Drizzle with a little extra olive oil, if desired. Serve with warm pita, toasted bread, or fresh vegetables.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~140 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~11 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g



Melitzanosalata (Greek Eggplant Dip)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggplants – 2 mediums (about 600 g)
- Olive oil – 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Garlic – 1 clove (5 g)
- Lemon juice – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Fresh parsley, finely chopped – ¼ cup (15 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 200°C / 400°F. Prick the eggplants with a fork in 2-3 places to help them cook faster and more evenly. Roast for 30-40 minutes, turning once, until very soft and collapsed. To check for doneness, pierce the eggplant with a knife or fork—it should slide in easily. Let cool slightly, then peel off the skin and discard it. Place the eggplant flesh in a bowl. Add olive oil, garlic, and lemon juice. Mash the eggplants with a fork. For a smoother texture, use a blender—either partially or until completely smooth. Stir in parsley, season with salt and pepper to taste. Chill for 10–15 minutes or serve at room temperature. Serve with whole-grain pita or flatbread.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~150 kcal Protein: ~2 g Fat: ~12 g Carbohydrates: ~9 g



Provençal Olive Tapenade

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Black olives (pitted, Niçoise or Kalamata) – 1¼ cups (200 g)
- Capers (drained) - 1½ tbsp (15 g)
- Anchovy fillets - 3–4 fillets (10 g)
- Garlic – 1 small clove (5 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 3 tbsp (45 ml)

Instructions

Place olives, capers, anchovies, and garlic in a food processor. Pulse until finely chopped but still slightly coarse. Small pieces of olives should be visible. With the processor running, drizzle in the olive oil until combined. Season lightly with black pepper if needed. The mixture should be easy to spread on bread, but not runny or creamy. Serving Suggestions: Spread on toasted baguette or crostini, served as part of a mezze/antipasti platter, use sparingly as a condiment for grilled fish or vegetables

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~160 kcal Protein: ~1.5 g Fat: ~16 g Carbohydrates: ~2 g



Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Pure tahini paste - 1/2 cup
- Large lemon - 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- Garlic - 2 small cloves, finely minced
- Ground turmeric - 1/2 tsp
- Warm water - 1/2 cup (add gradually to reach desired thickness)

Instructions

In a medium bowl, whisk together the tahini, lemon juice, minced garlic, and ground turmeric. The mixture may become very thick or seize — this is normal. Slowly pour in the warm water, one tablespoon at a time, whisking constantly. Continue whisking until the sauce transforms from a thick paste into a light, smooth, and velvety cream. For a thinner dressing, add a little more water. For a thicker dip, use slightly less water. Add a pinch of sea salt and whisk once more. Divide into four small ramekins or drizzle over your main dish.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 115 kcal Protein: 3 g Fat: 10 g Carbohydrates: 5 g



Tzatziki (Classic Greek Yogurt Sauce)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Greek yogurt (full-fat, thick) – 1³/₄ cups (400 g)
- Cucumber – 1 medium cucumber (200 g), grated and well drained
- Garlic – 1 clove (5 g), finely minced
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Lemon juice – 1¹/₂ tbsp (22 ml)

Instructions

Grate the cucumber and squeeze out as much liquid as possible using a clean kitchen towel or paper towels. In a bowl, combine the Greek yogurt and drained cucumber. Add the garlic, olive oil, and lemon juice. Mix well until smooth and evenly combined, then season with salt to taste. Chill for 10–15 minutes before serving for the best flavor. Serve as a dip with pita or vegetables. Use as a sauce for grilled meat, fish, or falafel.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~120 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~4 g



Spanish Romesco Sauce

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Red bell peppers – 2 mediums (about 300 g)
- Tomato – 1 medium (about 120 g)
- Walnuts – 1/2 cup (60 g)
- Garlic – 1 large clove (5 g)
- Smoked paprika – 1 tsp (2 g)

Instructions

Roast the bell peppers, tomato, and garlic at 200°C / 400°F for 15 minutes, until soft and lightly charred. Roast the garlic clove in its skin to prevent burning. Peel the peppers once cool. Place the roasted peppers, tomato, walnuts, garlic, and smoked paprika in a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth but slightly textured. Add 1–2 tablespoons of water only if needed to loosen the sauce. Season with salt to taste.

Tips

Serve with roasted vegetables, fish, seafood, or chicken, along with potatoes or vegetable fritters. It's also perfect for Spanish-style tapas.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~160 kcal Protein: ~4 g Fat: ~13 g Carbohydrates: ~5 g



Simple French Vinaigrette

Prep Time: 5 minutes Cook Time: 5 minutes Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Extra virgin olive oil – 1/4 cup (60 ml)
- Red wine vinegar – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Dijon mustard – 1 tsp (5 g)
- Salt – 1/4 tsp (1.5 g)
- Black pepper – 1/4 tsp (0.5 g)

Instructions

In a small bowl combine the red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, salt, and black pepper. Whisk (or shake) until well combined. Slowly drizzle in the olive oil while whisking continuously to emulsify. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Use immediately or store refrigerated for up to 5 days.

Nutrition Information (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~135 kcal Protein: 0.2 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 1 g



Creamy Classic Hummus

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Cooked chickpeas (canned or boiled) – 2 cups (400 g), drained and rinsed
- Tahini (sesame paste) – ¼ cup (60 g)
- Lemon juice (fresh) – 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Garlic – 1 clove (5 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 3 tbsp (45 ml)

Instructions

How to Cook Chickpeas

Place the dried chickpeas in a large bowl, cover with plenty of cold water, and soak for 8–12 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse. Transfer to a pot, cover with fresh water, bring to a boil, then simmer for 50–60 minutes, until tender but not mushy. Drain well.

Finish the Dish

Add chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, and garlic to a food processor. Blend until thick and mostly smooth. With the processor running, slowly add olive oil. Add 2–4 tablespoons of cold water and blend until the hummus is creamy and smooth. Taste and season with salt as needed. Transfer to a bowl and drizzle with a bit of extra olive oil before serving. Serve with pita bread, fresh vegetables, or crackers.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~210 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~15 g



Salsa al Pomodoro (Classic Italian Tomato Sauce)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Fresh Ripe tomatoes (or canned crushed tomatoes) – about 6 medium tomatoes (600 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Garlic – 2 cloves (10 g), finely sliced
- Fresh basil leaves – ¼ cup (10 g), finely chopped
- Salt – ½ tsp (3 g)

Instructions

Finely chop the garlic. Dip the tomatoes in hot water for 1–2 minutes, then remove the skins. Cut the tomatoes into small cubes. Heat the olive oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the chopped garlic and cook for 30–60 seconds until fragrant. Do not brown the garlic. Add the chopped tomatoes and salt. Stir. Simmer, uncovered, for 12–15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens. Remove from the heat and stir in the chopped basil leaves.

Tips

Salsa al Pomodoro is a classic Italian tomato sauce that is highly versatile. It pairs exceptionally well with pasta, vegetable dishes, chicken, white fish, seafood, and cheese-based dishes—experiment and discover your favorite combinations.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~120 kcal Protein: ~2 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~8 g



Pesto alla Genovese

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Fresh basil leaves – about 2 packed cups (60 g)
- Pine nuts – ¼ cup (30 g)
- Parmesan cheese (finely grated) – ½ cup (40 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Garlic – 1 clove (5 g)

Instructions

Peel the garlic clove. Wash and dry the basil leaves thoroughly. Blend the base in a blender - basil, pine nuts, garlic, and Parmesan. Add the oil. With the processor still running, slowly drizzle in the olive oil until you have a smooth, but slightly textured sauce. Taste and add salt if needed.

Tips

Pesto is a versatile Italian sauce that flavors pasta, vegetables, meats, fish, and simple appetizers. Pesto is best used without direct heat to preserve its vibrant taste. And of course, experiment—use the herbs and nuts available in your region. These can include parsley, arugula, spinach, walnuts, cashews, almonds, and more.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~22 g Carbohydrates: ~4 g



Bagna Cauda (Warm Italian Anchovy Sauce)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Anchovy fillets (in oil, drained) – about 10–12 fillets (50 g)
- Garlic – 6 cloves (30 g), thinly sliced
- Extra-virgin olive oil – ½ cup (120 ml)
- Unsalted butter – 2 tbsp (28 g)
- Milk – ¼ cup (60 ml)

Instructions

Soften the garlic. Place the chopped garlic in a small saucepan, then add the milk and simmer for 5-7 minutes, until very soft. Drain the milk. Set the garlic aside on a plate. Start making the sauce. Add the olive oil and butter to the same saucepan. Heat over very low heat until the butter has melted. Add the anchovy fillets and cook over low heat, stirring until they dissolve into the oil and form a smooth paste. Add the softened garlic and continue to cook over low heat for 3-5 minutes, stirring constantly. The sauce should be soft and glossy. Serve warm.

Tips

The sauce is served hot in a special ceramic bowl called a fujo, which is kept warm with a candle to maintain a gentle simmer throughout the meal. For dipping, serve with a variety of vegetables and bread:

- Raw vegetables: cardoon (Spanish artichoke, a key ingredient), celery, bell pepper, carrot, Jerusalem artichoke
- Cooked vegetables: boiled potatoes, roasted beets, and cauliflower
- Bread: slices of crusty baguette or toasted croutons.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~335 kcal Protein: ~4-5 g Fat: ~34 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g

Chapter 4 Salads



Farro Salad with Roasted Vegetables

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 45 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Dry farro - 1 cup (200 g)
- Water - 3 cups (720 ml)
- Bell peppers, sliced - 2 large (about 300 g)
- Red onion, sliced - 1 medium (150 g)
- Crumbled feta cheese - ¼ cup (40 g)

Instructions

Bring the water to a boil in a saucepan. Add the farro and salt, reduce the heat, and simmer for 25–30 minutes, until tender but still chewy. Drain well. While the farro cooks, preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Lightly oil a baking sheet. Arrange the sliced peppers and onion in an even layer, season lightly with salt, and roast for 25–30 minutes, turning once, until soft and lightly caramelized. Combine the cooked farro and roasted vegetables in a large bowl. Let cool slightly, then gently fold in the feta cheese. Adjust seasoning with salt to taste. Serve warm or at room temperature. For extra flavor, serve with Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 290 kcal Protein: 10 g Fat: 6 g Carbohydrates: 44 g



Classic Greek Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ripe tomatoes, cut into wedges - 4 medium tomatoes (about 450 g)
- Cucumber, thickly sliced - 1 large cucumber (300 g)
- Kalamata olives, pitted - 15–18 olives (75 g)
- Feta cheese, cut into large cubes - 4 oz (115 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)

Instructions

Place the tomatoes and cucumber in a large bowl. Add the olives and gently toss to combine. Arrange the feta cheese on top in large pieces. Drizzle with olive oil. Season lightly with salt and a pinch of dried oregano, if desired.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 230 kcal Protein: 7 g Fat: 18 g Carbohydrates: 10 g

Patatosalata (Classic Greek Potato Salad)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 30 minutes | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks - 4–5 medium (about 900 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Fresh lemon juice - 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Chopped fresh parsley - ¼ cup (15 g)
- Red onion, thinly sliced - ¼ medium (40 g)

Instructions

Place the potatoes in a pot, cover with cold water, add a pinch of salt, and bring them to a boil.

Cook for 18–20 minutes, until the potatoes are tender but not falling apart. Drain well. While the potatoes are still warm, transfer them to a bowl. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Add the parsley and red onion, season with salt to taste, and mix carefully. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 260 kcal Protein: 4 g Fat: 10 g Carbohydrates: 38 g

Provençal Tomato & Goat Cheese Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Ripe tomatoes, sliced or cut into wedges - 4 medium tomatoes (about 450 g)
- Black or Kalamata olives, pitted - about 15–18 olives (75 g)
- Goat cheese, crumbled or sliced - 3 oz (85 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Fresh basil leaves, torn - ¼ cup (10 g)

Instructions

Arrange the tomatoes on a serving platter or in a bowl. Scatter the olives evenly over the tomatoes.

Add the goat cheese in large crumbles or slices. Drizzle with olive oil. Season lightly with salt and black pepper. Add the basil and serve immediately. For extra flavor, drizzle with pesto.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 180 kcal Protein: 5 g Fat: 13 g Carbohydrates: 11 g



Maroulosalata (Greek Lettuce Salad)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Romaine lettuce, finely shredded - 6 cups (about 300 g)
- Chopped fresh dill (mint or chives) - ¼ cup (15 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - 1 cup (115 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Fresh lemon juice - 1 tbsp (15 ml)

Instructions

Place the shredded romaine lettuce in a large bowl. Add the chopped dill and toss gently to combine. Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice. Add the crumbled feta cheese. Season lightly with salt and toss gently just before serving.

Tips

Suitable as an everyday salad with fish or chicken, or as a light snack (meze). You can also add olives or finely grated cucumber, if desired.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 190 kcal Protein: 6 g Fat: 15 g Carbohydrates: 7 g



Spanish Tuna & Egg Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Tuna, drained - 1 can (140 g)
- Tomatoes, chopped or sliced - 2–3 medium tomatoes (about 300 g)
- Canned corn, drained - 1 cup (about 150 g)
- Eggs, sliced - 2 hard-boiled (about 100 g)
- Black or green olives, pitted - about 15–18 olives (75 g)

Instructions

Place the eggs in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, then cook for 9–10 minutes. Drain, cool, peel, and slice. Place the tomatoes and corn in a large bowl or arrange them on a serving platter. Add the drained tuna, breaking it into large flakes. Top with sliced hard-boiled eggs and olives. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt to taste, and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 220 kcal Protein: 15 g Fat: 9 g Carbohydrates: 15 g



Quinoa Salad with Corn & Avocado

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Quinoa (dry) - 1 cup (170 g)
- Corn kernels (fresh or frozen) - 1½ cups (240 g)
- Avocado — 1 large, diced (200 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil — 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Fresh lime juice — 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Rinse the quinoa well. Cook it in a 1:2 ratio of quinoa to water for 12–15 minutes, until tender and the liquid is absorbed. Remove from the heat and let stand for 5 minutes, then fluff with a fork. Blanch the corn kernels in boiling water for 5–7 minutes until tender, or fry them for 7–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly golden. Drain and let cool. In a large bowl, combine the cooked quinoa, corn, and diced avocado. Drizzle with olive oil and lime juice, season with salt and pepper, toss gently, and serve. Drizzle with Pesto for extra flavor.

Nutrition Information (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~300 kcal Protein: 7 g Fat: 13 g Carbohydrates: 40 g



Cucumber & Feta Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- sliced cucumber - 1 large cucumber (300 g)
- Arugula - 2 cups (≈ 60 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - ¾ cup (120 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil - 2 tbsp (28 g)
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Instructions

Place the sliced cucumber and arugula in a large bowl. Add the crumbled feta cheese. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Toss gently and serve immediately.

Tips

Serve this salad fresh to keep the arugula crisp. Add a squeeze of lemon, if desired. It works well as a light snack or as a side to grilled dishes.

Nutrition (per serving, approximate)

Calories: ~170 kcal Protein: ~5 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~6 g



Mediterranean Tuna & White Bean Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Tuna in water, drained - 2 cans (280 g total)
- Cooked white beans - 1½ cups (cannellini or navy), drained and rinsed (240 g)
- Leafy greens (romaine, mixed salad greens, or baby spinach) - 4 cups (120 g)
- Capers, drained - 3 tsp (15 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)

Instructions

Place the drained tuna in a large bowl and gently break it into large flakes. Add the white beans and leafy greens. Sprinkle with the chopped capers. Drizzle with olive oil. Toss gently to combine, keeping the tuna pieces intact, and season with salt and black pepper to taste. Serve immediately or slightly chilled.

Tips

For extra bite, add 2–3 tablespoons of thinly sliced red onion.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 260 kcal Protein: 22 g Fat: 13 g Carbohydrates: 14 g



Caprese

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ripe tomatoes – 4 medium tomatoes (450 g), sliced
- Fresh mozzarella – 9 oz (250 g), sliced
- Fresh basil leaves – ½ cup (20 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Slice the tomatoes and mozzarella into even rounds. Arrange them on a serving platter, alternating tomato and mozzarella slices. Tuck fresh basil leaves between the slices. Drizzle evenly with olive oil, season with salt and black pepper. Optional: Add 1 tsp basil pesto for a modern variation.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~12 g Fat: ~17 g Carbohydrates: ~8 g



Smoked Salmon & Avocado Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Lightly salted (smoked) salmon, sliced or torn into pieces - 7 oz (200 g)
- Avocados, sliced - 2 ripe (300 g)
- Cherry tomatoes, halved - 12–15 cherry tomatoes (150 g)
- Leafy salad greens - 4 cups (120 g)
- Sesame seeds, lightly toasted - 2 tbsp (20 g)

Instructions

Arrange the leafy greens in a large salad bowl or on a serving plate. Top with the avocado and cherry tomatoes. Add the lightly salted salmon slices. Drizzle with olive oil, season lightly with black pepper, and a pinch of salt. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 285 kcal Protein: 18 g Fat: 22 g Carbohydrates: 10 g



Greek-Style Grilled Chicken Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Grilled chicken breast, sliced - 10.5 oz (300 g)
- Cucumber, diced - 1 small cucumber (200 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - 1/2 cup (85 g)
- Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced - 8–10 olives (40 g)
- Yogurt dressing (or tzatziki sauce) - 1/2 cup (120 g)

Instructions

Season chicken breasts lightly with salt and black pepper. Grill over medium heat for 6–7 minutes per side, until fully cooked and lightly charred. Let rest for 5 minutes, then slice. Place the grilled chicken in a large salad bowl. Add the diced cucumber and sliced olives. Sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese. Spoon the yogurt dressing over the salad. Toss gently to combine and season with salt and black pepper to taste. Serve immediately or chilled.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 280 kcal Protein: 27 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 8 g



Warm Lentil & Mushroom Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Dry lentils (green or brown), rinsed - 1 cup (190 g)
- Water - 3 cups (720 ml)
- Mushrooms, sliced - 8 oz (225 g)
- Extra virgin olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Romaine lettuce, chopped - 3 cups (90 g)

Instructions

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add the lentils, reduce the heat, and simmer uncovered for 20–25 minutes, until tender but not mushy. Drain well. While the lentils are cooking, heat the olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add the mushrooms and sauté for 5–7 minutes, until tender and lightly golden. Transfer the warm lentils to a large bowl and add the sautéed mushrooms. Toss gently. Add the chopped romaine lettuce last, without cooking, and carefully fold it into the warm salad just before serving. Drizzle with oil and season with salt and black pepper to taste. For extra flavor, serve with Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 255 kcal Protein: 10 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 26 g



Roasted Beet & Feta Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 60 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Roasted beets, sliced - 3 medium (about 300 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - 1/2 cup (85 g)
- Walnuts, roughly chopped - 1/4 cup (30 g)
- Arugula or mixed salad greens, chopped - 3 cups (120 g)
- Vinaigrette dressing - 1/4 cup (60 ml)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F). Wash beets well, and trim stems (do not peel). Wrap beets tightly in foil or place them in a covered baking dish. Bake for 45–60 minutes, until completely tender when pierced with a knife. Allow to cool slightly, then peel and cut into thin rounds or crescents. Place arugula (lettuce leaves) in a salad bowl, add sliced roasted beets, sprinkle with crumbled feta cheese, and chopped walnuts. Drizzle with vinaigrette dressing. Toss gently just before serving. For extra flavor, serve with Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 260 kcal Protein: 7 g Fat: 18 g Carbohydrates: 18 g



Mediterranean Creamy Chickpea Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Cooked chickpeas (or canned) – 2 cups (400 g)
Cucumber – 2 cups diced (about 250 g; Persian or mini cucumbers work best)
- Red bell pepper, diced – 1 medium (150 g)
- Red onion, finely chopped – 1/4 cup (40 g)
- Plain Greek yogurt – 3/4 cup (180 g)

Instructions

Place the chickpeas, diced cucumber, bell pepper, and red onion in a large bowl. Add the Greek yogurt and gently toss until all the ingredients are evenly coated. Add the lemon juice and season with a pinch of salt and black pepper, if desired. Serve immediately, or refrigerate for 15–20 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~180 kcal Protein: ~9 g Fat: ~4 g Carbohydrates: ~26 g



Strawberry & Goat Cheese Salad

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Baby spinach - 5 oz (150g)
- Fresh strawberries - 2 cups 300g, hulled and sliced
- Walnuts (or slivered almonds) - 1/2 cup (60g), lightly toasted
- Soft goat cheese (or Feta) - 4 oz (115g), crumbled
- Balsamic glaze - 2 tbsp (30ml)

Instructions

Divide the baby spinach among four plates or arrange it in a large, shallow serving bowl. Evenly distribute the sliced strawberries over the greens. Crumble the goat cheese (or feta) over the top. Sprinkle the toasted walnuts or almonds over the salad. Drizzle the balsamic glaze in a zigzag pattern. Finish with freshly ground black pepper and serve immediately.

Tips

Black pepper is often paired with fruit in Mediterranean cuisine to add depth and balance. It enhances sweetness and creates a more complex, savory flavor.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 210 kcal Protein: 8 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 15 g



Broccoli Salad with Herbs & Almonds

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Broccoli florets - 1 large head (400 g)
- Mixed fresh herbs - 1 cup (parsley, dill, or baby spinach), chopped (40 g)
- Sliced almonds - ¼ cup (30 g)
- Extra olive oil or grapeseed oil - 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Fresh lemon juice - 1 tbsp (15 ml)

Instructions

Bring a small pot of water to a boil. Add the broccoli florets and blanch for 2–3 minutes until bright green and just tender. Drain well and let cool slightly. Transfer the broccoli to a large bowl. Add the chopped herbs and sliced almonds. Drizzle with oil and lemon juice. Toss gently to combine, season with salt to taste, and serve immediately or chilled.

Tips

This salad also tastes great with pesto—thin it with a bit of water beforehand if needed. For greater tenderness, use almond flakes.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 170 kcal Protein: 6 g Fat: 11 g Carbohydrates: 12 g



Roasted Sweet Potato Salad

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Sweet potatoes - 2 medium (600 g), peeled and cubed
- Fresh spinach - 4 cups (120 g)
- Sliced almonds (almond flakes) - ¼ cup (30 g)
- Soft cheese (goat cheese or mild soft white cheese) - ½ cup (85 g), crumbled
- Red onion - 1 small, very thinly sliced (100 g)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F). Lightly grease a baking sheet. Arrange the sweet potato cubes in a single layer, sprinkle lightly with salt, and bake for 25 minutes, turning once, until tender and lightly caramelized.

Remove from oven and let the sweet potatoes cool for 5–10 minutes, until warm but not hot. Transfer the sweet potatoes to a large bowl. Add the fresh spinach and gently toss. Add the chopped red onion, almonds, and shredded soft cheese. Season with salt, black pepper, and olive oil to taste and toss gently. Serve warm or at room temperature. For extra flavor, serve with Creamy Lemon Tahini Dressing.

Tips

Red onion is used raw in this salad to add freshness and a gentle crunch.

If the flavor feels too sharp, soak the sliced onion in cold water for 5–10 minutes, then drain well — this softens the taste while keeping it crisp. Soft cheese adds creaminess and balances the natural sweetness of the roasted sweet potatoes. For a firmer texture and a saltier flavor, replace the soft cheese with feta.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 255 kcal Protein: 7 g Fat: 11 g Carbohydrates: 34 g

Chapter 5 Vegetable, Grain & Legume Sides



Roasted Mediterranean Vegetables

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Zucchini, cut into half-moons – 2 mediums (about 300 g)
- Eggplant, cut into half-moons– 1 medium (about 350 g)
- Red bell pepper, sliced – 1 large (about 180 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 3 tbsp / 45 ml
- Dried oregano – 1½ tsp / 1.5 g

Instructions

Preheat to 200°C / 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the zucchini, eggplant, and bell pepper on the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with oregano, salt, and black pepper. Toss to coat evenly. Spread the vegetables in a single layer and roast for 25 minutes, stirring once halfway through, until tender and lightly golden.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~140 kcal Protein: ~2 g Fat: ~10 g Carbohydrates: ~9 g



Moroccan Apricot & Almond Couscous

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Couscous (dry) – 1 cup / 180 g
- Hot water – about 1 cup (240 ml)
- Dried apricots – ½ cup (80 g), chopped
- Sliced almonds – ¼ cup (30 g), lightly toasted
- Lemon juice – 1 tbsp

Instructions

Place the couscous and chopped apricots in a heatproof bowl. Pour the hot broth over the couscous, cover, and let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Stir in the almonds, lemon juice, and a drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt and black pepper to taste. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~260 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~8 g Carbohydrates: ~40 g

Fasolakia (Greek Braised Green Beans)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 45 minutes | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Green beans (fresh, trimmed) – 1 lb (450 g)
- Tomatoes (chopped or canned crushed) – ripe tomatoes 2–3 medium tomatoes (300 g)
- Onion, sliced (yellow or white) – 1 medium (150 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – ¼ cup / 60 ml
- Parsley or chives (chopped) – ¼ cup (10 g)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add the sliced onion and cook for 5–7 minutes, until soft and translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, season lightly with salt and pepper, and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the green beans, stir to coat them in the sauce, then add ½ cup / 120 ml water. Bring to a gentle simmer. Cover and cook over low heat for 25 minutes, until the beans are tender and the sauce is rich. Stir in the fresh parsley or chives, adjust seasoning, and serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~180 kcal Protein: ~3 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~10 g

Roasted Cauliflower

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Cauliflower, cut into florets - 1 medium head (500 g)
- Olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Tahini - ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Fresh lemon juice - 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Ground coriander - ½ tsp (1 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Toss the cauliflower florets with olive oil and ground coriander. Spread evenly on a baking sheet. Roast for 30 minutes, turning once, until golden and tender.

In a small bowl, whisk together the tahini and lemon juice until smooth and creamy. Drizzle the tahini sauce over the roasted cauliflower just before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 185 kcal Protein: 5 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 12 g



Bulgur with Spinach & Walnuts

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Bulgur - 1 cup (180 g)
- Water - 2 cups (480 ml)
- Fresh spinach, roughly chopped - 3 cups (90 g)
- Walnuts, roughly chopped - 1/4 cup (30 g)
- Avocado oil or grapeseed oil - 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Bring the water to a boil in a saucepan. Stir in the bulgur, cover, and cook over low heat for 12–15 minutes until tender and the water is absorbed. Remove from heat and fluff the bulgur with a fork.

While the bulgur is still hot, gently fold in the spinach until wilted. Add the oil and salt, then mix well. Transfer to a plate, sprinkle with nuts, and enjoy!

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 225 kcal Protein: 6 g Fat: 11 g Carbohydrates: 25 g



Greek Lemon Potatoes

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 55 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges - 2 lb (900 g)
- Fresh lemon juice - 1/4 cup (60 ml)
- Olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Dried oregano - 1 tsp (1 g)
- Garlic, crushed – 2 cloves, (6 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Arrange the potato wedges in a single layer in a baking dish.

In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil, salt, oregano, and garlic. Pour the mixture over the potatoes and toss to coat evenly. Roast for 45 minutes, turning once, until the potatoes are golden, tender, and lightly crisp at the edges. Serve and savor.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 240 kcal Protein: 4 g Fat: 10 g Carbohydrates: 35 g



Mediterranean-Style Lentils

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Dry lentils (green or brown), rinsed - 1 cup (190 g)
- Water - 3 cups (720 ml)
- Mixed fresh herbs (parsley, spinach, or dill), chopped - 1 cup (40 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - ½ cup (85 g)
- Sesame seeds or hulled sunflower seeds - 2 tbsp (20 g)

Instructions

Bring the water to a boil in a saucepan. Add the lentils, reduce the heat, and simmer uncovered for 20–25 minutes, until tender but not mushy. Drain if needed. While the lentils cook, toast the sesame seeds in a dry skillet over medium heat for 2–3 minutes, stirring constantly, until lightly golden. Transfer the warm lentils to a bowl. Gently fold in the chopped herbs and crumbled feta cheese.

Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds, season with salt to taste, and serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 215 kcal Protein: 12 g Fat: 8 g Carbohydrates: 26 g



Simple Eggplant Caponata

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggplant, diced – 1 large or 2 medium eggplants (450 g)
- Cherry tomatoes, halved – 20 cherry tomatoes (250 g)
- Green olives, sliced – 15–18 olives (75 g)
- Olive oil – 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Red wine vinegar – 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Eggplants can sometimes be bitter. To reduce bitterness, we recommend salting them. Cut the eggplant into cubes, lightly sprinkle with salt, and let sit for 20–30 minutes. Then blot with paper towels (no need to rinse) and proceed with the recipe. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Spread the diced eggplant on a baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, season lightly with salt, and toss to coat. Roast for 25 minutes, stirring once, until tender and lightly golden. Add the cherry tomatoes and olives, then roast for 10 more minutes until juicy and slightly caramelized. Remove from the oven, drizzle with red wine vinegar, gently toss, and let rest for 5 minutes before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~140 kcal Protein: 2 g Fat: 9 g Carbohydrates: 14 g



Savory Paprika Chickpeas

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 1 hour 10 minutes (plus soaking) | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Dried chickpeas – 1 cup (200 g)
- Extra-virgin olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Dried garlic – 1 tsp (2 g)
- Paprika (sweet or smoked) – 1 tsp (2 g)
- Salt – 1/2 tsp (3 g)

Instructions

How to Cook Chickpeas

Place the dried chickpeas in a large bowl, cover with plenty of cold water, and soak for 8–12 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse. Transfer to a pot, cover with fresh water, bring to a boil, then simmer for 50–60 minutes, until tender but not mushy. Drain well.

Finish the Dish

Heat the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the cooked chickpeas, dried garlic, paprika, and salt. Toss to coat evenly. Cook for 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the chickpeas are lightly golden. Adjust seasoning if needed. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~190 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~8 g Carbohydrates: ~22 g



Quinoa with Green Peas & Goat Cheese

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Quinoa, rinsed - 1 cup (170 g)
- Water 2 cups (480 ml)
- Green peas (fresh or frozen) - 1 cup (140 g)
- Goat cheese, crumbled - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (60 g)
- Extra light olive oil or grapeseed oil - 2 tbsp (30 ml)

Instructions

Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add the quinoa, cover, and simmer for 12–15 minutes, until tender and the liquid is absorbed. Add the green peas during the last 3 minutes of cooking to warm through and keep them bright green. 3. Remove from heat. Drizzle with oil, season with salt to taste, toss gently, transfer to a plate, sprinkle with goat cheese, and serve warm.

Tips

To remove bitterness, always rinse quinoa thoroughly before cooking. After rinsing, drain thoroughly and lightly toast the quinoa in a dry skillet over medium heat for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly, until fragrant. Lightly toasting enhances the flavor but does not replace rinsing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 245 kcal Protein: 9 g Fat: 11 g Carbohydrates: 26 g



Creamy Mushroom Risotto

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Arborio rice - 1 cup (200 g)
- Mushrooms, sliced — 10 oz (300 g)
- Hot vegetable or chicken broth — 4 cups (1 liter)
- Heavy cream — 1/2 cup (120 ml)
- Finely grated Parmesan cheese - 1/2 cup (50 g)

Olive oil, salt, and black pepper are considered pantry staples and not counted as ingredients.

Instructions

Heat the broth in a saucepan and keep it warm over low heat. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet or wide saucepan over medium heat. Add the sliced mushrooms and cook for 5–7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until softened and lightly browned. Season lightly with salt and black pepper. Add the Arborio rice and cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring, until the grains are evenly coated in the oil and lightly glossy. Add the warm broth one ladle at a time, stirring frequently and allowing the liquid to absorb before adding more. Continue adding broth and stirring for 18–20 minutes, until the rice is tender but still slightly firm and the mixture is creamy. Stir in the heavy cream and Parmesan. Cook for 1–2 minutes more, until the risotto is rich and smooth. Serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 360 kcal Protein: 11 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 45 g



Baked Eggplant with Tomato & Parmesan

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 60 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Eggplants – 2 medium (about 900 g)
- Olive oil – ½ cup (120 ml)
- Tomato sauce – 2 cups (480 g)
- Fresh mozzarella – 9 oz (250 g), sliced
- Grated Parmesan cheese – ¾ cup (75 g)

Instructions

Prepare the eggplants. Slice the eggplants lengthwise into ¼-inch (0.5 cm) thick slices. Lightly salt them and let them rest for 15 minutes. Pat dry with paper towels. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook the eggplant slices in batches until golden on both sides. Set aside on paper towels. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Spread a thin layer of tomato sauce on the bottom of a baking dish. Add a layer of eggplant, then tomato sauce, mozzarella, and a sprinkle of Parmesan. Repeat the layers, finishing with Parmesan on top. Bake uncovered for 35–40 minutes, until bubbly and golden on top. Let rest for 10 minutes before serving to allow the layers to set.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~420 kcal Protein: ~19 g Fat: ~30 g Carbohydrates: ~24 g



Stuffed Zucchini with Rice

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 60 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Zucchini – 4 medium (about 800 g / 1¾ lb)
- Cooked rice – 1½ cups (270 g)
- Onion, finely chopped – 1 cup (150 g)
- Crushed tomatoes or tomato purée – 1½ cups (360 g)
- Grated hard cheese (Parmesan, Pecorino, or similar) – ½ cup (50 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Cut the zucchini in half lengthwise and scoop out the centers, and finely chop the flesh. In a bowl, combine the cooked rice and onion, then season with salt, black pepper, and dried herbs. Mix gently. Fill the zucchini halves with the rice mixture and arrange them snugly in a baking dish. Add the chopped zucchini flesh to the crushed tomatoes, then pour the mixture into the bottom of the baking dish around the stuffed zucchini. Cover loosely with foil and bake for 30 minutes, until the zucchini begins to soften. If the tomato sauce seems too thick while cooking, add a little water. Remove the foil, sprinkle the grated cheese evenly over the zucchini, and return to the oven. Bake uncovered for another 10 minutes, until the tops are lightly golden. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~310 kcal Protein: ~11 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~46 g



Halloumi-Style Vegetable Skewers

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 30 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Halloumi cheese, cut into large cubes – 10 oz (280 g)
- Zucchini, sliced into thick rounds – 2 medium (about 400 g)
- Red bell pepper, cut into chunks – 1 large (about 180 g)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Dried oregano – 1 tbsp (3 g)

Instructions

Grill Method (Primary)

Place the halloumi, zucchini, and bell pepper in a large bowl. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, oregano, and black pepper, and toss gently to coat. Thread the halloumi and vegetables onto skewers, alternating pieces. Grill over medium-high heat for 10–12 minutes, turning occasionally, until golden and tender. Serve immediately.

Oven Method

If you don't have a grill, bake these skewers instead.

Preheat the oven to 425°F (220°C). Place the skewers on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 15–18 minutes, turning once, until golden and tender.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~340 kcal Protein: ~14 g Fat: ~26 g Carbohydrates: ~12 g

Chapter 6 Pasta & Soups



Creamy Seafood Pasta

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 30 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Pasta (spaghetti or fettuccine) – 14 oz (400 g)
- Raw shrimp, peeled and deveined – 1 lb (450 g)
- Butter – 4 tbsp (60 g)
- Garlic, minced – 4 cloves (20 g)
- Heavy cream – 1½ cups (360 ml)

Instructions

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until al dente. Reserve ½ cup (120 ml) of pasta water, then drain the pasta. Melt 2 tbsp (30 g) butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the shrimp, season lightly with salt and pepper, and cook for 2–3 minutes per side until just pink. Transfer to a plate. In the same skillet, add the remaining butter. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant. Pour in the cream and simmer gently for 4–5 minutes, until slightly thickened. Add the cooked pasta to the sauce and toss to coat. Loosen with a splash of reserved pasta water if needed. Return the shrimp to the pan and warm through for 1–2 minutes. Serve immediately, seasoned to taste.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~620 kcal Protein: ~34 g Fat: ~32 g Carbohydrates: ~52 g



Green Pesto Pasta with Peas

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Whole wheat pasta – 12 oz (340 g)
- Frozen green peas – 1½ cups (225 g)
- Basil pesto – ½ cup (120 g)
- Grated Parmesan cheese – ½ cup (45 g)

Instructions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the whole-wheat pasta according to the package instructions until al dente. During the last 2–3 minutes of cooking, add the frozen peas to the pasta water. Reserve ¼ cup (60 ml) of the cooking water, then drain the pasta and peas. Return the pasta and peas to the pot. Add the pesto and toss gently. Add the grated Parmesan and a splash of reserved cooking water if needed. Toss until creamy and evenly coated. Season with salt to taste and serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~430 kcal Protein: ~17 g Fat: ~13 g Carbohydrates: ~56 g



Pasta alla Norma (Classic Sicilian Eggplant Pasta)

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Short pasta (rigatoni or penne) – 12 oz (340 g)
- Eggplants, diced – 2 medium (about 700 g),
- Olive oil – ⅓ cup (80 ml)
- Tomato sauce – 2 cups (480 g)
- Ricotta salata or Pecorino Romano cheese, grated – ¾ cup (90 g)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the peeled and diced eggplant and cook for 10–12 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden brown and tender—season lightly with salt. Pour the tomato sauce into the skillet with the eggplant and simmer for 8–10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until al dente according to package directions. Reserve ½ cup (120 mL) of the pasta water, then drain the pasta. Add the cooked pasta to the sauce and toss to coat. Add a little of the remaining water to thin the sauce if necessary. Place on plates and sprinkle with grated cheese.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~520 kcal Protein: ~18 g Fat: ~22 g Carbohydrates: ~62 g



One-Pot Tomato & Feta Orzo

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Orzo pasta - 1.5 cups (300 g)
- Vegetable or Chicken broth - 2 cups (500 ml)
- Cherry tomatoes, halved - 1 cup (250 g)
- Feta cheese, crumbled - 1/2 cup (75 g)
- Fresh baby spinach - 2 cups (60 g)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the orzo and cook for 1–2 minutes, stirring, until lightly toasted and fragrant. Add the stock and halved cherry tomatoes. Bring to a gentle boil, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer for 10–12 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Most of the liquid should be absorbed, creating a creamy consistency. If the orzo seems too dry, add a little water as needed. Add the baby spinach and crumbled feta. Cook for 1–2 minutes more, until the spinach is wilted and the cheese begins to soften. Season with oregano, salt, and black pepper to taste. Serve immediately while warm and tender.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~365 kcal Protein: ~14 g Fat: ~9 g Carbohydrates: ~56 g



Greek Cinnamon Meat Sauce Pasta

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Spaghetti – 14 oz (400 g)
- Ground beef – 1 lb (450 g)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Onion, finely chopped – 1½ cups (220 g)
- Crushed tomatoes – 2 cups (480 g)

Cinnamon are considered pantry staples and not counted as ingredients.

Instructions

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Cook the spaghetti until al dente. Drain and set aside. Heat olive oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 6–8 minutes, until soft and translucent. Add the ground beef and cook until browned, breaking it up with a spoon. Stir in the crushed tomatoes, season with salt, black pepper, and a pinch of cinnamon. Reduce the heat and simmer gently for 30 minutes, until thick and rich. Serve the sauce over the pasta.

Traditional serving: topped with grated Kefalotyri or Parmesan cheese (optional).

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~490 kcal Protein: ~31 g Fat: ~20 g Carbohydrates: ~46 g



Tunisian Fish Soup

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- White fish fillets (cod, hake, or sea bass), cut into large chunks – 1½ lb (680 g)
- Potatoes, peeled and cut into large cubes – 2 medium potatoes (300 g)
- Onion, finely chopped – 1 large onion (220 g)
- Crushed tomatoes or tomato purée – 2 cups (480 g)
- Fresh parsley, chopped – ½ cup (15 g)

Instructions

In a large saucepan over medium heat, sauté the onion in a bit of water until soft and lightly golden, about 6–8 minutes. Add the chopped tomatoes. Reduce the heat slightly and simmer for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Add 3.5 cups (840 ml) of water. Bring to a gentle boil. Add the potatoes and fish at the same time. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 15–18 minutes, until the potatoes are tender. Cook the fish until cooked through. Stir in the fresh parsley. Remove from heat and let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~270 kcal Protein: ~30 g Fat: ~3 g Carbohydrates: ~18 g



Creamy Cauliflower & Lemon Soup

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 30 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Cauliflower – 1 large head (about 2 lb / 900 g), cut into florets
- Onion – 1 medium, chopped
- Vegetable broth – 3 cups (720 ml)
- Heavy cream – 1 cup (240 ml)
- Lemon juice – 2 tbsp

Instructions

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 4–5 minutes, until softened. Add the cauliflower and vegetable stock. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15–18 minutes, until the cauliflower is very tender. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the vegetables to a blender. Reserve the cooking stock. Blend until smooth. Add the heavy cream and lemon juice and blend again. With the blender running, add the reserved stock a little at a time until the soup reaches your desired consistency. Season with salt and black pepper. Transfer the soup to the pot and warm gently over low heat. Do not boil.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~220 kcal Protein: ~4 g Fat: ~16 g Carbohydrates: ~14 g



Avgolemono (Classic Greek Lemon Chicken Soup)

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Chicken breast or thighs, boneless – 12 oz (350 g)
- Chicken broth – 6 cups (1.4 L)
- Short-grain rice – ½ cup (100 g)
- Eggs – 3 large (about 165 g without shells)
- Fresh lemon juice – ⅓ cup (80 ml)

Instructions

Bring the chicken broth to a gentle boil. Add the chicken and simmer for 12–15 minutes, until fully cooked. Remove the chicken, let it cool slightly, then shred or dice it. Add the rice to the same pot and simmer for 12–15 minutes, until tender. In a bowl, whisk the eggs until pale and frothy. Slowly whisk in the lemon juice. Slowly pour 1–2 cups of hot broth into the egg–lemon mixture, whisking constantly to prevent the eggs from curdling. Reduce the heat to low. Slowly stir the tempered mixture back into the pot. Add the chicken and gently heat for 2–3 minutes. Do not boil. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~300 kcal Protein: ~26 g Fat: ~11 g Carbohydrates: ~22 g



Minestrone (Classic Italian Vegetable Soup)

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Potatoes, diced – 2 medium (300 g)
- Celery, sliced – 2 stalks (80 g / about 1 cup)
- Crushed tomatoes (canned) – 2 cups (480 g)
- Cooked white beans (cannellini or navy) – 1½ cups (250 g)
- Small pasta (ditalini, small shells, or elbow) – ½ cup (80 g)

Instructions

Heat a small amount of olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the celery and cook for 3–4 minutes, stirring, until slightly softened and aromatic. Add the potatoes and cook for 2–3 minutes, stirring to coat them lightly in the oil. Add the crushed tomatoes, 6 cups (1.4 L) of water, and the pasta. Season lightly with salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes, until the potatoes are tender and the pasta is just al dente. Stir in the cooked beans and simmer for 5 minutes, to heat them through and allow the flavors to come together. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove from heat and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Tips

Minestrone has no fixed recipe. Its ingredients change with the seasons and what is available, but the foundation always remains the same: vegetables, legumes, and either pasta or rice.

Traditionally, serve it with grated Parmesan cheese and fresh herbs.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~14 g Fat: ~8 g Carbohydrates: ~46 g

Chapter 7 Meat & Poultry Dishes



Quick Lemon Garlic Chicken Bites

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Chicken breast – 1½ lb (680 g), cut into bite-size cubes
- Olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Lemon juice – 3 tbsp (45 ml)
- Garlic– 4 cloves (20 g), minced
- Dried oregano – 1 tbsp (3 g)

Salt and black pepper, to taste (not counted in the 5 ingredients)

Instructions

In a large bowl, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, oregano, salt, and black pepper. Add the chicken and toss to coat evenly. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken in a single layer. Cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden and cooked through. Remove from heat and let rest for 2–3 minutes before serving.

Serving suggestion: Serve with a fresh salad, rice, quinoa, or warm pita.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~280 kcal Protein: ~38 g Fat: ~11 g Carbohydrates: ~2 g



One-Pan Mediterranean Steak Bites with Olives

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Sirloin steak – 1½ lb (680 g), cut into bite-size cubes
- Kalamata olives – ½ cup (80 g), sliced
- Garlic – 3 cloves, minced
- Lemon juice – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Fresh parsley – ¼ cup (15 g), chopped

Instructions

Pat the steak dry with paper towels and season with salt and black pepper. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add 1–2 tablespoons of olive oil. Arrange the steak in a single layer. Cook for 2–3 minutes per side, until browned and cooked to your desired doneness. Transfer the steak to a plate. In the same skillet, reduce the heat to medium. Add the garlic and cook for about 30 seconds, until fragrant. Add the olives and lemon juice, stirring to combine. Return the steak to the skillet and toss to coat with the juices and oil. Cook for 1–2 minutes, until heated through. Remove from the heat and sprinkle with fresh parsley before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~360 kcal Protein: ~34 g Fat: ~22 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g



Goat Cheese & Sun-Dried Tomato Stuffed Chicken

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Chicken breasts – 4 boneless, skinless (about 1½ lb / 680 g)
- Goat cheese – 4 oz (115 g), softened
- Sun-dried tomatoes – ½ cup (70 g), finely chopped
- Garlic – 2 cloves, minced
- Fresh parsley – 2 tbsp, chopped

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and lightly grease a baking dish with olive oil. Place the chicken breasts on a cutting board. Using a sharp knife, cut a deep horizontal slit along the thick side of each breast, keeping the knife parallel to the board and being careful not to cut all the way through. Leave about ½ inch (1–1.5 cm) of meat on all sides to create a pocket for the filling. In a small bowl, combine the goat cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, garlic, and parsley. Mix until well combined. Divide the filling evenly and stuff it into the chicken breasts. Secure with toothpicks if needed. Season the outside of the chicken with salt and black pepper, then lightly brush with olive oil. Place the chicken in the prepared dish and bake for 20–22 minutes, until cooked through. Let the chicken rest for 3–5 minutes before serving. Remove the toothpicks, if using.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~330 kcal Protein: ~38 g Fat: ~17 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g



Creamy Almond & Yogurt Turkey Skillet

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Turkey breast fillet, sliced into strips — 1 lb (450 g)
- Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced — 8–10 brussels sprouts (200 g)
- Zucchini, sliced — 1 medium (200 g)
- Greek yogurt (plain, full-fat) — 1/2 cup (120 g)
- Sliced almonds — 1/4 cup (30 g)

Instructions

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and lightly coat it with olive oil. Add the turkey and cook for 4–5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly golden. Add the Brussels sprouts and zucchini. Cook for 5–6 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften and begin to caramelize. Reduce the heat to low and remove the skillet from the heat. Stir in the Greek yogurt until smooth and creamy. Return to low heat and cook for 1–2 minutes to warm through. Do not boil. Season with salt and black pepper. Sprinkle with sliced almonds before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~310 kcal Protein: ~29 g Fat: ~18 g Carbohydrates: ~9 g



Easy Chicken Cacciatore

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Bone-in chicken thighs or drumsticks - 2 lb (900 g)
- Canned crushed tomatoes - 1½ cups (360 g)
- Onion, sliced - 1 medium (120 g)
- Pitted olives (black or mixed), halved - 15–18 olives (75 g)
- Olive oil - 3 tbsp (45 ml)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the chicken pieces and cook for 4–5 minutes per side, until lightly golden. Remove and set aside. Add the sliced onion to the same pan and cook for 4–5 minutes, until softened. Stir in the crushed tomatoes and olives, then return the chicken to the pan. Cover and simmer gently for 25–30 minutes, until the chicken is tender and fully cooked. Season with salt and black pepper to taste before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 420 kcal Protein: 32 g Fat: 28 g Carbohydrates: 10 g



Saltimbocca alla Romana

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Veal cutlets, thinly sliced - 8 cutlets (about 1 lb / 450 g)
- Prosciutto, thin - 8 slices (120 g)
- Fresh sage leaves – 8 leaves (4 g)
- Unsalted butter - 3 tbsp (42 g)
- Dry white wine - ¼ cup (60 ml)

Instructions

Lightly pound the veal cutlets to an even thickness of about ¼ inch (5 mm). Place them on a work surface. Lay a slice of prosciutto over each cutlet, wrap it snugly around the meat, tuck a sage leaf between the veal and the prosciutto, and press gently to adhere. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the veal cutlets, prosciutto-side down, and cook for 2–3 minutes, until lightly golden. Turn the cutlets, pour in the white wine, and cook for another 2–3 minutes, spooning the pan sauce over the meat until the veal is cooked through. Remove from the heat once the sauce has slightly reduced. Season lightly with black pepper and serve immediately with the pan juices.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 360 kcal Protein: 28 g Fat: 22 g Carbohydrates: 2 g



Provencal Beef Stew

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 2 hours 35 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Beef chuck, cut into large cubes – 2 lb (900 g)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Onion, sliced – 2 medium
- Carrots, sliced – 3 medium
- Dry red wine – 3 cups (720 ml)

Garlic, and herbs (such as bay leaf or thyme) are considered pantry staples and not counted as ingredients.

Instructions

Heat olive oil in a heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Season the beef lightly with salt and pepper. Brown the meat in batches for 4–6 minutes, turning occasionally, until well colored on all sides. Remove and set aside. In the same pot, add the onion and carrots. Cook for 6–8 minutes, stirring, until softened and lightly golden. Return the beef to the pot. Pour in the red wine. Add the bay leaf and herbs, if using. Bring to a gentle simmer, cover, and cook over low heat for 2 hours, until the beef is very tender. Remove from the heat and let rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~520 kcal Protein: ~42 g Fat: ~28 g Carbohydrates: ~14 g



Garlic Herb Lamb Chops

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Lamb chops (rib or loin chops) – 2 lb (900 g)
 - Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
 - Garlic, minced – 4 cloves (20 g)
 - Fresh rosemary, finely chopped – ¼ cup (15 g)
 - Fresh parsley, chopped – ½ cup (15 g)
-

Instructions

Prepare the lamb. Pat the lamb chops dry with paper towels, then place them in a large bowl. Add olive oil, garlic, rosemary, salt, and black pepper. Rub the mixture evenly over the lamb chops. Let the chops rest at room temperature for 10 minutes. Preheat a grill or grill pan over medium-high heat. Grill the lamb chops for 3–4 minutes per side for medium doneness, turning once. Adjust the time slightly to achieve the desired doneness. Remove from the grill, sprinkle with fresh parsley, and let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~520 kcal Protein: ~34 g Fat: ~40 g Carbohydrates: ~1 g



Greek-Style Spinach and Feta Turkey Patties

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20-25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ground turkey – 1 lb (450 g)
- Fresh spinach – 2 cups (60 g), finely chopped
- Feta cheese – 1/2 cup (75 g), crumbled
- Egg – 1 large
- Garlic powder – 1 tsp

Instructions

In a large bowl, combine the ground turkey, spinach, feta, egg, garlic powder, salt, and black pepper. Mix gently until just combined. Divide the mixture into 8 equal portions and shape into patties. Heat a large skillet over medium heat and lightly coat it with olive oil. Cook the patties for 5–6 minutes per side, until golden and cooked through (internal temperature reaches 165°F / 74°C). Remove from the skillet and let the patties rest for 2–3 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~290 kcal Protein: ~27 g Fat: ~18 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g



Lemon & Ricotta Chicken Meatballs

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Ground chicken – 1 lb (450 g)
- Ricotta cheese (whole milk, well drained) – 1/2 cup (120 g)
- Parmesan cheese, grated – 1/3 cup (30 g)
- Fresh parsley, chopped – 1/4 cup (15 g)
- Lemon zest – 1 tbsp

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a large bowl, combine the ground chicken, drained ricotta, Parmesan, parsley, lemon zest, salt, and black pepper. Mix gently until just combined. Form the mixture into 16–18 meatballs and place them on the prepared baking sheet. Lightly brush or spray the meatballs with olive oil. Bake for 18–20 minutes, until cooked through and lightly golden (internal temperature reaches 165°F / 74°C). Let the meatballs rest for 2–3 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~280 kcal Protein: ~28 g Fat: ~16 g Carbohydrates: ~3 g

Chapter 8 Seafood Dishes



Cod Biscay Style

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 55 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Cod fillets, skinless – 1½ lb (680 g)
- Olive oil – ⅓ cup (80 ml)
- Onion, thinly sliced – 2 cups (300 g)
- Roasted red peppers, peeled – 2 cups (300 g)
- Garlic – 4 cloves (20 g)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 220°C / 425°F. Wash and place peppers whole on a baking sheet lined with parchment. Roast for 20–30 minutes, turning once or twice, until skins are blackened and starting to fall off. Transfer hot peppers to a bowl and cover with a lid or cling film. Leave to steam for 10 minutes. Remove the skin and seeds from the peppers, then cut them into large pieces. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium-low heat. Add the onion and cook for 12–15 minutes, stirring frequently, until very soft and lightly golden. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant. Add the roasted red pepper and cook for 5 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Transfer the mixture to a blender and blend until smooth. If the sauce seems too thick, add a little warm water and blend. Return the sauce to the pan and gently reheat over low heat. Season the cod lightly with salt. Carefully place the fillets in the smooth pepper sauce. Cover and simmer for 8–10 minutes, turning once, until the fish is opaque and flakes easily. Remove from heat and let rest for 5 minutes. Drizzle the sauce generously over the cod before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~360 kcal Protein: ~33 Fat: ~22 Carbohydrates: ~14 g



Oven-Baked Mediterranean Sea Bass

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 40 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Whole branzino (sea bass), cleaned and gutted – 2 fish (900 g total)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Lemon – 1 large (120 g)
- Fresh parsley, roughly chopped – ½ cup (15 g)
- Garlic, sliced – 4 cloves (20 g)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Lightly oil a baking dish. Pat the branzino dry with paper towels. Lightly season the inside and outside with salt. Fill each fish's cavity with lemon slices, garlic, and parsley. Drizzle the fish with olive oil. Place the fish in the baking dish and bake uncovered for 22–25 minutes, until the flesh is opaque and flakes easily with a fork. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving. Spoon the pan juices over the fish.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~380 kcal Protein: ~36 Fat: ~26 g Carbohydrates: ~2 g



Simple Seafood Paella

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 45 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Short-grain rice (paella or arborio) – 1½ cups (300 g)
- Mixed seafood (shrimp, mussels, calamari) – 1½ lb (680 g)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Seafood broth (vegetable broth or water) – 3½ cups (830 ml)
- Frozen peas – 1 cup (150 g)

Instructions

Heat olive oil in a wide paella pan or large skillet over medium heat. Add the mixed seafood and cook for 2–3 minutes, just until lightly opaque. Remove from the pan and set aside. Add the rice to the pan and stir to coat it in the oil. Pour in the warm seafood broth and add saffron (if using). Bring to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered over medium-low heat for 15–18 minutes, until most of the liquid is absorbed. Arrange the seafood and scatter the peas over the rice. Cook for 3–5 minutes, until the rice is tender and the seafood cooks through. Remove from heat and rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~450 kcal Protein: ~30 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~48 g



Creamy Spinach and Leek Fish Skillet

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 12–15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- White fish fillets (such as cod or pollock), cut into large chunks — 1 lb (450 g)
- Leek, thinly sliced (white and light green parts) — 1½ cups (180 g)
- Baby spinach — 3 cups (90 g)
- Olive oil — 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Heavy cream — ¼ cup (60 ml)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the fish and cook for 2–3 minutes per side, until lightly golden. Gently transfer to a plate. In the same skillet, add the leek and cook for 3–4 minutes, until soft and fragrant. Add the spinach and cook just until wilted, about 1 minute. Reduce the heat to medium-low, return the fish to the skillet, and pour in the cream. Simmer gently for 3–4 minutes, until the sauce lightly coats the fish and vegetables. Season with salt and black pepper, if desired, and serve warm.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~270 kcal Protein: ~24 g Fat: ~17 g Carbohydrates: ~6 g



Creamy Greek Yogurt & Pistachio Roasted Salmon

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Salmon fillets – 4 (about 1½ lb / 680 g total)
- Greek yogurt (full-fat, thick) – ½ cup (120 g)
- Fresh parsley or dill – ¼ cup (15 g), finely chopped
- Pistachios – ¼ cup (30 g), finely chopped
- Lemon zest – 1 tbsp

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or lightly grease it with olive oil. Pat the salmon dry with paper towels and season with salt and black pepper. Arrange the fillets skin-side down on the prepared baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine the Greek yogurt, chopped herbs, pistachios, and lemon zest. Mix until a thick paste forms. Spread the yogurt mixture evenly over the top of each salmon fillet. For extra crunch, sprinkle additional chopped pistachios over the top. Bake for 12–15 minutes, until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork. Avoid overbaking. Let the salmon rest for 2–3 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~420 kcal Protein: ~36 g Fat: ~28 g Carbohydrates: ~4 g



Mediterranean White Fish with Fresh Peach Salsa

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- White fish fillets (such as cod, halibut, or tilapia) – 1½ lb (680 g)
- Peaches – 2 large, diced
- Red onion – ¼ cup (40 g), finely chopped
- Lemon juice – 2 tbsp
- Blackened seasoning – 2 tsp

Instructions

In a small bowl, combine the diced peaches, red onion, and lemon juice. Season lightly with salt and set aside to allow the flavors to meld. Pat the fish dry with paper towels. Sprinkle evenly with the blackened seasoning and lightly brush with olive oil. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the fish and cook for 3–4 minutes per side, until a dark crust forms and the fish is opaque and flakes easily with a fork. Transfer the fish to serving plates and serve with the peach salsa on the side. Serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~290 kcal Protein: ~34 g Fat: ~10 g Carbohydrates: ~10 g



One-Pan Salmon with Roasted Vegetables

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 25 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Salmon fillets – 4 (about 1½ lb / 680 g total)
- Zucchini – 2 medium, sliced
- Cherry tomatoes – 2 cups (300 g)
- Red onion – 1 small, sliced
- Dried oregano – 1 tsp

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C) and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the zucchini, cherry tomatoes, and red onion on the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt, black pepper, and half of the oregano, and toss to coat. Arrange the salmon fillets among the vegetables. Drizzle the salmon lightly with olive oil and sprinkle with the remaining oregano. Bake for 15–18 minutes, until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork and the vegetables are tender. Let the salmon rest for 2–3 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~380 kcal Protein: ~34 g Fat: ~22 g Carbohydrates: ~8 g



Italian Stewed Calamari

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Calamari (squid), cleaned, sliced into rings – 1½ lb (680 g)
- Olive oil – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Garlic, sliced – 3 cloves (15 g)
- Crushed tomatoes – 2 cups (480 g)
- Fresh parsley, chopped – ½ cup (15 g)

Instructions

Heat the olive oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds, just until fragrant (do not brown). Pour in the crushed tomatoes, season lightly with salt and pepper, and bring to a gentle simmer. Add the calamari rings, stir to coat in the sauce, reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer gently for 30 minutes, until tender. Add a splash of water during cooking if needed to maintain a saucy consistency. Stir in the fresh parsley and remove from the heat. Serve hot, with crusty bread to soak up the sauce.

Tips

Squid can become tough if not cooked properly.

To keep it tender, follow one of these two rules:

✓ Rule 1: Cook it very quickly

High heat for 1–2 minutes (grilling or sautéing).

✓ Rule 2: Cook it slowly

Low heat for 30 minutes or longer

✗ Avoid the middle zone (3–15 minutes) — this is when calamari turns rubbery.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~32 g Fat: ~16 g Carbohydrates: ~12 g



Spanish Garlic Shrimp

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Raw shrimp, peeled & deveined – 1 lb (450 g)
- Olive oil (extra virgin) – ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Garlic, thinly sliced – 4 cloves (20 g)
- Red chili flakes – ½ tsp (1 g)
- Fresh parsley, finely chopped – ¼ cup (10 g)

Instructions

Pat the shrimp dry and season lightly with salt. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic cloves and chili flakes. Sauté for 30–60 seconds until fragrant (do not brown). Add the shrimp in a single layer. Sauté for 1–2 minutes on each side, until pink and cooked through. Remove from heat, sprinkle with fresh parsley, and serve immediately.

Tips

Serve hot, straight from the pan. Perfect as a tapas-style appetizer. Traditionally enjoyed with crusty bread to soak up the garlic oil.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~230 kcal Protein: ~23 g Fat: ~15 g Carbohydrates: ~2 g



Orange & Rosemary Shelled Mussels

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Shelled mussels (fresh or frozen, thawed) 1 lb (450 g)
- Olive oil – 2 tbsp (30 ml)
- Shallot, finely chopped – 1 small (30 g)
- Orange (zest + juice) - 1 medium orange (about 180 g)
- Fresh rosemary, sprig – 1 tsp (2 g)

Instructions

If using frozen mussels, thaw them thoroughly and pat them dry with paper towels. Heat the olive oil in a wide pan over medium heat. Add the shallot and cook for 2–3 minutes, until softened. Add the mussels and cook for 2–3 minutes, stirring gently, until heated through. Add the orange zest, orange juice, and the rosemary sprig. Simmer for 1–2 minutes, spooning the fragrant juices over the mussels, until the flavors meld. Remove from the heat, discard the rosemary sprig, toss gently, and serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 195 kcal Protein: 18 g Fat: 11 g Carbohydrates: 6 g

Chapter 9 Desserts



Classic Tiramisu

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Mascarpone cheese – 1 cup (225 g)
- Heavy cream – 1 cup (240 ml)
- Powdered sugar – $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (70 g)
- Ladyfinger cookies (savoiardi) – 12 pieces (120 g)
- Strong brewed coffee, cooled – $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (180 ml)

Unsweetened cocoa powder is optional, for dusting.

Instructions

In a large bowl, combine heavy cream, mascarpone, and powdered sugar. Beat with an electric mixer for 1.5 to 2 minutes until the mixture is smooth and thick, with soft, firm peaks. Lightly dip cookies in cooled coffee, just enough to moisten. Place a layer of coffee-dipped cookies in a deep dish (or serving glass). Top with a layer of cream mixture. Repeat layers. Dust lightly with cocoa powder, if desired. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

Tips

This recipe uses a simplified, egg-free tiramisu cream, ideal for beginners. Whipping the mascarpone and cream together reduces the risk of overwhipping or curdling, resulting in a smooth and stable texture.

This version also keeps longer in the refrigerator than traditional egg-based tiramisu, making it perfect for make-ahead desserts.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~450 kcal Protein: ~7 g Fat: ~34 g Carbohydrates: ~30 g

Lemon Cake

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 55 | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- All-purpose flour – 1½ cups (180 g)
- Eggs – 3 large (about 165 g without shells)
- Sugar – ¾ cup (150 g)
- Light olive oil – ½ cup (120 ml)
- Fresh lemons – 2 medium lemons
(about ¼ cup / 60 ml juice + zest from 1 lemon)

Baking powder and salt are considered pantry staples and not counted as ingredients.



Instructions

Preheat oven to 175°C (350°F). Line the parchment or lightly grease a 20 cm (8 in) round baking dish. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until slightly thickened, about 1-2 minutes. Add the olive oil, lemon juice, and lemon zest and mix until smooth. Add the flour, baking powder (2 tsp / 8 g), and a pinch of salt. Mix gently until soft (do not overmix). Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 38-42 minutes, until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely before slicing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~360 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~18 g Carbohydrates: ~44 g

Almond Cake

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Almond flour – 1½ cups (150 g)
- Eggs – 3 large (about 165 g without shells)
- Sugar – ½ cup (100 g)
- Grape seed oil (or melted butter) – ⅓ cup (80 ml)
- Baking powder – 1 tsp (4 g)



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 175°C (350°F). Lightly grease a 20 cm round cake pan. In a bowl, whisk the eggs and sugar until pale and slightly thickened, about 1–2 minutes. Whisk in the grape seed oil until smooth. Add the almond flour and baking powder. Gently fold until just combined. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 30–35 minutes, until lightly golden and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to a rack to cool completely before slicing.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~390 kcal Protein: ~11 g Fat: ~28 g Carbohydrates: ~22 g

Easy 5-Ingredient Baklava Bites

This simplified baklava keeps the traditional flavor and texture while fitting a 5-ingredient format—crispy phyllo, nutty filling, and a glossy honey syrup.

Prep time: 25 minutes | Cook time: 1 hour | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Phyllo dough – 8 sheets (about 120 g)
- Walnuts (or pistachios), finely chopped – 1½ cups (180 g)
- Unsalted butter, melted – ½ cup (115 g)
- Sugar – ½ cup (100 g)
- Honey – ⅓ cup (110 g)



Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Lightly butter an 8×8-inch (20×20 cm) baking dish. Place 2 sheets of phyllo in the dish, brushing each lightly with melted butter. Repeat the process until you use half of the sheets. Mix the chopped walnuts with the sugar. Spread evenly over the phyllo layers. Top with the remaining phyllo sheets, brushing each with butter. Cut into squares or diamonds. Bake for 35 minutes, until deeply golden and crisp. Warm the honey with ¼ cup (60 ml) of water until liquid. Pour the warm syrup over the hot baklava. Let rest for 30 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~520 kcal Protein: ~8 g Fat: ~34 g Carbohydrates: ~48 g



Panna Cotta

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 20 minutes + chilling | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Heavy cream – 2 cups (480 ml)
- Milk – ½ cup (120 ml)
- Sugar – ⅓ cup (70 g)
- Gelatin powder – 2 tsp (6 g)
- Vanilla extract – 1 tbsp (13 g)

Instructions

Soak gelatin in ¼ cup (60 mL) of cold milk. Stir. Let it stand for 5 minutes until swollen. In a saucepan, combine the heavy cream, the remaining milk, and the sugar. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring, until sugar dissolves and mixture is hot but not boiling. Remove from heat. Add softened gelatin, stir until dissolved, then add vanilla extract. Divide the mixture evenly among four glasses. Let cool slightly, then refrigerate for at least 4 hours, until completely set. Serve chilled with fresh fruit, if desired.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~360 kcal Protein: ~6 g Fat: ~28 g Carbohydrates: ~22 g

Biscotti

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 50 | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- All-purpose flour – 1½ cups (180 g)
- Sugar – ½ cup (100 g)
- Eggs – 2 large (about 110 g without shells)
- Whole almonds, roughly chopped – ¾ cup (110 g)
- Light olive oil (or neutral oil or softened butter) – ¼ cup (60 ml)

Baking powder and a pinch of salt are considered pantry staples and not counted as ingredients.

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a bowl, whisk the eggs and sugar until pale. Add the olive oil and mix until smooth. Stir in the flour, baking powder (1 tsp / 4 g), and a pinch of salt. Shape the dough into a cylinder about 10 inches (25 cm) long. Place on the baking sheet. Bake for 20–22 minutes, until lightly golden and set. Remove from the oven and let cool for 10 minutes. Slice diagonally into ¾-inch (2 cm) pieces. Arrange slices cut-side down on the baking sheet. Bake for 10–13 minutes, turning once, until dry and crisp. Let cool completely before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~320 kcal Protein: ~8 g Fat: ~14 g Carbohydrates: ~42 g

Avocado Chocolate Mousse

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 10 | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Ripe avocados - 2 medium (300 g)
- Unsweetened cocoa powder - 5 tbsp (25 g)
- Honey or maple syrup or agave syrup - ¼ cup (85 g)
- Milk of choice (almond, oat, or dairy) - ¼ cup (60 ml)
- Vanilla extract - 1 tsp (5 ml)

Instructions

Cut the avocados in half, remove the pits, and scoop the flesh into a food processor or blender. Add the cocoa powder, honey (or syrup), milk, and vanilla extract. Blend until completely smooth and creamy. Divide the mousse evenly into 4 serving glasses. Chill for 15–20 minutes if desired, or serve immediately.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 260 kcal Protein: 4 g Fat: 18 g Carbohydrates: 24 g

Date & Nut Energy Balls (No sugar)

Prep time: 15 minutes | Cook time: 15 | Serves: 4



Ingredients

- Medjool dates (or other soft dates), skins removed, pitted - 10–12 dates (160 g)
- Mixed nuts (almonds, walnuts, or hazelnuts) - ¾ cup (90 g)
- Unsweetened cocoa powder - 1 tbsp (8 g), plus extra for rolling (optional)
- Fresh lemon juice - 2 tsp (10 ml)
- Water 2–3 tbsp (30–45 ml)

Instructions

If the dates are dry, soak them in warm water for 5 minutes, then drain well. Place the dates in a food processor and blend until a smooth paste forms. Add the nuts and pulse until finely chopped and evenly combined. Add the cocoa powder, lemon juice, and water. Process until the mixture holds together when pressed. Roll the mixture into small balls. If desired, roll the balls in additional cocoa powder for coating. Refrigerate for 10–15 minutes before serving.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 240 kcal Protein: 6 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 26 g



Protein Strawberry Cottage Cheese Ice Cream

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 2–3 hours | Serves: 2

Ingredients

- Strawberries - 1 cup (150 g), fresh or frozen
- Cottage cheese - 1 cup (250 g)
- Honey 2–3 tbsp

Instructions

Add the strawberries, cottage cheese, and honey to a blender. Blend until smooth and creamy. Transfer the mixture to a freezer-safe container and spread evenly. Freeze for 2–3 hours, or until firm. Let stand at room temperature for 5–10 minutes before serving for a softer texture.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 130–170 kcal Protein: 12–15 g Fat: 3–5 g Carbohydrates: 10–16 g



Apple-Carrot Marshmallow Bites (No Sugar)

Prep time: 20 minutes | Cook time: 3–4 hours

Serves: about 20–24 pieces

Ingredients

- Carrots - about 4 medium carrots (400 g), peeled and chopped
- Apples - about 2 medium apples (350 g), peeled, cored, and chopped
- Water -1/2 cup (120 ml) water for cooking, 3–4 tbsp water (50–70 ml) for blooming gelatin
- Orange - juice of 1 orange
- Quick-dissolving gelatin - 55 g (220 Bloom)

Instructions

Place the chopped carrots and apples in a saucepan. Add 120 ml (1/2 cup) of water. Cook over medium heat for 15–20 minutes, or until the fruits and carrots are completely soft. Blend the mixture using an immersion blender or a countertop blender until smooth. In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over 50–70 ml (3–4 tbsp) of water. Let it sit for 5–10 minutes to bloom. Add the orange juice and the bloomed gelatin to the warm fruit purée. Stir until the gelatin is completely dissolved. Beat the mixture with a mixer for 3–5 minutes, until it becomes lighter in color and slightly airy. This step helps create a smoother, more delicate texture. Pour the mixture into a mold lined with parchment paper or plastic wrap, or use silicone molds. Cover the top with plastic wrap to seal. Refrigerate for at least 3–4 hours, or until fully set. Remove from the mold and cut into small cubes or bite-sized pieces.

Tips

For the most consistent results, especially in desserts, measuring ingredients by weight is recommended.

Nutrition (per serving, approx., 1 piece, if cut into 24 pieces.)

Calories: ~30 kcal Protein: ~2 g Fat: ~0 g Carbohydrates: ~6 g



Honey Apple Oat Crumble

Prep time: 10 minutes | Cook time: 45 | Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Apples, peeled and sliced - 4 medium (520 g)
- Rolled oats - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (70 g)
- All-purpose flour - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (30 g)
- Honey or maple syrup - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (85 g)
- Light olive oil - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (55 g)

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Evenly spread the sliced apples in the baking dish. Pulse the oatmeal in a food processor for 5–6 short bursts until it resembles coarse meal with a few small flakes. In a bowl, combine the oatmeal, flour, honey (or maple syrup), and light olive oil. Mix until crumbly. Sprinkle the crumbs evenly over the apples. Bake for 35 minutes, until the apples soften and the crumbs turn lightly golden. Let cool slightly before serving.

Tips

Light olive oil has a neutral flavor and is ideal for baking desserts without bitterness.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: 310 kcal Protein: 4 g Fat: 14 g Carbohydrates: 44 g



Honey Berry Sauce

Prep time: 5 minutes | Cook time: 15 minutes | Serves: about 1½ cups (6–8 servings as a topping)

Ingredients

- Mixed berries (fresh or frozen) – 2 cups (300 g)
- Honey – 3–4 tbsp, to taste
- Lemon juice – 1 tbsp
- Lemon zest – 1 tsp
- Water – 2–3 tbsp

Instructions

Add the berries, water, and honey to a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook for 6–8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the berries are soft and release their juices. Remove from heat and blend until smooth using an immersion blender or a countertop blender. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve to remove the seeds, if desired. Stir in the lemon juice and lemon zest. Let cool slightly; the sauce will thicken as it cools. Serve warm or chilled. Perfect for panna cotta, pancakes, waffles, yogurt, frozen yogurt, or desserts.

Nutrition (per serving, approx.)

Calories: ~45 kcal Protein: ~0.5 g Fat: ~0 g Carbohydrates: ~11 g

Chapter 8 - 30-Day Mediterranean Meal Plan

This 30-day meal plan will help you easily organize your daily menu using the recipes in this book.

It follows a “cook once, eat twice” approach: you prepare many main dishes once and enjoy them over two days, saving time and simplifying the cooking process.

The plan is flexible - you can change days, repeat favorite dishes, or adjust portions according to your preferences and the rhythm of life, using it as a convenient reference point.



Week 1

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	Peach & Cashew Yogurt Bowl	Minestrone + Whole-grain bread	Mushroom Risotto + Provencal Tomato Salad	Whole-grain crackers with cheese
Tuesday	Peach & Cashew Yogurt Bowl	Minestrone + Whole-grain bread	Mushroom Risotto + Provencal Tomato Salad	Whole-grain crackers with cheese
Wednesday	Oatmeal with Tomatoes, Olives & Feta	Mediterranean Creamy Chickpea Salad+ Whole-grain crackers	Chicken Cacciatore + Greek Lemon Potatoes	Fresh fruit
Thursday	Oatmeal with Tomatoes, Olives & Feta	Mediterranean Creamy Chickpea Salad+ Whole-grain crackers	Chicken Cacciatore + Greek Lemon Potatoes	Fresh fruit
Friday	Green Protein Breakfast Smoothie	Pasta alla Norma	Moroccan Couscous + Spanish Garlic Shrimp	Olives and cherry tomatoes
Saturday	Simple Orange French Crepes	Pasta alla Norma (leftovers) + Cucumber & Feta Salad	Moroccan Couscous + Spanish Garlic Shrimp	Pear slices with walnuts
Sunday	Simple Orange French Crepes	Warm Lentil & Mushroom Salad	Quick Lemon Garlic Chicken Bites+ Maroulosalata	Pear slices with walnuts

Week 2

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	Caramelized Apple Baked Oatmeal	Broccoli Salad + Tuna Bruschetta	Baked Eggplant with Tomato & Parmesan+ Bulgur	Halloumi + Whole-grain crackers
Tuesday	Caramelized Apple Baked Oatmeal	Broccoli Salad + Tuna Bruschetta	Baked Eggplant with Tomato & Parmesan+ Bulgur	Halloumi + Whole-grain crackers
Wednesday	Vegetable Egg Muffins	Goat Cheese & Sun-Dried Tomato Stuffed Chicken+ Maroulosalata	Creamy Cauliflower & Lemon Soup + Whole-grain bread	Apple + a handful of nuts
Thursday	Vegetable Egg Muffins	Goat Cheese & Sun-Dried Tomato Stuffed Chicken + Maroulosalata	Creamy Cauliflower & Lemon Soup + Whole-grain bread	Apple + a handful of nuts
Friday	Granola (with milk or yogurt)	Farro Salad	Creamy Seafood Pasta + Zucchini Bites	Avocado, crackers
Saturday	Zucchini Fritters	Saltimbocca alla Romana + Farro Salad (leftovers)	Creamy Seafood Pasta + Zucchini Bites	Avocado, crackers
Sunday	Zucchini Fritters	Saltimbocca alla Romana + Greek Salad	Mediterranean Leftover Bowl (Saltimbocca, vegetables, olives cheese, bread, nuts)	Date & Nut Energy Balls

Week 3

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	Tomato Toast with Sardines	Roasted Sweet Potato Salad	Seafood Paella	Apple-Carrot Marshmallow Bites
Tuesday	Tomato Toast with Sardines	Roasted Sweet Potato Salad	Seafood Paella	Apple-Carrot Marshmallow Bites
Wednesday	Ricotta & Cranberry Bake	Roasted Beet, Feta & Walnut Salad + Bulgur	Avgolemono + Whole-grain bread	Orange + a few almonds
Thursday	Ricotta & Cranberry Bake	Roasted Beet, Feta & Walnut Salad + Bulgur	Avgolemono + Whole-grain bread	Dark chocolate with nuts
Friday	Avocado & Poached Egg Bowl	Greek-Style Grilled Chicken Salad	Warm Lentil & Mushroom Salad + Bruschetta Olive Tapenade	Dark chocolate with nuts
Saturday	Greek Yogurt Pancakes + Honey Berry Sauce	Greek-Style Grilled Chicken Salad	Warm Lentil & Mushroom Salad + Bruschetta Olive Tapenade	Orange or mandarin + a few almonds
Sunday	Greek Yogurt Pancakes+ Honey Berry Sauce	Smoked Salmon & Avocado Salad	One-Pot Tomato & Feta Orzo	Dates and nuts

Week 4

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	Creamy Sweet Corn & Parmesan Scramble	Creamy Almond & Yogurt Turkey Skillet	Green Pesto Pasta with Peas	Date & Nut Energy Balls
Tuesday	Creamy Sweet Corn & Parmesan Scramble	Creamy Almond & Yogurt Turkey Skillet	Green Pesto Pasta with Peas	Date & Nut Energy Balls
Wednesday	Ricotta Toast with Figs & Almonds	Quinoa Salad with Corn & Avocado	Fasolakia + Hummus with pita	Olives & Nuts
Thursday	Ricotta Toast with Figs & Almonds	Quinoa Salad with Corn & Avocado	Fasolakia + Hummus with pita	Olives & Nuts
Friday	Green Protein Breakfast Smoothie	Roasted Vegetables + Smoked Paprika Halloumi	Greek Pasta with Meat Sauce	Modern Chorizo, Olive & Corn Tapas, crackers
Saturday	Creamy Polenta with Mushrooms & Parmesan	Roasted Vegetables + Smoked Paprika Halloumi	Greek Pasta with Meat Sauce	A banana and a handful of pistachios
Sunday	Creamy Polenta with Mushrooms & Parmesan	Patatosalata (Classic Greek Potato Salad)	Creamy Greek Yogurt & Pistachio Roasted Salmon + Simple Eggplant Caponata	Avokado mousse

Week 5

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	Spinach & Feta Egg Wrap	Mediterranean- Style Lentils	One-Pan Mediterranean Steak Bites with Olives + Roasted Beet & Feta Salad	Fresh Fruit
Tuesday	Spinach & Feta Egg Wrap	Mediterranean- Style Lentils	One-Pan Mediterranean Steak Bites with Olives + Roasted Beet & Feta Salad	Fresh Fruit

Final Thoughts

Thank you for taking this journey through the flavors of Mediterranean cuisine!

I hope these recipes have brought lightness to your days, pleasure to your table, and a sense of confidence when working with familiar ingredients, while reinforcing the idea that healthy eating can be simple, practical, and truly enjoyable.

If this book becomes part of your daily cooking, your experience may help others discover whether it fits their own cooking journey.

