

HEALTHIER TRADITIONS COOKBOOK™

AROUND THE WORLD

20 Globally Inspired Recipes



CHICKPEA TAGINE
(MOROCCO)



JAPCHAE
(KOREA)



ARROZ CON LECHE
(COSTA RICA)



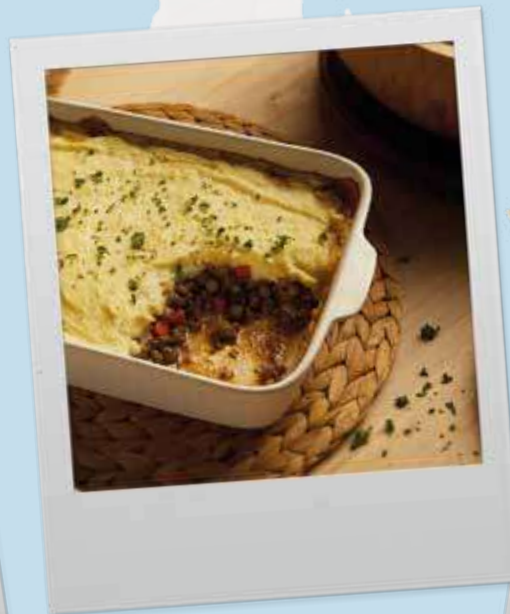
GAZPACHO
(SPAIN)



PAVLOVA
(AUSTRALIA)



PAO DE QUEIJO
(BRAZIL)



FOREWORD



People have the potential to live longer than ever before, and this possible gift of extra time requires that we safeguard our health and wellness, and that we take good care of ourselves in our daily lives. Delicious, nutritious food promotes good health and brings people together.

Nonprofit Transamerica Institute® is pleased to share Healthier Traditions Cookbook: Around the World, the newest cookbook in the Healthier Traditions Cookbook™ series. It features traditional recipes from 19 countries spanning six continents, offering flavorful dishes like Brazil's savory Pao de Queijo, Australia's sweet Pavlova, and India's Matar Paneer.

We developed this cookbook to inspire and encourage people of all culinary skill levels to learn about how people eat around the world. We hope you will enjoy learning how to cook these dishes as well as a bit about the history and the ingredients used in making them. We designed these recipes to contain as many vegetables as possible, use healthy oils, minimize refined grains and sweeteners, and maximize flavor from spices and herbs, all while aiming to keep the essence of the dish. We offer vegetarian and gluten-free alternatives when possible; you are welcome to make any other preferred substitutions based on your preferences or needs. The recipes can be adjusted based on your own preferences for certain flavors, dietary restrictions, seasonality, etc.

While the recipes are designed to be nutritious for a generally healthy population, not everyone has the same needs; depending on your health status, you may need to make other modifications. Consult a registered dietitian for dietary guidance.

We extensively researched the history and science behind these dishes to inform the development of these recipes, but we acknowledge that they may not represent all versions of a recipe and/or be the same version that people from a certain region or country have cooked it for hundreds or thousands of years. Further, some of these recipes rely on ingredients that are commonly used in certain cultures and other parts of the world, but they may not be readily accessible where you live. You may be able to find some key ingredients online, but it can also often be fine to substitute a similar spice or other flavoring, whole grain, vegetable, etc., to make a dish that is just as nutritious and enjoyable.

The nutrient information provided corresponds to one serving of each dish. Values presented are approximations due to variations in ingredients' content and measurements. They were calculated primarily with data from USDA's [FoodData Central](#) integrated data system and augmented with information from food manufacturers and data from Nutritionix, when needed. Calculations and data sourcing relied on the professional judgement of the recipe developer.

We truly hope you and your family, friends, and loved ones will enjoy these recipes.

Transamerica Institute



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CHICKPEA TAGINE



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
25 minutes



Cook time:
30 minutes



Total time:
55 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or less, if preferred)
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 pinch saffron (optional)
- 2 large carrots, roughly chopped
- 1 summer squash, cubed
- 1 can diced tomatoes, no salt added
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 6 dried apricots, chopped
- 1 orange juice and zest (organic, if possible)
- ½ tablespoon honey
- 1 cup uncooked whole wheat couscous
- 1 ½ cup cooked or canned chickpeas, no salt added
- ½ large lemon, juiced
- 1 small handful fresh cilantro (or parsley), chopped
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, slightly toasted



DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat a medium pan over a medium heat and add oil. Add the diced onion and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 more minute.
3. Lower the heat and add all of the spices, carrots, and squash. Stir to coat evenly.
4. Add the tomatoes, broth, apricots, orange juice and zest, and honey.
5. Turn the heat up and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook for 20 minutes, until carrots are tender.
6. While vegetable mixture is cooking, prepare couscous according to package directions.
7. When vegetables are softened, add the chickpeas and simmer for 5 more minutes.
8. Stir in lemon juice and sprinkle with cilantro (or parsley) and almonds. Serve warm over couscous.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 506 calories
- 14g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 410mg sodium
- 88g carbohydrate
- 16g fiber
- 31g sugar
- 17g protein

TIPS:

1. This recipe uses a whole wheat couscous instead of a more common couscous made of refined flour, making it a more nutrient-dense option. If you are seeking a gluten-free option, try using millet, a whole grain rice blend, or even quinoa (although these would not be traditional).
2. A tagine refers to both a 2-part clay vessel used for cooking in North African countries (such as Morocco), as well as a stew-like dish that can be cooked in a tagine (such as this chickpea tagine). Clay is good for cooking this style of dish as it is porous and traps moisture in food, helping to preserve the taste of ingredients. It is also an insulating material that holds heat and keeps food warm.
3. While tagines typically contain meat, this dish is entirely vegetarian (and could be vegan, if using a sweetener other than honey). The chickpeas provide plenty of protein for a meal and the many different herbs, spices, fruits, and vegetables provide such interesting flavor that the meat will not be missed.

EGUSI



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
10 minutes



Cook time:
1 hour



Total time:
1 hour 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ pounds bone-in chicken thighs (roughly 4 thighs)
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small chili pepper (e.g., habanero), chopped
- ½ bell pepper, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- ¼ cup dried shrimp
- 1 cup egusi seeds
- ½ cup water
- 1 tablespoon avocado or other neutral oil
- 1 cup low sodium chicken stock
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 6 cups chopped mixed greens (e.g., spinach, kale)

DIRECTIONS:

1. To parboil chicken thighs, add thighs to a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook 12–15 minutes. Remove from water, trim and discard any large pieces of skin or fat, and set thighs aside.
2. While chicken cooks, combine tomatoes, onion, peppers, and garlic in a blender or food processor until smooth. If you prefer to not see or notice the texture of the dried shrimp, add them to blended mixture, as well.
3. In a separate medium bowl, stir together the egusi with ½ cup of water to form a paste.
4. Bring a large pan to medium heat and add 1 tablespoon avocado or other neutral oil. Pour in blended vegetables and add shrimp. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add chicken, chicken stock, and spices and cook for another 5 minutes.
5. Add egusi paste in spoonfuls to the pot. Do not stir so that lumps remain. Add more water if needed to thoroughly cover egusi. Cover with lid and cook for 10 minutes.
6. Stir in greens, cover, and cook for another 5–10 minutes, until reaching desired texture. Add another sprinkle of salt to taste, if needed.
7. Serve the egusi soup in a bowl with fufu, eba, or pounded yam.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 247 calories
- 10g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 371mg sodium
- 11g carbohydrate
- 4g fiber
- 3g sugar
- 26g protein

TIPS:

1. Egusi is a stew that is very popular in Nigeria and surrounding countries. The most distinctive ingredient is egusi seeds, which are derived from certain cucurbitaceous plants (e.g., squash, melon, gourd). Various other ingredients may be used, such as different red meats or types of fish, locust beans, and pumpkin leaves. It is often served with eba, made from a cassava-based dough, but could also be served with other starchy sides.
2. Egusi is not commonly found in American grocery stores. If necessary, you can substitute a variety of other nut or seed meals either purchased from a store or made by pulsing them in a food processor. Examples may include pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, or almonds; be sure to use raw, as opposed to roasted and salted, nuts or seeds.
3. Egusi is commonly made with a lot of palm oil, which is both high in saturated fat and promotes deforestation. Though not perfectly traditional, this recipe uses much less oil, instead relying on vegetables and spices to provide flavor.
4. In case of any shellfish allergies, omit the dried shrimp and use instead diced mushrooms, bonito flakes, or fried garlic.



SHIRO WOT



Yield:
2 servings



Prep time:
10 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

SAUCE:

- 1 medium red onion, chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons berbere spice
- ½ cup chickpea flour
- 1 cup canned crushed tomatoes
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1½ cups water, plus more as needed
- 1 teaspoon minced jalapeño (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger to a food processor and pulse until very finely minced, stopping periodically to scrape down the sides of the bowl to ensure even chopping.
Set aside.
2. Heat a pot over medium heat, then add the olive oil, onion mixture, berbere, and salt. Stir to combine, cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and thickened, about 3 minutes.
3. Whisk in the chickpea flour and stir briskly to avoid lumps. Whisk in the tomatoes and 1 cup of water. Reduce the heat to low and simmer, adding more water as needed to loosen the mixture and stirring occasionally. Keep stirring until the mixture becomes smooth and thickened, roughly 10 minutes. Stir in jalapeños (if using) and serve warm. Note the shiro will thicken as it stands and cools.
4. Season with salt and pepper as needed and serve with injera (a fermented, teff-based flatbread) or other whole grain bread.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 318 calories
- 17g fat
- 3g saturated fat
- 739mg sodium
- 38g carbohydrate
- 9g fiber
- 14g sugar
- 9g protein

TIPS:

1. This dish is a typical Ethiopian vegetarian stew, with the term “wot” referring to a stew. The predominant ingredient is shiro powder, made from chickpeas. This recipe is traditionally made with Shiro powder which is made from chickpeas and spices. Shiro powder may be difficult to find, so this recipe instead uses berbere spice.
2. While traditional shiro wot will likely use clarified butter (a variety known as niter kibbeh) as a source of fat, this recipe uses a more heart-healthy olive oil in its place.
3. Some berbere spice blends have more salt than others. Therefore, this recipe includes very little additional salt to avoid adding too much sodium; you may find that you want to add more if the blend you use does not have much or any salt.
4. This stew is typically served with injera, an Ethiopian flatbread made with fermented teff flour. Feel free to buy or make this bread to serve with your stew, or you could substitute another whole grain flatbread in a pinch.



JAPCHAE



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
25 minutes



Cook time:
30 minutes



Total time:
55 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

SAUCE:

- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari
- ½ tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon avocado oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- ½ teaspoon white pepper

NOODLES:

- 8 ounces Korean sweet potato noodles
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon avocado or extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced
- 8 ounces sirloin beef, sliced against the grain into strips
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 4 scallions, sliced into 4-inch pieces
- ½ bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, cut into matchsticks
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced
- 8 ounces spinach, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds, for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a small bowl, whisk together ingredients for sauce. Set aside.
2. Bring a pot of water to a boil, add noodles, and stir with a wooden or metal spoon to ensure they don't stick together. Cover and cook for up to 6 minutes, depending on package instructions. When done cooking, drain and rinse the noodles under cold water to cease cooking.
3. Crack egg into another small bowl and beat with a fork. Heat a large pan or skillet over medium heat, then add ½ teaspoon oil. Once heated, add cracked egg, tilting the pan so the egg spreads thinly. Cook for about 1 minute, then flip, turn off heat, and let sit in pan for 1 more minute. Let it cool and slice it into thin strips.
4. Add another 1 teaspoon oil to the large pan, raise heat to medium-high, and add mushrooms. Stir to prevent sticking and cook for 2-3 minutes, until any liquid has evaporated. Add sliced beef and 2 tablespoons of sauce to pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Set aside.
5. Add remaining ½ tablespoon oil to the pan over medium heat. Once hot, add onion, scallions, peppers, and carrots. Stir occasionally and cook until softened, about 4 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add spinach and cook for 1-2 minutes, until wilted. Turn off heat.
6. Add mushrooms, beef, egg strips, and noodles back into pan, pour on remaining sauce, and stir to combine. Garnish with sesame seeds and serve warm.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 389 calories
- 18g fat
- 4g saturated fat
- 607mg sodium
- 41g carbohydrate
- 6g fiber,
- 9g sugar
- 19g protein

TIPS:

1. The most prominent ingredient in this Korean dish is dangmyeon, which are noodles made from sweet potato starch, known for their translucency and chewiness. They are refined and do not contain most of the nutrition present in whole sweet potatoes; therefore, you are welcome to substitute any whole grain noodle that you prefer (although this would not be traditional).
2. “Japchae” means mixed vegetables in Korean and the dish in fact originally consisted of only chopped, mixed vegetables. It then evolved to include meat and noodles over time. Feel free to use any combination of fresh, seasonal vegetables you have on hand; examples include julienned zucchini, green beans, or kale.
3. For a vegetarian version of this dish, omit the beef and add more fried eggs and/or cubes or slices of pan-fried or baked tofu.
4. Other recipes for japchae may contain a few tablespoons of sweetener. They may also contain a refined vegetable oil and more sesame oil than this version. This recipe uses much less sweetener and minimizes these oils that can be high in pro-inflammatory omega-6 fatty acids and devoid of other nutritious compounds—instead relying on less-refined oils like olive and/or avocado oil that can provide healthier sources of fats.



MAPO TOFU



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
25 minutes



Cook time:
15 minutes



Total time:
40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound firm tofu
- 1 tablespoon avocado or organic canola oil
- 1 teaspoon Sichuan peppercorns
- 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 4 ounces shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- 1 tablespoon fermented black bean paste
- 2 tablespoons doubanjiang paste (or less, to reduce heat)
- 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium tamari
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 2 scallions, finely sliced

DIRECTIONS:

1. While preparing other ingredients, press tofu block with a dish towel or paper towels between a large plate or cutting board and a heavy pot or pan to release extra liquid. Let sit for at least 15 minutes and then cut into 1-2-inch cubes.
2. In a wok or large pan over medium low heat, add the oil and Sichuan peppercorns. Cook for 30 seconds, until fragrant, and add the ginger and garlic. Cook for another 1 minute.
3. Add the mushrooms, black bean paste, doubanjiang, tamari, broth, and vinegar. Raise heat to medium and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Add the tofu cubes to the mixture and gently toss the tofu in the sauce. Let simmer for 3-5 minutes, and then add the sesame oil and top with scallions. Serve warm with brown rice, if desired.

TIPS:

1. This dish comes from Chengdu, the capital of the Sichuan Province. This province is known for its spicy cuisine and especially for use of the eponymous peppercorn, which can cause a slight numbing effect after consumption. The dish's name means "pockmarked old woman," referring to the woman believed to have developed the recipe in the late 1800s.
2. Mapo tofu is traditionally made with a softer tofu, such as silken, which has a custard-like texture. You are welcome to use that if desired and if available; note it should not be pressed before cooking and it will not hold together as easily during cooking.
3. This dish typically includes some ground beef or pork to provide more flavor and texture. This recipe incorporates finely minced mushrooms to provide those factors while offering a more nutrient-dense alternative. It also includes brown rice in place of white rice, as well as healthier oils in place of other oils (such as chili oil, which is commonly made with soybean or vegetable oil).





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 177 calories
- 10g fat
- 1g saturated fat
- 666mg sodium
- 8g carbohydrate
- 2g fiber
- 3g sugar
- 11g protein

PANCIT



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
15 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
35 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 ounces brown rice instant vermicelli noodles (or other thin brown rice noodles)
- 1½ tablespoons avocado oil, divided
- 1 pound boneless and skinless chicken thighs
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 mild onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- ½ cup sliced carrots
- 1½ tablespoons reduced-sodium tamari
- ½ tablespoon fish sauce
- ½ tablespoon oyster sauce
- ¼ cup water
- 1 cup green onions, sliced



DIRECTIONS:

1. Soak noodles according to package directions.
2. Heat a large pan or skillet over medium heat and add ½ tablespoon oil. When hot, add chicken thighs. Cook for 5 minutes, then flip and cook on other side for 5 minutes, until lightly browned. Remove from pan and set aside.
3. Add another 1 tablespoon oil to the pan, followed by garlic and onion. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until the onions become translucent. Let cool for at least 5 minutes and then chop into bite-sized pieces.
4. Add the cabbage and carrots, stir, and cook until wilted, 3-4 minutes. Add the chicken pieces and stir to combine, then remove from the pan and set aside.
5. Reduce heat to medium. Add tamari, fish sauce, oyster sauce, and water. Bring to a simmer and add the vegetable and chicken mixture along with the noodles, tossing to combine. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until most of the liquid is gone.
6. Remove from heat, stir in green onions, and serve immediately.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 486 calories
- 16g fat
- 3g saturated fat
- 594mg sodium
- 53g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 3g sugar
- 34g protein

TIPS:

1. Pancit is a traditional stir-fried noodle dish eaten throughout the Philippines. There are many different versions; this recipe is most similar to pancit bihon, which is known for using rice noodles. It has been modified to contain much less sodium, whole grain noodles, no added sweetener or condiments with preservatives, and a healthier oil.
2. The Chinese originally introduced noodles to the name of this dish which is derived from the phrase “pian i sit,” meaning something convenient or cooked quickly, from the Hokkien dialect predominantly spoken in southeastern mainland China.
3. This dish can be modified to be pescatarian by substituting a type of seafood like shrimp, squid, or mussels (without shells). For a vegetarian version, you could use pan-fried or baked tofu cubes.

MATAR PANEER



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
15 minutes



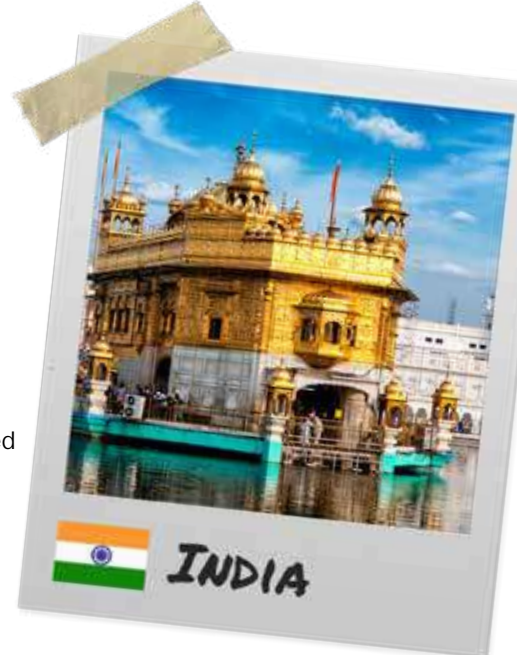
Cook time:
35 minutes



Total time:
40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces paneer cut in ½-inch pieces, about 2 cups
- 2 tablespoons avocado or other neutral cooking oil, divided
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 inch ginger, peeled and minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped green chili (such as jalapeño)
- 1 green cardamom pod
- 5 peppercorns
- 1 can diced or crushed tomatoes, no salt added (or 2 large tomatoes)
- ¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 10 raw and unsalted cashews
- ⅛ teaspoon cloves
- ⅛ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon coriander
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ¼ teaspoon cumin
- 2 cups frozen peas, thawed
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro (for garnish)



DIRECTIONS:

1. If using store-bought paneer, soak in bowl of hot water for 20 minutes. Drain before using.
2. Meanwhile, heat a large pan or skillet over medium heat. Add 1 tablespoon oil, followed by onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add garlic, ginger, chili, cardamom, and peppercorns. Stir and cook for 2 minutes, until fragrant. Add tomatoes, salt, and cashews. Sauté for 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and let cool. Transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. (Note if your pan has sufficient depth, you can use an immersion blender to purée this mixture.)
4. Add 1 more tablespoon oil to the pan over medium heat. Add remaining spices, pour in tomato mixture, and stir to combine. Add peas, water, and paneer, stirring to combine. Cook for 5 more minutes. Add salt to taste, if desired.
5. Turn off the heat, garnish with cilantro, and serve warm with brown rice or whole wheat naan, paratha, or roti.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 276 calories
- 20g fat
- 10g saturated fat
- 312mg sodium
- 16g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 9g sugar
- 17g protein

TIPS:

1. Matar paneer is a traditional north Indian dish from the Punjab region. Paneer is a type of cheese commonly eaten in the region and is prepared with a variety of different spices. This version includes a sweet and spicy sauce including a mixture of predominantly tomatoes and many anti-inflammatory spices without added cream or butter/ghee, making it healthier.
2. This dish can be easily modified to make a plant-based version. Instead of using a block of paneer, substitute a comparable amount of tofu—omitting the soaking step and even pressing, if desired.

KOKODA



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
30 minutes



Cook time:
30 minutes



Total time:
60 minutes

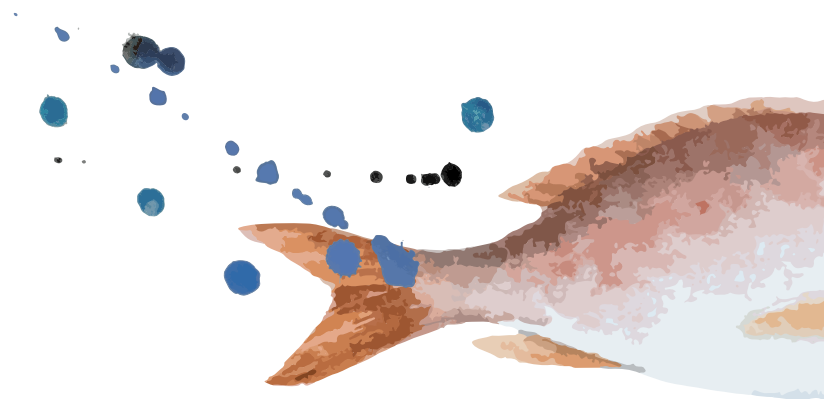
INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound boneless, skinless snapper fillet, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 cup canned light coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, diced
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 medium tomato, diced
- ½ jalapeño or red chili
- ½ small red onion, diced
- ¼ cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 lime, cut into 4 wedges



DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl, toss the snapper with the white vinegar. Leave to marinate for 30 minutes, then drain and rinse the snapper.
2. Return snapper to bowl along with the coconut milk, lime juice, salt, black pepper, bell peppers, scallions, tomato, chili, and red onion and stir gently to combine.
3. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Top with cilantro and serve with additional lime wedges.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 184 calories
- 6g fat
- 3g saturated fat
- 370mg sodium
- 9g carbohydrate
- 2g fiber
- 8g sugar
- 24g protein

TIPS:

1. Kokoda is considered to be the national dish of Fiji, found in the continent of Oceania. It is similar to the more familiar ceviche in that it is cooked in vinegar and without heat. Once the acidity of the vinegar cooks the fish, it is served in coconut milk with freshly chopped vegetables (and often in a coconut shell) for a refreshing and delicious meal.
2. This dish can be made with many different types of white fish. Ask your fishmonger what firm, white fish is most fresh for this recipe. Examples of fine alternatives to snapper may include bass, sole, or grouper.
3. Kokoda is traditionally cooked in juice from nearly a cup of citrus juice. To save time without losing flavor, this recipe uses white vinegar to cook the fish.
4. If not eaten by itself, this dish may traditionally be served with taro chips, but it could also be served with brown rice, roasted sweet potato wedges, tortilla chips, or taco shells.



PAVLOVA



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
25 minutes



Cook time:
1 hour 30 minutes



Total time:
>2 hours
25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

PAVLOVA:

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 4 egg whites (room temperature)
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon white wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon arrowroot starch

WHIPPED YOGURT CREAM:

- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- ½ cup low- or full-fat strained yogurt
- ¼ cup fresh berries (or more, if desired)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 275°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and draw a 9-inch circle on the paper. Pulse sugar in a food processor several times to make it finer.
2. Make sure the egg whites are at room temperature before starting. Beat egg whites and cream of tartar at low speed in a mixer with the whisk, or using eggbeaters in a bowl, until soft peaks form.
3. Add the granulated sugar 1 tablespoon at a time allowing each to dissolve fully, and whip the egg whites and sugar at medium speed until forming stiff peaks. Note these two steps could take up to 20 minutes in total. Briefly mix in white wine vinegar and starch.
4. Use a spatula to gently transfer egg whites onto parchment paper, forming one large base. Use an offset spatula to scrape up the sides with an upward motion to help the rising of the meringue. Bake in the middle of the oven for about 1½ hours. The bottom should be lightly golden and the sides should feel firm; a toothpick stuck in the side should come out with a marshmallow-like substance. Leave in oven to cool for at least 60 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, make the whipped cream by adding the heavy cream, vanilla extract, and sugar to a bowl. Beat on medium-high speed until stiff peaks form. Add the yogurt to the whipped cream. Mix on medium speed for 15 seconds or until fully incorporated.
6. Once pavlova is cooled, top with whipped yogurt cream and fresh berries before serving. Alternatively, it can be left on the counter (without topping) in an airtight container for 24 hours.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 137 calories
- 5g fat
- 3g saturated fat
- 44mg sodium
- 20g carbohydrate
- 0g fiber
- 19g sugar
- 5g protein

TIPS:

1. Pavlova is a light dessert similar to a large meringue that is eaten around the world. It has long been thought to have originated in Australia, although New Zealand also claims it as its own. Recent evidence actually suggests earlier versions may have originated in Europe. The fruit toppings differ, with European and American versions more often using berries while New Zealand versions may use kiwi and Australian versions might use passionfruit or pineapple.
2. Pavlova is a very difficult recipe and requires dry air; it unfortunately will not work well if the air is humid. Also, oven temperatures may vary slightly. You may find you need to bake and/or cool it a bit longer than instructed. Even if the texture of your pavlova doesn't turn out perfectly, it will still taste good!
3. Traditional pavlova is very high in sugar, containing a whole cup in the base alone. This version contains half of that amount. Also, this topping is healthier than a traditional whipped cream because it incorporates plain yogurt, cutting down on the amount of saturated fat while also adding a nice tartness to counterbalance the sweetness of this dessert.
4. This recipe will leave you with 4 egg yolks. Be sure to save them! The yolks hold the vitamin D, vitamin A, and most of the other micronutrients found in an egg. Possible ways to use them include incorporating them into scrambled eggs or a frittata; making a homemade Caesar dressing, aioli, or lemon curd; making a small batch of cookies that only needs 1 yolk or half an egg; or making homemade pasta dough.

GAZPACHO



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
20 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2½ pounds fresh tomatoes
- 1 medium cucumber
- 1 medium red or green pepper
- 1 small sweet yellow or red onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more for garnish
- ½ cup water (not needed if using tomatoes with high water content)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Slice off and dice a few tablespoons of each tomato and cucumber to use for garnish; set aside.
2. Roughly chop the remaining tomatoes, cucumber, pepper, onion, and garlic. Combine chopped vegetables with vinegar in a blender or food processor and purée until smooth. Add more vinegar, 1 teaspoon at a time, if more acidity is needed, and water, 1 tablespoon at a time, if more liquid is needed.
3. Add the oil, salt, and pepper and purée briefly to incorporate. Transfer to a glass or ceramic container, cover, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serve chilled. Garnish with chopped tomatoes, cucumber, and additional black pepper, if desired.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 136 calories
- 10g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 299mg sodium
- 13g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 8g sugar
- 2g protein

TIPS:

1. Gazpacho is a chilled, summery soup that hails from Andalusian region in Spain. The earliest versions did not include tomatoes because they did not arrive from the New World until the 1500s, so it was originally white. Tomatoes are now the predominant ingredient, and the additional types of produce, flavorings (such as vinegars), and sometimes even bread vary by region.
2. The rich red color of tomatoes comes from the carotenoid called lycopene. As a fat-soluble pigment, its absorption is enhanced by the presence of fat. Thus, the hearty portion of olive oil in this recipe not only adds delicious flavor, healthy fat, and other beneficial compounds, but it increases the bioavailability of other nutrients in the same meal.
3. Depending on the vegetables you have on hand and can buy locally, you may choose to modify the types of tomatoes, peppers, or other ingredients in this recipe. For example, you could use purple or green heirloom tomatoes to yield a different color. You could also use an equivalent amount of shallots in place of the onions, if you prefer their flavor.
4. Tomatoes are at their peak in the summer in most of the US. Therefore, this soup will be most flavorful and nutrient-dense when made during summer months and using tomatoes grown locally. Also, because tomatoes typically contain high amounts of pesticide residue, it's best to buy organic varieties, when possible.



SOPA DE GRÃO DE BICO



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
25 minutes



Cook time:
40 minutes



Total time:
1 hour
5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 cups water
- ½ tablespoon nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon celery seed
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 dried bay leaf
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 medium tomatoes, chopped (or 2 cups crushed)
- 3 large cabbage leaves, chopped (1 cup)
- 2 medium Yukon gold potatoes (about 12 ounces), chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 1 tablespoon cumin
- 3 cups cooked chickpeas (or 2 cans of no salt added chickpeas)
- 1 bunch cilantro, roughly chopped (stems included)
- Juice of 1 lemon (roughly 3 tablespoons)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Boil the water and stir in nutritional yeast, parsley, salt, celery seed, black pepper, and bay leaf. Set aside.
2. In a large saucepan or pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 3 minutes, stirring consistently.
3. Add the tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, carrot, and cumin. Stir to combine and cook for 1 minute.
4. Add the chickpeas and cilantro to the pot. Mix well and add the hot broth. Cook for 30 minutes over low heat.
5. Using a ladle or heat-proof measuring cup, add half of the soup to a glass or stainless-steel blender to purée. If only a plastic blender or food processor is available, separate half of this soup in a heat-proof bowl and let cool until warm to the touch and then purée. Alternatively, half of the soup can be separated and puréed with an immersion blender.
6. Return the purée to the pot and stir in lemon juice. Serve warm.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 321 calories
- 12g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 611mg sodium
- 46g carbohydrate
- 10g fiber
- 9g sugar
- 11g protein

TIPS:

1. Soups including some mixture of legumes, vegetables, grains, and meat or seafood are common in Portugal. This dish contains a balanced mixture of vegetables, carbohydrate-rich potatoes, olive oil, and flavorful herbs and spices that can provide a satisfying meal any time of day.
2. “Grão” means grain or bean in Portuguese and “grão de bico” specifically refers to chickpeas. These beans are an excellent source of fiber as well as protein, folate, copper, and various other nutrients. Chickpeas grown conventionally in the US have been shown to retain high amounts of pesticide residue. Therefore, try to buy organic chickpeas, when possible.
3. Traditional recipes may call for vegetable bullion to flavor this soup. This seasoning mixture can be very high in sodium and also use preservatives, so this recipe replicates the seasoning mix with the first 7 ingredients. If desired, you may alternatively substitute 6 cups of regular vegetable broth (or low-sodium, if desired).
4. To make a complete meal, consider topping with a spoonful of plain yogurt and serving with whole grain bread and olive oil or a side salad.

SARMALE



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
1 hour 30 minutes



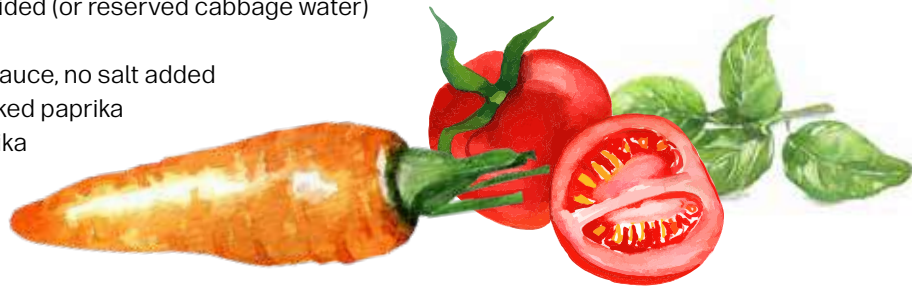
Cook time:
4 hours



Total time:
5 hours
30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup uncooked brown rice (preferably short grain)
- 1 large head green cabbage (you'll only use the 16-20 largest outer leaves), roughly 3 pounds
- 3 cups sauerkraut, drained and squeezed dry (reserve 1 cup juice for cooking liquid)
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 4 ounces mushrooms (e.g., cremini), diced
- 12 ounces lean ground pork (or other ground meat of choice)
- ¼ cup fresh dill, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1½ teaspoons black pepper, divided
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)
- 3 ¼ cups water, divided (or reserved cabbage water)
- 3 dried bay leaves
- 8 ounces tomato sauce, no salt added
- ½ tablespoon smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon paprika



DIRECTIONS:

1. Cook rice on stove according to package directions. When it is finished cooking, set aside to cool.
2. Meanwhile, fill a large pot with enough water to cover the cabbage and bring to a boil. Remove the core from the cabbage and place the whole head in the pot. Cover and cook for 3 minutes, until soft enough to pull off individual leaves. Reserve 3 ¼ cups of water. Drain pot and set aside cabbage to cool. Reserve 3 ¼ cups of water, if possible.
3. When cabbage is cool enough to handle, remove approximately 20 leaves. Use a paring knife to cut away the thick center stem of each leaf while keeping them otherwise in one piece. Chop any remaining bits of cabbage, mix with sauerkraut, and set aside.
4. In a large skillet or pan, add 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Cook the diced onion, stirring frequently, until softened and translucent, about 5 minutes. Add carrots and garlic and cook for another minute. Raise heat to medium-high and add mushrooms. Stir occasionally and cook until mushrooms are soft and their liquid has evaporated, up to 10 minutes. Remove from heat.
5. In a large bowl, combine ground pork with rice, vegetable mixture, dill, parsley, thyme, ½ teaspoon black pepper, and red pepper (if using). Add ¼ cup of water and stir until incorporated.
6. In another large bowl, combine 1 cup sauerkraut liquid, 3 cups water, bay leaves, tomato sauce, 1 teaspoon black pepper, smoked paprika, and paprika. Set aside.
7. On a plate or other flat surface, set a cabbage leaf with the cut core closest to you. Spoon about ¼ cup of filling (depending on size of leaf) onto the cabbage leaf. Fold the right and left side of the leaf to overlap slightly in the middle. Hold the folded sides in place as you roll the leaf with filling away from you, creating a tight roll. Set aside and repeat with remaining leaves and filling.
8. Pour 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large pot or heavy-bottomed skillet. Spread sauerkraut mixture evenly across bottom of pot followed by an even layer of stuffed cabbages. Pour over remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil and cooking liquid. If cabbage isn't covered with liquid, add more water. If the pot is not large enough to fit all rolls, you can cook them in 2 separate pots, splitting the components evenly between the 2 pots, or cook them in 2 layers in 1 pot. To cook rolls in 2 layers, begin with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, then add half of the sauerkraut, half of the rolls, the remaining sauerkraut, the remaining rolls, and then top everything with the cooking liquid and another 1 tablespoon of olive oil.
9. Set pot on the stove, cover and bring to a boil. Crack lid slightly, then reduce to low heat and cook for 2-3 hours, until tender and liquid has reduced by half. Check roughly every 30 minutes in case you need to add more water to prevent burning.
10. When finished cooking, remove the bay leaves and serve warm over polenta or more brown rice (with no added salt). You may also garnish with plain yogurt and/or chopped parsley.

NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 341 calories
- 17g fat
- 5g saturated fat
- 858mg sodium
- 39g carbohydrate
- 11g fiber
- 15g sugar
- 17g protein

TIPS:

1. For a vegetarian version of this dish, use 1½ cups cooked brown, green, or black lentils instead of ground beef. These can be canned or cooked from ¾ cup dried lentils.
2. If desired, you can bake the sarmale in an oven-proof casserole dish covered with a glass or ceramic lid or aluminum foil, rather than on the stovetop, for a comparable amount of time.
3. This classic Romanian dish is reminiscent of cabbage rolls cooked and eaten in various countries in Europe. One of the main distinguishing features in sarmale is the use of fermented cabbage to create the rolls. We can't likely find fermented cabbage heads in American grocery stores and most of us lack the equipment to feasibly ferment a whole head of cabbage at home. As a more practical alternative, this dish incorporates pre-made sauerkraut into the fully composed dish to impart the necessary flavor.
4. Sarmale are traditionally filled with primarily meat and rice, with some herbs and vegetables. This dish is made a bit healthier by using brown rice and a smaller amount of meat with the addition of diced mushrooms to maintain texture and umami flavor.

ONTBIJTKOEK



Yield:
8 servings



Prep time:
10 minutes



Cook time:
60 minutes



Total time:
1 hour
40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 teaspoon butter (for pan)
- 1 tablespoon spelt flour (for pan)
- 1 cup rye flour, sifted
- 1 cup spelt flour, sifted
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon cloves
- ⅛ teaspoon anise
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper (optional)
- ⅛ teaspoon coriander (optional)
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- ¼ cup packed, dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsulfured molasses
- 2 tablespoons honey



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Line a standard loaf pan with parchment, coat with butter, and sprinkle with flour.
2. In a large bowl combine the rye flour, spelt flour, baking powder, and spices.
3. Heat milk on stove or in microwave until hot. In another large bowl, whisk together the sugar, molasses, honey, and hot milk until well combined.
4. Add the wet ingredients to the dry mixture and stir with a spoon or paddle beater until the dough is smooth. Pour batter into prepared pan.
5. Bake for 1 hour. The bread will be done when a toothpick or skewer comes out clean.
6. When fully baked, turn off the oven, crack the door open, and leave the bread in the oven to cool down for at least 30 minutes; this will ensure it doesn't sink in the middle and will ease taking it out of the pan. Then remove the bread and allow it to cool completely.
7. Slice and enjoy as is or toasted, topped with apple butter and/or plain yogurt, if desired. Cover and store in refrigerator or freezer.

NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 173 calories
- 1g fat
- 1g saturated fat
- 431mg sodium
- 38g carbohydrate
- 4g fiber
- 17g sugar
- 5g protein

TIPS:

1. Ontbijtkoek is a traditional spice bread that essentially means “breakfast cake” in Dutch. It may be enjoyed throughout the Netherlands for breakfast, dessert, at Christmas celebrations, and at children’s parties. There are several versions throughout the country, each using slightly different ingredients. It is also found in Indonesia, introduced through Dutch colonialization in the 1600s.
2. While ontbijtkoek may typically be served with a slather of butter, try topping it with plain yogurt, nut butter, or unsweetened apple butter for a more nutritious combination.
3. Typical recipes may contain more than 1 cup of sugar per 2 cups of flour, resulting in a single serving of bread that provides more sugar than adults are recommended to eat in a whole day. This version contains only ½ cup of sweetener, making it more suitable for eating as breakfast. To serve as a dessert, you may desire to add honey or apple butter on top.
4. Ontbijtkoek, also known as peperkoek, traces its history back to the Middle Ages, when leftover pieces and crumbs of bread were gathered, mixed with pepper and honey, and compressed into a cake.



COTTAGE PIE



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
45 minutes



Cook time:
35 minutes



Total time:
1 hour
20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

TOPPING:

- 1½ pounds russet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 2"x2" pieces
- 2 cups cauliflower florets, cut into 2"x2" pieces
- ½ cup low- or reduced-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ¾ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper



FILLING:

- 1 pound ground beef (93% lean) or turkey
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 large carrots, diced
- 1 large celery stalk, diced
- 8 ounces mushrooms (e.g., cremini) diced
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- ½ tablespoon fresh thyme (or ½ teaspoon dried)
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 dried bay leaf
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 cup low-sodium beef, chicken, or vegetable broth**
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Arrange the potato pieces in a steamer basket and steam for 10 minutes. Add cauliflower to the basket and cook another 15 minutes, until all pieces are tender when pierced with a knife. Transfer to a metal or ceramic bowl and mash with a potato masher or paddle attachment of a mixer until smooth.
2. In a small saucepan or in the microwave, heat the milk and whisk in olive oil, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Stir into the potato mixture.
3. Add meat to a large skillet and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until brown, up to 5 minutes. Transfer meat to a plate and wipe away any fat remaining in skillet.
4. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, carrots, and celery, and sauté until they begin to soften, about 4 minutes. Raise heat to medium-high and add mushrooms, garlic, thyme, rosemary, bay leaf, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper. Stir occasionally and cook until mushrooms are soft and their liquid has evaporated, up to 10 minutes. Remove bay leaf.
5. Return meat to the pan and stir in broth. Bring to a simmer, then add peas. Stir to combine and pour mixture into a 9"x13" or 3-quart oval baking dish.
6. Spread the potato mixture on top of the meat, set baking dish on baking sheet (to catch any liquid that might spill over), and bake until juices bubble and the top is lightly browned, about 25 minutes, or longer if needed.
7. Remove from the oven, garnish with parsley, and serve warm.

* This dish is traditionally made with a ground beef. For a vegetarian version, substitute beef with 2 cups of cooked brown or green lentils, added in at the same time as the peas, and only use ½ cup of broth. If using ground turkey instead of beef, first heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in skillet before adding the meat.

** For deeper flavor, use half red wine if cooking with beef or white wine if cooking with turkey or lentils.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 376 calories
- 13g fat
- 4g saturated fat
- 670mg sodium
- 41g carbohydrate
- 6g fiber
- 11g sugar
- 23g protein

TIPS:

1. This savory pie likely originated in the United Kingdom (and perhaps Ireland) in the 1700s as an outlet to use leftover ingredients to make a meal. The name "cottage" refers to the original intended consumers of the dish, who were likely peasants likely living in cottages.
2. Traditional versions of this recipe include a topping made of potatoes, butter, cream, and perhaps even cheese (plus seasonings), making for a heavy and energy-dense dish. This dish incorporates more vegetables into the topping by adding mashed cauliflower and into the filling by adding mushrooms.
3. As there are multiple components of this recipe, you can make its preparation more manageable by cooking the filling, cooking the topping, and then baking the full pie in separate stages, storing each cooked and cooled component in a sealed container in the refrigerator until you are ready to compile and bake it.



BRITISH SCONES



Yield:
8 servings



Prep time:
15 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
35 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups whole wheat flour, plus more for dusting
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1½ tablespoons avocado, extra virgin olive, or organic canola oil
- 1½ tablespoons unsalted butter
- ⅔ cup reduced-fat or whole milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pre heat the oven to 425°F. Dust a large baking sheet with flour.
2. Sift the flour and baking powder together into a medium bowl. Stir in the brown sugar and oil. Cut in the butter using a fork until blended and the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
3. Stir in the milk. Then, use your hands to bring together a soft mass of dough.
4. Sprinkle your workspace with flour, place the dough in the middle, and use your hands to flatten it into a circle that is roughly 1 inch thick.
5. Use a round pastry cutter or thinly rimmed glass (roughly 2½ inches in diameter) to cut out 8 circles from the dough (pressing scraps back together and cutting out additional rounds as needed). Place the circles onto the prepared baking tray.
6. Bake for 15-18 minutes until golden brown. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes on baking sheet. Serve with jam and plain yogurt, if desired.



QUICK STRAWBERRY JAM

(to accompany scones)



Yield:
½ cup



Prep time:
5 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup chopped fresh or frozen strawberries (organic, if possible)
- 2 teaspoons chia seeds (and more if needed)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

DIRECTIONS:

1. Bring a small saucepan to medium-low heat and cook the berries until they start to break down, roughly 10 minutes. Mash the fruit with the back of a wooden spoon or a potato masher to your desired texture.
2. Remove from the heat and stir in the chia seeds and lemon juice. Let stand 5 minutes, until thickened. If you want it thicker, stir in more chia seeds, 1 teaspoon at a time.
3. Once the jam has cooled to room temperature, transfer it to a jar. Note the jam will thicken further and become more set once completely chilled. Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks or in the freezer for up to 3 months; thaw in the refrigerator before using.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 155 calories
- 6g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 192mg sodium
- 22g carbohydrate
- 4g fiber
- 3g sugar
- 5g protein

TIPS:

1. While American scones are known for being very unhealthy—and particularly high in butter and cream, making them rich and dense—English scones are lighter. They are also typically eaten with toppings, which can include butter or clotted cream. For a healthier topping, try plain yogurt, ricotta cheese, and/or a low-sugar jam.
2. These scones are made with a nutrient-dense whole wheat flour, providing much more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than a refined white flour. For a gluten-free variation, you can use a gluten-free mix or preferably your own mix of a few alternative flours such as oat flour, almond meal, etc.
3. While most English scones typically contain at least a few tablespoons of butter, this recipe swaps some of the butter for more heart-healthy olive oil or another neutral oil of your choosing (preferably olive or avocado oil).
4. To make a quick topping for your scones, try this unsweetened, small-batch strawberry chia jam recipe. It relies on chia seeds, rather than pectin, to form a gel. If you prefer to not have visible chia seeds in your jam, purée the jam after cooking.
5. For this jam, feel free to use any berries or fruit that is in season (noting that firmer fruits will take longer to cook). Also, because it does not contain sugar, it won't last very long in the refrigerator; therefore, use or freeze it in a glass jar within 1 week.

PICADILLO



Yield:
4 servings



Prep time:
20 minutes



Cook time:
35 minutes



Total time:
55 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 small bell pepper, diced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1 pound ground beef (93% lean)
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes (if using canned, use crushed or diced and no salt added)
- ½ cup green olives, chopped
- ½ tablespoon capers, drained
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup dry white wine or sherry
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped (optional)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat a large pan or a skillet over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and cook, stirring continually with a wooden spoon, until browned, up to 10 minutes. Once cooked, wipe away any remaining oil and set meat aside.
2. Reduce heat to medium, add olive oil to the same pan or skillet, and add the chopped onion and pepper. Cook and stir until softened, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Add minced garlic and bay leaf, stir, and cook for 1 more minute.
3. Add cumin, oregano, raisins, tomatoes, olives, and capers, and stir to combine. Return beef to the pan along with water and wine. Allow to cook and reduce over medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 10 to 15 minutes.
4. Add another splash of water if moisture is needed to continue to cook, then remove from heat. Remove bay leaf, garnish with cilantro (if using), and serve warm with brown rice, plantains, cooked potatoes, or other desired side.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 337 calories
- 14g fat
- 4g saturated fat
- 559mg sodium
- 26g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 16g sugar
- 25g protein

TIPS:

1. Picadillo is a classic meat-based stew, named after the Spanish word “picar” (meaning “to mince”), from Central America that follows a different recipe in different countries. This slightly sweet version is Cuban. The Mexican version is spicier; the Filipino version may contain carrots, potatoes, and peas; and the Costa Rican version may contain the chayote fruit.
2. Many picadillo recipes call for a pre-packaged seasoning mix that is very high in sodium and may contain preservatives and artificial colors. This version uses only natural spices and whole food ingredients to provide both strong flavors and good nutrition.
3. To make this a well-rounded meal, serve with sides such as brown rice, taco shells, or plantains, and a simple salad or grilled or roasted vegetables. You can also use this as a filling for baked empanadas.



ARROZ CON LECHE



Yield:
8 servings



Prep time:
5 minutes



Cook time:
40 minutes



Total time:
45 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups brown rice
- 2 large strips lemon peel (preferably organic)
- 4 cardamom pods
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 4 cups reduced-fat milk
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon (for garnish)



DIRECTIONS:

1. Rinse the rice under cold water. Add to a medium-sized saucepan over medium heat with just enough water to cover the rice. Add the lemon peel, cardamom pods, and cinnamon stick to the pot.
2. Once the water is absorbed into the rice, start adding the milk $\frac{1}{2}$ a cup at a time. Stir constantly, adding more milk as the liquid starts to be absorbed into the rice.
3. When all milk has been added and the rice has reached the desired creaminess, remove pan off the heat and stir in salt and vanilla.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of brown sugar at a time until it reaches your desired level of sweetness.
5. Serve either hot or cold, garnished with cinnamon to serve.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 263 calories
- 4g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 86mg sodium
- 50g carbohydrate
- 2g fiber
- 14g sugar
- 8g protein

TIPS:

1. This simple dessert is found in various Spanish-speaking countries and means “rice with milk” in Spanish. Different countries may add other flavorings or toppings, such as coconut in Colombia or cloves in Peru. In its most basic form, it is very similar to rice pudding in the US.
2. This version of arroz con leche is more nutritious than traditional versions because it uses a whole grain brown rice. While brown rice often imparts a stronger flavor than the refined white rice grains, the flavor of the vanilla and spices and the bit of sweetness in this dessert help to balance it and make for an all-around pleasing treat.
3. Other versions of this dish may have more sugar than rice by volume in the recipe, such that a single serving provides more sugar than is recommended in a whole day. This recipe has plenty of sweetness and other delicious flavors with just 5 tablespoons in the whole pot.
4. You may use whatever type of milk you would like in this recipe. Also, if you would like the texture to be thinner, you may keep adding more milk until it reaches your desired texture.



TOSTONES



Yield:
6 servings



Prep time:
10 minutes



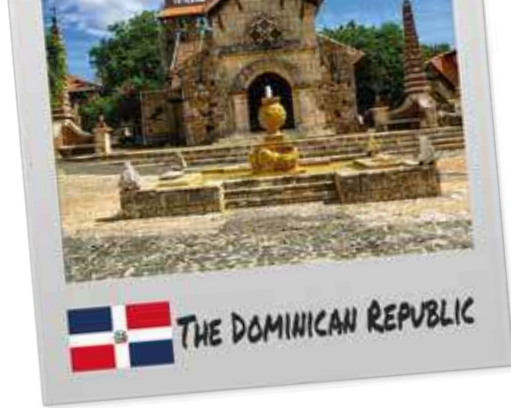
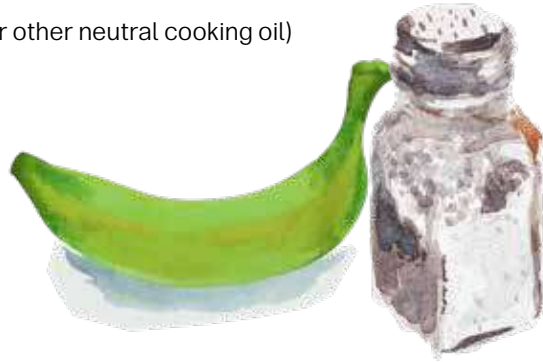
Cook time:
30 minutes



Total time:
40 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 large green plantains
- 3 tablespoons avocado oil (or other neutral cooking oil)
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. To prepare the plantains, slice off both ends and use the tip of a paring knife to cut through the skin of a plantain (without cutting into the flesh) from top to bottom, following the curve of the plantain as you slice. Repeat twice more on the plantain so you have 3 evenly distributed slits. Pry off each section of skin, discard, and repeat with remaining plantains. Slice each plantain into 1-inch-thick rounds.
3. Toss sliced plantains with 2 tablespoons of oil on the baking sheet. Disperse them evenly across the pan with flat sides down. Bake for 15 minutes.
4. Remove plantains from oven and place on heat-proof surface. Use the bottom of a jar or other sturdy glass to gently press down on each round to achieve about ¼-inch thickness.
5. Distribute rounds across baking sheet and lightly brush the top of each with remaining 1 tablespoon oil using a pastry brush or finger. Flip them and brush the other sides. Sprinkle with salt.
6. Return the pan to the oven and bake for 16–18 minutes, until nicely golden and sizzling. Serve warm with Creamy Mojo Sauce, if desired.



CREAMY MOJO SAUCE



Yield:
1 cup



Prep time:
10 minutes



Cook time:
-



Total time:
10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

SAUCE:

- ¼ cup avocado- oil or olive- oil mayonnaise
- ¼ cup plain full-fat or low-fat yogurt
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 2 green onions (green tops only)
- 1 small jalapeño, chopped
- 1¼ cups packed fresh cilantro, including the leaves and stems
- 1 large clove garlic, roughly chopped
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper



DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine the ingredients in a blender and purée until smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 251 calories
- 16g fat
- 2g saturated fat
- 388mg sodium
- 31g carbohydrate
- 2g fiber
- 17g sugar
- 2g protein

TIPS:

1. Tostones are twice-fried green plantains that are eaten throughout the Caribbean, named after the Spanish verb “tostar” (meaning “to toast”). They are typically a savory, starchy side dish, but can also be eaten as a snack. The same dish is also known as patacones, although the names are used in different countries. This version approximates the tostones found in the Dominican Republic.
2. Like bananas, plantains sweeten as they ripen. The unripe, green plantains are needed for this recipe. They have a texture and nutrient profile somewhat comparable to a potato.
3. While tostones are traditionally fried in more than a cup of oil, this recipe approximates the same texture while baking them with a much smaller amount of oil; it also uses a healthier type of oil.
4. Tostones may be served with a variety of sauces. This version contains similar flavors to a mojo verde (or green sauce, named for the color of the cilantro), but also includes a bit of mayonnaise and yogurt to provide a creamy base. You may omit those ingredients and instead add ¼ cup olive oil to your sauce, if desired.

RED VELVET CAKE



Yield:
12 servings



Prep time:
30 minutes



Cook time:
55 minutes



Total time:
1 hour
25 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

CAKE:

- 2 medium red beets (about 8 ounces), to yield 1 cup beet purée
- 1 teaspoon butter (for pans)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup neutral oil, such as avocado
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup + 2 tablespoons low-fat buttermilk (or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup low-fat milk + 2 tablespoons plain yogurt)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon white vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon vanilla extract
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cocoa powder (not Dutch-process)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fine sea salt

FROSTING:

- 8 ounces low-fat (or Neufchâtel) cream cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup (or 1 5.3-ounce container) full-fat, plain strained yogurt
- $\frac{1}{16}$ teaspoon fine sea salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract



DIRECTIONS:

1. To make the beet purée, scrub beets, place in a small saucepan covered by 1 inch of water, and boil until tender when pierced with a knife, 20–30 minutes. Drain, let cool to room temperature, and cut into large pieces. Purée in a food processor until smooth. Measure out 1 cup and refrigerate or freeze any extra purée for another use.
2. While beet is boiling, position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350°F. Grease 2 9-inch round cake pans with butter and line the bottom and sides with parchment paper.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the cooled beet purée, sugar, oil, egg, buttermilk, lemon juice, vinegar, and vanilla.
4. Place a strainer over the bowl and sift in the flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Whisk or stir to combine.
5. Divide the batter evenly into the prepared pans and bake until the cake springs back to the touch and a toothpick inserted near the center comes out with cleanly, 35–45 minutes. Remove cakes from the oven, let cool for about 10 minutes, and invert onto a wire rack. Peel away the parchment and let cool completely. Dry cake can be stored in a covered container at room temperature for up to 2 days.
6. To make the frosting, add all ingredients to a mixing bowl and beat with a hand mixer or stand mixer until smooth.
7. To assemble the cake, first trim the tops of each layer to be flat, if necessary. Place 1 layer on a large plate, with the bottom side down. Use an offset spatula to spread about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of frosting on top and then place the second layer on top. Spread remaining frosting over top and sides of cake. Slice and serve at room temperature.



NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 306 calories
- 16g fat
- 5g saturated fat
- 277mg sodium
- 36g carbohydrate
- 3g fiber
- 20g sugar
- 7g protein

TIPS:

1. This will make a cake with fairly thin layers. If you desire a taller cake with more volume, you can double the recipe and bake in the same cake pans (with a longer baking time) to create deeper layers, yielding a cake that could serve up to 24 people.
2. Originating in the 1800s, red velvet cakes were given their name based on their smooth texture and slight reddish tint created by the chemical reaction between the baking soda, cocoa powder, and vinegar in this cake. People started to add red food coloring in the 1900s to make the color even brighter. This version derives natural color from beets, avoiding the artificial dye that many studies have associated with negative health outcomes.
3. Using an unprocessed cocoa powder helps to retain the red color of the beets. Other recipes call for a red coloring because the Dutch-process cocoa that is often used today in recipes is basic, rather than acidic, doesn't yield a red color when reacting with other ingredients in the recipe.
4. In addition to the lovely color, beets impart additional fiber and beneficial compounds, such as betaine, into this cake. Substituting whole grain flour also adds more nutritional value than white flour. The cake and icing are lower in sugar than traditional versions. Finally, rather than mixing butter with cream cheese to make this frosting, this recipe mixes a thick, strained yogurt that imparts a tart flavor that melds well with the sweetness of the cake.



PAO DE QUEIJO



Yield:
12 servings



Prep time:
10 minutes



Cook time:
20 minutes



Total time:
30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cauliflower rice, packed
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoons reduced-fat milk
- 1 cup tapioca flour
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- Additional water, if needed



DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease each cup of a muffin tin.
2. Add cauliflower, salt, egg, milk, and flour to a food processor and blend until smooth, scraping down the sides as needed. Add both cheeses and pulse until evenly incorporated. The consistency should be sticky and slightly thinner than cookie dough; if needed, add either a splash of water or more tapioca flour, ½ tablespoon at a time, and blend to incorporate.
3. Use a small ice cream scoop or tablespoon to scoop a spoonful of dough into each muffin cup. Moisten your fingers with water and pat each scoop into a slightly rounded mound.
4. Baked until the tops are lightly browned, 18–20 minutes. Transfer to wire rack or plate and serve warm.

TIPS:

1. Pao de queijo hails from southeastern Brazil, where it is most commonly eaten as a breakfast or snack. The earliest versions of this bread were made by slaves using cassava root they learned to process and prepare in food after arriving from Africa. Over time, a more refined tapioca flour (derived from cassava) was used and cheese and milk were incorporated as the dairy industry grew.
2. Pao de queijo is traditionally made with Minas cheese, named after the state in southeastern Brazil where this bread is thought to have originated. It is mild, salty, and slightly spongy; the most familiar cheese like it in the US may be queso fresco. Because it can't be readily found, most recipes in the US call for mozzarella or Monterey Jack as well as Parmesan for a deeper flavor. You can experiment with other cheese types that together approximate the texture and moisture level of the more moist Minas cheese.
3. This bread is a variation of a choux pastry, which is a type of pastry that, at its most basic level, consists of butter, water, flour, and eggs. It gains volume based on the creation of steam from its high moisture content rather than a raising agent like baking powder or yeast. The French gougère is another variation that incorporates cheese, although it contains a wheat-based flour while pao de queijo contains a gluten-free tapioca flour that provides its characteristic chewiness.
4. This recipe adds more nutrition to a traditional recipe by incorporating cauliflower rice. The strong flavor of the cheese prevents the flavor of the cauliflower from overpowering the bread and it provides additional fiber, vitamin C, folate, anthoxanthins (which are potent antioxidants) and other nutrients.





NUTRITION FACTS:

(per serving)

- 64 calories
- 2g fat
- 1g saturated fat
- 140mg sodium
- 10g carbohydrate
- <1g fiber
- <1g sugar
- 2g protein

Our registered dietitian

Christina works as a healthcare consultant, focusing on advancing the role of nutrition in healthcare. She applies her expertise in healthcare and public health research, policy, and practice to support diverse stakeholders in improving care delivery and health outcomes. She also regularly writes, teaches, and develops trainings and clinical programs about nutrition, culinary medicine, and sustainable agriculture—including directing award-winning culinary medicine trainings for healthcare professional associations, developing five cookbooks for the Transamerica Institute, coauthoring *The Farm Bill: A Citizen's Guide* and *Mix It Up: The Culinary Medicine Cookbook for Mixing Things up in the Kitchen*, and co-developing a culinary medicine course at the Georgetown University School of Medicine and lifestyle medicine program for MedStar Shah. Christina previously worked for Avalere (a healthcare advisory firm), the US Environmental Protection Agency, Teaching Kitchen Collaborative, NIH Clinical Center, and other organizations. Christina serves as past-president of the DC Metro Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, board member of Slow Food DC and member of Slow Food's Food and Farm Policy Team, member of the Academy CEO Advisory Council, and founder of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative's nutrition working group. Christina completed her dietetic internship at Massachusetts General Hospital; earned her MPH from UC Berkeley; and earned her AB in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, with a certificate in Italian Language and Culture, from Princeton University. Christina was selected as a 2025 Outstanding Dietitian of the Year by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Learn more about her at www.christinabadaracco.com or follow her on Instagram @cbadarac.

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