

---

# *The Flexible Pantry*

A FOOD BANK COOK BOOK

---



# CONTENTS

# NUTRITION FACTS

|   |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Nutrition Facts</b>                                                                                                                                              |
|   | 8 servings per container                                                                                                                                            |
|   | <b>Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)</b>                                                                                                                                   |
| 2 | <b>Amount per serving</b>                                                                                                                                           |
|   | <b>Calories 230</b>                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3 | <b>% Daily Value*</b>                                                                                                                                               |
|   | <b>Total Fat 8g 10%</b>                                                                                                                                             |
|   | Saturated Fat 1g 5%                                                                                                                                                 |
|   | Trans Fat 0g                                                                                                                                                        |
|   | <b>Cholesterol 0mg 0%</b>                                                                                                                                           |
|   | <b>Sodium 160mg 7%</b>                                                                                                                                              |
| 4 | <b>Total Carbohydrate 37g 13%</b>                                                                                                                                   |
|   | Dietary Fiber 4g 14%                                                                                                                                                |
| 5 | Total Sugars 12g                                                                                                                                                    |
|   | Includes 10g Added Sugars 20%                                                                                                                                       |
|   | <b>Protein 3g</b>                                                                                                                                                   |
| 6 | Vitamin D 2mcg 10%                                                                                                                                                  |
|   | Calcium 260mg 20%                                                                                                                                                   |
|   | Iron 8mg 45%                                                                                                                                                        |
|   | Potassium 240mg 6%                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7 | * The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice. |

**1. Serving size** allows you to know how many calories, fat, fiber and other nutrients you are eating at one time. It is important to check the serving sizes as most labels give the information for a much smaller portion than what we actually eat.

**2. Calories** measure how much energy you will get from eating a serving of food.

**3. Total fat, saturated fats, trans fats, or sodium:** a diet high in these may increase the risk of heart disease and stroke, and high blood pressure.

Emphasize healthier unsaturated fats found in olive and canola oils, walnuts, avocado and fish, and limit saturated and trans fat in the diet.

Sodium intake should be less than 2300 mg per day.

**4. Fiber:** A food is a good source of fiber if it has 2.5-4.9 grams (g) of fiber per serving and a high source of fiber if it has 5g or more.

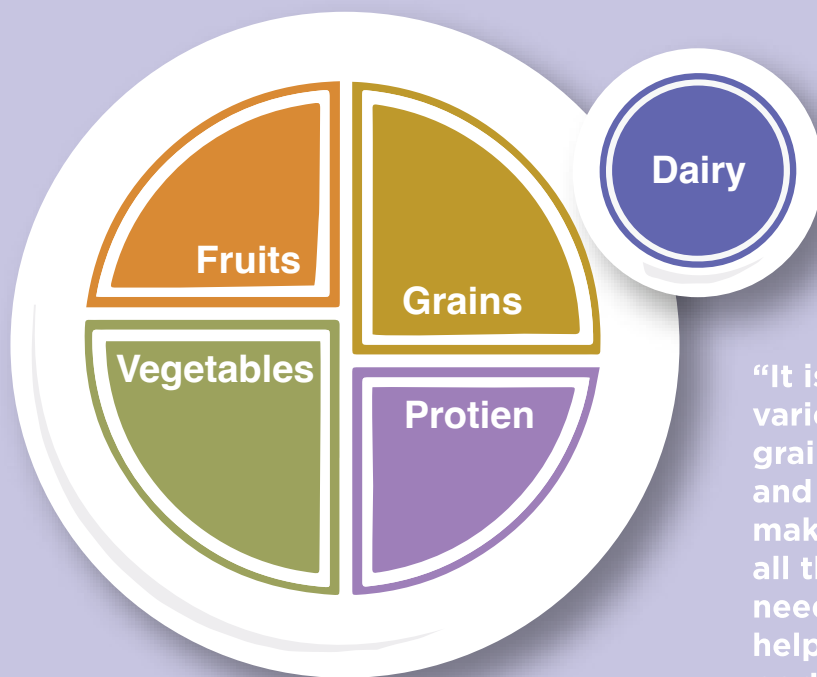
**5. Total Sugars and Added Sugars:** The daily recommended amount of added sugar is 28-36 grams or 7-9 teaspoons of sugar.

**6. Vitamins and minerals** in foods are also important in helping to maintain the health of your body. The four vitamins and minerals listed on the food labels are the most common nutrients that are lacking in the American diet.

**7. The % Daily Value** is a guide in seeing how much of a nutrient is in one serving of food. It is an estimate based on a 2000 calorie diet and can make it quick and easy to compare nutrients in two similar products.

Choose foods with a lower % Daily Value of saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium (found in the yellow section).

Choose foods with a higher % Daily Value of fiber, vitamins, and minerals.



Choose **MyPlate.gov**

“It is important to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy and dairy alternatives to make sure you are getting all the nutrients your body needs. MyPlate can be a helpful tool to watch for portion control and to make sure you are meeting all the food group requirements in your diet.”

#### **VEGETABLES:**

Healthy whether fresh, frozen, or canned. Canned vegetables should be low to no sodium added. You want to get a wide variety of different types of vegetables every week to get all vitamins and minerals.

The vegetable subgroups are dark green, red and orange, beans, starches, and other. At least 3 servings of veggies per day!

#### **FRUITS:**

Healthy, whether fresh, frozen or canned. Whole fruits are important because they have fiber. This helps with digestion. A cup of 100% fruit juice counts as 1 serving per day. At least 2 servings of fruit per day!

#### **GRAINS:**

You want half the grains you eat to be whole grains. Whole grains have 3 parts: bran, germ, and endosperm. They contain fiber, healthy fats, and B vitamins. Some examples of whole grains are brown rice, oatmeal, and popcorn.

#### **PROTEIN:**

All foods made from seafood; meat, poultry, and eggs; beans, peas, and lentils; nuts, seeds, and soy products are all considered sources of protein. Meat and poultry should be low-fat, like 93% lean ground beef, pork loin, and skinless chicken breasts. Vegetarian options include beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

#### **DAIRY:**

The dairy group includes milk, yogurt, cheese, lactose-free milk and fortified milk alternatives and yogurt. It does not include products with little calcium and a high fat content, such as cream cheese, sour cream, cream, and butter. Must contain about 300 mg calcium per serving to count as a serving of dairy.

# COOKING TIPS

- **Planning:** Create a menu based on what you have in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer.
- **Shopping:** Check what you have and make a list for what you need.
- **Going to the store:** Bring your list and eat before going to the store to stay on budget.
- **Meal prepping:** Cook in batches and eat throughout the week; you can freeze leftovers!
- **Cook together:** Get the family involved, distributing duties to each member!

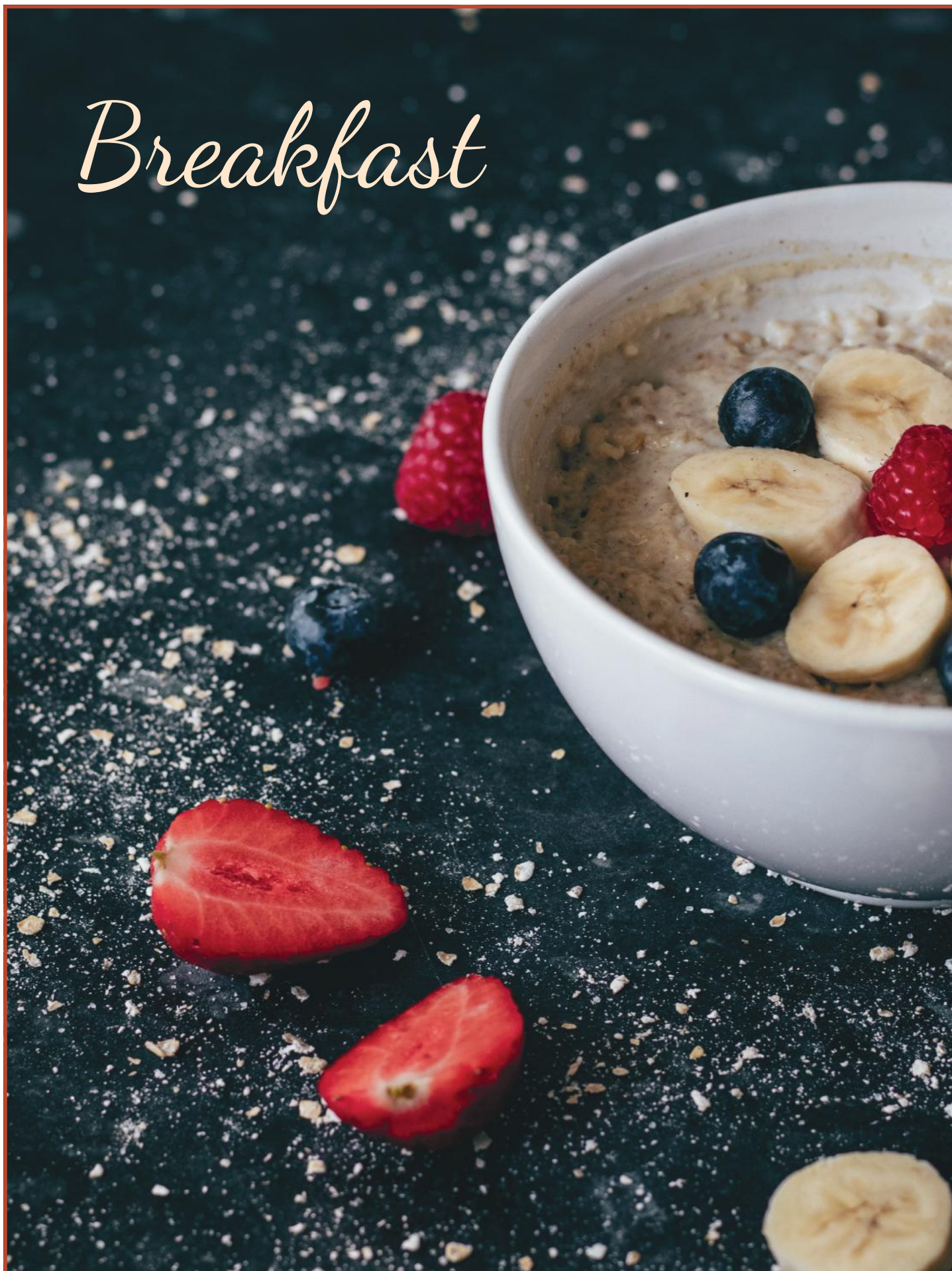
## RECIPE KEY

| Recipe Calls for... |
|---------------------|
| tsp=teaspoon        |
| Tbsp=tablespoon     |
| mg.=miligram        |
| g=gram              |
| oz=ounce            |

## KITCHEN CONVERSION CHART

| Recipe Calls for... | Cut in Half    | Cut in Thirds      |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 Cup               | 1/2 Cup        | 1/3 Cup            |
| 3/4 Cup             | 6 Tbsp         | 1/4 Cup            |
| 2/3 Cup             | 1/3 Cup        | 3 Tbsp, 1 1/2 tsp  |
| 1/2 Cup             | 1/4 Cup        | 2 Tbsp, 2 tsp      |
| 1/3 Cup             | 2 Tbsp, 2 tsp. | 1 Tbsp, 1 1/4 tsp. |
| 1/4 Cup             | 2 Tbsp         | 1 Tbsp, 1 tsp      |
| 1 Tbsp              | 1 1/2 tsp      | 1 tsp              |
| 1 tsp               | 1/2 tsp        | 1/3 tsp            |
| 1/2 tsp             | 1/4 tsp        | 1/8 tsp            |
| 1/4 tsp             | 1/8 tsp        | Dash               |

# *Breakfast*



# VEGETABLE FRITTATA

## INGREDIENTS

6 eggs  
1 Tbsp chopped parsley  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
1 small onion,  
chopped finely  
1 cup broccoli  
1 large tomato, diced  
1 Tbsp Parmesan cheese  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Add in any vegetables that you have in your pantry whether fresh, frozen or canned.

## NUTRITION

1 slice:

Calories: 130

Fat: 7g.

Saturated fat: 1g.

Sodium: 305mg.

Carbs: 6g.

Fiber: 2g.

Protein: 7g.

PREP 5 mins

COOK 20 minutes

SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350° F.
2. In a bowl, beat the eggs with parsley, salt, and pepper, then set aside.
3. Heat a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the skillet and cook onions until lightly browned. Remove the onions and set aside.
4. Add the rest of the olive oil to the skillet and add the eggs.
5. Cook until the eggs begin to set (3-4 minutes) then sprinkle the onions, broccoli, and tomato over the top.
6. Sprinkle on Parmesan cheese and put the pan in the oven for 5-10 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.

# MAPLE PUMPKIN OAT MUFFINS

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup dry quick oats  
1/2 cup milk  
1 1/2 cup whole wheat flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
1/4 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp nutmeg  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 1/4 cup canned pumpkin  
2 large eggs  
1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce  
1/2 cup maple syrup

## NOTES

Applesauce is a useful alternative to butter or oil in baking to reduce the saturated fat content and calories. If you don't have apple sauce on hand you can use 1/2 cup of butter or oil instead.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 102  
Fat: 2g.  
Saturated Fat: 0g.  
Sodium: 147 mg.  
Carbs: 18g.  
Fiber: 1g.  
Sugar: 7g.  
Protein: 3g.

PREP 10 mins

COOK 20 minutes

SERVINGS 18



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Place cupcake liners into a small muffin tin or spray with cooking spray to prevent sticking.
3. Combine oats and milk in a small bowl and set aside for 5-10 minutes.
4. In a large bowl combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
5. In a medium bowl combine pumpkin, eggs, applesauce, and maple syrup. Add pumpkin mixture and oat mixture to the large bowl with the dry ingredients and stir until fully combined.
6. Divide batter among muffin cups, filling each 2/3 full. Bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Allow to cool before serving.

# PEANUT BUTTER ENERGY BITES

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup peanut butter  
1/3 cup honey  
1 cup dry old-fashioned  
oats  
1/2 cup chocolate chips

## NOTES

Add in 1 tablespoon of flax seeds, chia seeds, raisins, coconut flakes, or nuts of your choosing. Substitute for peanut butter with almond, sunflower, or any nut butter you have on hand.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 200  
Fat: 13g.  
Saturated fat: 3g.  
Sodium: 70mg.  
Carbs: 16g.  
Fiber: 4g.  
Sugar: 7g.  
Protein: 6g.

PREP 10 mins

COOK 0 minutes

SERVINGS 8



## DIRECTIONS

1. Using a microwave or stove top, melt the peanut butter and honey together in a bowl.
2. Add the oats, chocolate chips, or any additional ingredients to the warm peanut butter and honey.
3. Roll the mixture into bite-sized rounds.
4. Let energy bites sit in the refrigerator for 30 minutes, then enjoy!

# OVERNIGHT OATS

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup quick oats  
1/2 cup milk  
1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt  
1/4 cup fruit  
1 tsp maple syrup or other sweetener

## NOTES

Can add 1/4 tsp of cinnamon or other spices to enhance flavor. Swap out the dairy for dairy alternatives like almond milk or coconut yogurt.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 290  
Fat: 4.5g.  
Saturated fat: 1.5g.  
Sodium: 75g.  
Carbs: 49g.  
Sugars: 19g.  
Protein: 15g.

**PREP** 5 mins

**COOK** Overnight

**SERVINGS** 1



## DIRECTIONS

1. Using a 16-ounce container or mason jar, add oats and milk and stir together.
2. Layer the rest of the ingredients (yogurt, fruit, nuts, spices).
3. Refrigerate overnight and stir together before eating. Serve cold.

*Lunch*



# CURRY CAULIFLOWER SOUP

## INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, chopped  
2 tsp ginger  
2 tsp curry powder  
2 tsp cumin  
1 medium head  
cauliflower  
1 potato, peeled and  
diced  
2 quarts low sodium  
vegetable stock  
Salt & pepper to taste  
(Optional) Chopped  
cilantro for garnish

## NOTES

Swap out the vegetable stock for the same amount of water to reduce the amount of sodium.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 140  
Fat: 7g.  
Saturated fat: 1g.  
Sodium: 340 mg.  
Carbs: 16g.  
Fiber: 5g.  
Sugar: 6g.  
Protein: 4g.

PREP 10 mins

COOK 45 minutes

SERVINGS 6



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil over medium heat in a large soup pot.
2. Add the onion and cook until tender, about 5 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, ginger, curry powder, and cumin to the pot and stir for 30 seconds.
4. Add the cauliflower, potato, and stock and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
5. Using an immersion blender or regular blender, puree the soup until very smooth. Return to the pot, heat through, and add salt and pepper to taste. (Optional) Garnish each bowl with chopped cilantro.

# SLOW COOKER STUFFED PEPPER SOUP

## INGREDIENTS

1 medium onion  
1 pound lean ground beef  
2 medium green bell peppers, chopped  
1 package (8.8 oz) ready to serve brown rice  
3 Tbsp brown sugar  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp dried basil  
2 15 oz. can tomato sauce  
2 14.5 oz. can no salt added diced tomatoes, undrained  
1/2 tsp oregano  
32 oz. low sodium beef broth

## NOTES

For regular brown rice, cook ahead of time until just before tender.

## NUTRITION

1 1/2 cups:  
Calories: 200  
Fat: 3g.  
Saturated fat: 1g.  
Sodium: 550mg  
Carbs: 18g.  
Fiber: 3g.  
Sugar: 8g.  
Protein: 11g.

PREP 15 mins

COOK 5-6 hours

SERVINGS 12



## DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet, cook onions over medium high heat until tender.
2. Add ground beef; cook and break apart until no longer pink, 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Transfer to a 6 quart slow cooker or crock pot. Stir in the remaining ingredients.
4. Cook covered, on low until flavors are blended, 5 to 6 hours. Adjust salt and pepper to taste and serve.

*Lunch*

# ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH BISQUE

## INGREDIENTS

1 medium butternut squash  
3 Tbsp olive oil  
1/2 yellow onion, diced  
2 carrots, diced  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp black pepper  
1/4 tsp nutmeg  
3 cups vegetable broth  
1/2 cup milk

## NOTES

Swap out the dairy for any unsweetened dairy alternative like almond, oat, or coconut milk.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 270  
Fat: 20g.  
Saturated fat: 7g.  
Sodium: 300mg.  
Carbs: 20g.  
Fiber: 4g.  
Sugars: 5g.  
Protein: 3g.

PREP 20 mins

COOK 2 hours

SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350° F.
2. Cut the squash in half and remove seeds using a spoon.
3. Place squash on a tin foil-lined baking sheet. Coat with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Place in the oven for 1-1 1/2 hours or until tender.
4. Remove squash and allow to cool. Scoop out the flesh of the squash and discard the skin.
5. In a medium-sized pot, add 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrots, salt, pepper, and nutmeg and sauté until the onions are tender.
6. Add squash and cook for another 5 minutes. Add vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low-medium and simmer until the carrots are cooked through.
7. Using an immersion blender or regular blender, puree the soup until completely smooth.
8. Once smooth, return soup to the pot on medium-high heat and add milk. Heat through and add additional salt and pepper to taste.

# BROWN RICE AND CORN SALAD

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups corn  
1 cup cooked brown rice  
2-15 oz. cans pinto beans,  
drained and rinsed  
1 red bell pepper  
1 jalapeño, diced  
2 Tbsp of chopped green  
onion  
3 Tbsp olive oil  
2 Tbsp lime juice  
1 tsp cumin  
1 clove garlic  
3 Tbsp chopped cilantro  
Salt and pepper to taste

## NOTES

Can add crumbled queso fresco or feta cheese on top. Can use fresh, frozen, or canned corn for the salad. Grill or cook the corn in a skillet on medium-high heat with olive oil and salt and pepper to add a nice charred flavor.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 336

Fat: 13g.

Saturated Fat: 3g.

Sodium: 422mg.

Carbs: 40g.

Fiber: 11g.

Protein: 16g.

**PREP** 20 mins | **COOK** 15 minutes | **SERVINGS** 8 (1 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Add corn, brown rice, beans, red bell pepper, jalapeno, and green onions to a large bowl.
2. In a smaller bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, cumin, garlic, cilantro, and salt and pepper.
3. Fold dressing into the veggies. Serve cold.

*Lunch*

# CITRUS KALE SALAD

## INGREDIENTS

1 bunch of kale  
(about 6 cups)  
2/3 cup sliced toasted  
almonds  
1/3 cup sliced green onions  
2 mandarin oranges, peeled  
and segmented

### Vinaigrette:

3 Tbsp white balsamic  
vinegar  
3 Tbsp olive oil  
2 Tbsp orange juice,  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp Dijon mustard  
1 tsp honey

## NOTES

Can substitute the white balsamic vinegar for regular balsamic, rice wine, or white wine vinegar. To prep kale, you want to remove the stem from the leaves and chop the leaves into small strips. To make kale more tender, massage with olive oil for 3-4 minutes by pinching and squeezing the kale leaves or let the kale marinate in the dressing in the refrigerator for an hour.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 320  
Fat: 17g.  
Saturated fat: 2g.  
Sodium: 177mg.  
Carbs: 25g.  
Fiber: 4g,  
Total Sugars: 15g  
Protein: 5g.

PREP 5 mins | COOK 0 minutes | SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

1. Add kale, half of the almonds, half of the green onions and the mandarin oranges to a salad bowl.
2. In a mixing bowl whisk together all the vinaigrette ingredients until combined. If you do not have white balsamic vinegar you can substitute regular balsamic, rice wine, or white wine vinegar.
3. Pour vinaigrette dressing over the salad, then toss.
4. Top with the remaining almonds and green onions. Chill until ready to serve.

*Lunch*

# TUNA APPLE SALAD

## INGREDIENTS

12 oz. can of tuna  
(packed in water)  
2 Tbsp of minced red  
onion  
5 Tbsp of light Italian  
dressing  
1 apple chopped  
1 cup celery chopped

## NOTES

Substitute 2 Tbsp of  
olive oil and 2 Tbsp of  
any vinegar to replace  
the Italian dressing.  
Can be used in  
sandwiches, pitas,  
or on a salad.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 320  
Fat: 17g.  
Saturated fat: 2g.  
Sodium: 177mg,  
Carbs: 25g.  
Fiber: 4g.  
Total Sugars: 15g.  
Protein: 5g.

PREP 5 mins | COOK 5 minutes | SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

Mix all ingredients together and enjoy! Toss with fresh herbs to give more flavor.

*Dinner*



# TURKEY SWEET POTATO COWBOY PIE

## INGREDIENTS

3 large sweet potatoes,  
peeled  
2 cloves of garlic  
1/4 cup milk  
12 oz. ground turkey  
1 cup chopped carrots  
(fresh or frozen)  
1/2 cup corn (canned,  
fresh, or frozen)  
1/4 cup water  
8 oz. tomato paste  
2 Tbsp Worcestershire  
sauce  
(optional) 1/2 tsp dried  
sage  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Ground turkey is a lower saturated fat and calorie option than ground beef.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 268

Fat: 1g

Saturated Fat: 0g,

Sodium: 684 mg.

Carbs: 41g.

Fiber: 7g.

Protein: 24g.

PREP 20 minutes | COOK 2 hours | SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Cut sweet potatoes into 2-inch cubes. In a medium sauce pan, boil the sweet potatoes and garlic in lightly salted water and cover for 15-20 minutes.
3. Drain water and mash potato and garlic together. Gradually add milk and 1/2 tsp salt, mashing together until light and fluffy. Cover and keep warm.
4. Meanwhile in a large skillet, cook and break up the ground turkey over medium heat until browned. Drain if needed. Stir in carrots, corn, and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
5. Add tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, sage, salt and pepper to the pan and heat through. Spoon the turkey mixture into an 8x8 baking dish and spread into a bottom layer. Add a layer of mashed sweet potatoes on top of the turkey.
6. Bake uncovered in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes.

# VEGAN LENTIL SOUP

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup olive oil  
1 medium onion  
2 carrots, peeled and chopped  
2 garlic cloves, diced  
2 tsp cumin  
1 tsp curry powder  
1/2 tsp dried thyme  
1-28 oz. can diced tomatoes, drained  
1 cup lentils  
4 cups vegetable broth  
2 cups water  
1 cup collard greens or kale, chopped  
Salt and pepper to taste

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 380

Fat: 16g.

Saturated fat: 2g.

Sodium: 775mg.

Carbs: 49g.

Fiber: 11g.

Sugar: 10g.

Protein: 14g.

PREP 5 minutes | COOK 5 minutes | SERVINGS 4



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions and carrots and cook until the onion is softened and translucent, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, cumin, curry powder, and thyme and cook about 30 seconds.
3. Pour in the drained diced tomatoes and cook for 3 to 4 minutes stirring often.
4. Pour in the lentils, broth, and water. Season generously with black pepper and bring the pot to a boil.
5. Reduce the heat, partially cover the pot, and simmer. Cook until lentils are tender but still hold their shape, about 30 minutes depending on the type of lentil you choose.
6. To make soup creamier, blend about 2 cups of the soup or partially blend the soup with an immersion blender. Add the chopped greens and cook for 5 more minutes. Remove the pot from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. You can also add lemon juice and red pepper flakes for more flavor.

# CHICKEN CHILI

## INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp olive oil  
1 small onion  
1 garlic clove  
1 medium bell pepper  
1 pound ground chicken  
3 Tbsp chili powder  
1 Tbsp cumin  
28 oz. can no-salt added  
diced tomatoes  
15 oz. can kidney beans  
rinsed and drained,  
15 oz. can corn rinsed  
and drained  
1 cup chicken broth  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Add 1/2 tsp of cayenne  
pepper for more spice.

## NUTRITION

1 1/2 cups:  
Calories: 340  
Fat: 5g  
Sodium: 360mg  
Carbs: 42g  
Fiber: 9g  
Protein: 16g.

**PREP** 15 minutes | **COOK** 30 minutes | **SERVINGS** 6 (1 1/2 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add in chopped onion, minced garlic, and bell pepper and sauté for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. Add in ground chicken and break up the meat, cooking until no longer pink. Add in chili powder and cumin and stir for about 20 seconds.
3. Add in diced tomatoes, kidney beans, corn, and chicken broth.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until chili thickens. Taste and season with salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with sour cream, cheese, avocado, cilantro, or any topping of your choice!

# COCONUT CURRY CHICKPEA STEW

## INGREDIENTS

1 Tbsp neutral oil  
2 cloves garlic minced  
1/2 onion, chopped  
1-inch piece ginger, finely chopped or grated  
1-2 Tbsp Thai red curry paste (or 1 Tbsp of flour and 1 tsp of curry powder)  
15 oz. can chickpeas drained and rinsed  
1/2 cup coconut milk  
1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth  
1 bunch kale stems removed and torn into bite sized pieces  
Salt and pepper (optional) 1/2 cup fresh mint or cilantro to finish

## NOTES

Substitute water for the vegetable broth and adjust the seasoning to taste. This can help you control how much sodium is in the stew.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 529

Fat: 14.89g.

Sodium: 779mg

Fiber: 23.5g.

Carbs: 79.93g.

Protein: 25g.

PREP 5 minutes | COOK 40 minutes | SERVINGS 6



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a pot over medium heat. Add the garlic, onion, and ginger.
2. Cook, stirring occasionally until the onions are soft, but not brown, 2-3 minutes.
3. Add the curry paste and chickpeas and fry, stirring frequently, until the chickpeas start to sizzle and get slightly brown and crisp, 8-10 minutes.
4. Remove some chickpeas for garnish and set aside. Use a wooden spoon or potato masher to mash chickpeas – the starch will help thicken the stew.
5. Add the coconut milk and broth, scraping up any bits on the bottom of the pan. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened to your liking, 20-30 minutes. Stir in the greens and cook until wilted. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Scoop into bowls and top with reserved chickpeas, fresh herbs, and a drizzle of olive oil.

*Adapted from: i am a food blog*

*Dinner*

# SPAGHETTI SQUASH PRIMAVERA

## INGREDIENTS

1 medium spaghetti squash  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
1 onion chopped  
1 garlic clove minced  
1 large zucchini, diced  
1 bell pepper, chopped  
1 Tbsp Italian seasoning  
1 1/2 cup diced tomatoes  
3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Instead of in the microwave, cut the squash in half, scoop out the seeds, and drizzle with olive oil and salt and pepper. Roast for 30-40 minutes in the oven at 400° F. Then continue with step 3.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 380

Fat: 16g.

Saturated fat: 2g.

Sodium: 775mg.

Carbs: 49g.

Fiber: 11g.

Sugar: 10g.

Protein: 14g.

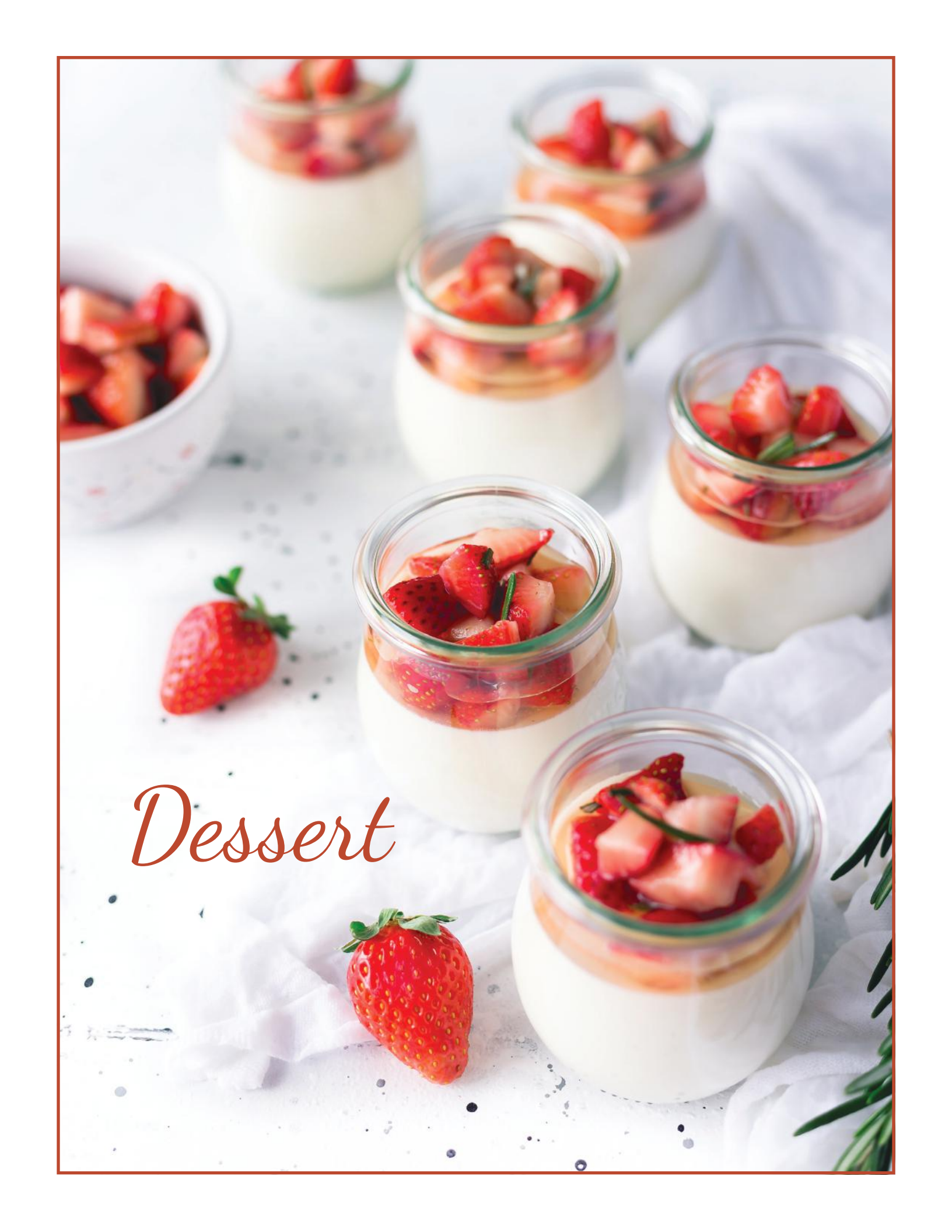
**PREP** 15 minutes | **COOK** 20 minutes | **SERVINGS** 6



## DIRECTIONS

1. Pierce the shell of the spaghetti squash with a fork and place in a microwave-safe dish. Cook in the microwave on high for 12 minutes, flipping halfway through. Set aside to cool enough to handle.
2. Slice the squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Use a fork to pull the flesh of the squash away from the shell and place into a large bowl. Fluff with a fork to separate the strands as much as possible.
3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook in the hot oil until just tender, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and continue cooking and stirring another 2 minutes.
4. Add the zucchini and bell pepper into the mixture. Season with the Italian herb seasoning and black pepper.
5. Add the tomatoes into the skillet. Continue cooking until the tomatoes are warmed, 3 to 5 minutes.
6. Add the squash to the skillet and toss until evenly mixed. Sprinkle with the feta cheese and toss again to serve.

*Dinner*

A photograph of several small glass jars filled with a creamy white pudding, topped with fresh strawberries and a sprig of rosemary. The jars are arranged on a white surface with a white cloth and scattered vanilla beans. A bowl of strawberries is visible in the background.

*Dessert*

# GLUTEN-FREE BLACK BEAN BROWNIES

## INGREDIENTS

1-15 oz. can black beans,  
drained and rinsed  
3 large eggs  
3 Tbsp canola oil  
3/4 cup sugar  
1/2 cup unsweetened  
cocoa powder  
1 tsp vanilla  
1/2 tsp baking powder  
Pinch of salt  
1/2 cup semi-sweet  
chocolate chips

## NOTES

The black beans make a dense, moist brownie and reduce the amount of carbohydrates and increase the fiber.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 135  
Fat: 6g.  
Saturated fat: 2g.  
Sodium: 121 mg.  
Carbs: 19g.  
Fiber: 2g  
Sugars: 14g.  
Protein: 3g.

**PREP** 15 minutes | **COOK** 35 minutes | **SERVINGS** 16



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Lightly oil an 8x8 inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray or line with parchment paper.
3. Place the black beans in a food processor or blender with a little bit of water and process until smooth.
4. Add eggs, oil, sugar, cocoa powder, vanilla extract, baking powder, and salt. Process until combined. Add 1/4 cup of the chocolate chips and pulse until the chips are incorporated.
5. Pour the batter into the pan and smooth the top of the brownies. Sprinkle the remaining chocolate chips on top.
6. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool before slicing into 16 (2-inch) squares.

Can make them as individually packaged brownies using cupcake liners (as shown in picture). Reduce the timing to 25-30 minutes in the oven.

*Dessert*

# WHITE BEAN CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup unsalted butter  
softened  
3/4 cup packed dark  
brown sugar  
1/2 cup canned  
cannellini beans  
2 Tbsp maple syrup  
2 large eggs room  
temperature  
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
1 1/2 cups all-purpose  
flour  
1/2 tsp baking soda  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 cup semi- sweet  
chocolate chips

## NOTES

The cannellini beans help add fiber and reduce the fat content in these cookies. If you do not have a food processor, you can use a potato masher or fork to mash the beans until smooth.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 100  
Fat: 3.5g.  
Saturated fat: 2g.  
Sodium: 72 mg.  
Carbs: 15g.  
Fiber: 1g.  
Sugars: 9g.  
Protein: 2g.

**PREP** 20 minutes | **COOK** 12 minutes | **SERVINGS** 24



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375° F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or spray with cooking spray.
2. In a bowl, beat the butter and sugar on medium speed until smooth.
3. Put the beans in a food processor and add the maple syrup. Puree until smooth. Add the beans to the butter mixture and process until completely smooth.
4. Add the eggs, one at a time. Then add the vanilla and mix until combined.
5. Sift the flour, baking soda, and salt together in a bowl and add to the wet ingredients. Mix until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.
6. Drop tablespoons of dough onto the prepared pans, about 2 inches apart. Bake until the cookies begin to turn golden around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes.

*Dessert*

# CHICKPEA BLONDIES

## INGREDIENTS

1-15 oz. can chickpeas  
1/2 cup almond butter  
1/3 cup maple syrup  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
1/2 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp baking powder  
1/4 tsp baking soda  
1/3 cup chocolate chips

## NOTES

Can use any nut butter in place of almond butter in the recipe. Can be stored in the fridge for up to 5 days.

## NUTRITION

Calories: 120  
Fat: 6g.  
Sodium: 177mg.  
Carbs: 14g.  
Fiber: 2g.  
Sugars: 7g.  
Protein: 4g.

**PREP** 10 minutes | **COOK** 25 minutes | **SERVINGS** 16



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F and spray an 8x8 inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a food processor or blender, add all ingredients except the chocolate chips and process until smooth.
3. Fold in 1/3 cup of chocolate chips. Spread the batter evenly in the baking dish.
4. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean and edges are slightly brown. Let cool before slicing into 16 (2 inch) blondies.

Can make them into individual bite-sized blondies using small cupcake tin (as shown in picture). Reduce the timing to 15-20 minutes in the oven.

# *Sides*



# MAPLE BALSAMIC ROASTED VEGGIES

## INGREDIENTS

5 Tbsp olive oil, divided  
2 Tbsp Italian seasoning  
Salt and pepper to taste  
1 bell pepper, chopped  
1 head of broccoli,  
chopped  
2 summer squashes,  
chopped  
1 onion, chopped  
1 pint cherry  
tomatoes, halved  
1 small garlic clove,  
minced  
2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1 tsp maple syrup

## NOTES

Roasting is a great way to cook any vegetables that are about to go bad and this marinade makes everything taste delicious.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories: 223

Fat: 14g.

Saturated Fat: 2g.

Sodium: 55mg.

Carbs: 15g.

Fiber: 2g.

Sugar: 6.5g

Protein: 3.5g.

**PREP** 15 minutes | **COOK** 30 minutes | **SERVINGS** 4 (1 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
2. In a small bowl, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper and stir together.
3. Combine all the chopped vegetables in a large bowl, pour on the olive oil dressing, and stir until the vegetables are evenly coated with olive oil.
4. Spread the vegetables on a baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. When they are done, place the vegetables back in the large bowl and refrigerate until cool.
5. In a separate bowl, combine the rest of the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and maple syrup until blended. Once the vegetables are completely cooled, drizzle vinaigrette over the vegetables and stir. Serve cold.

# CAULIFLOWER FRIED RICE

## INGREDIENTS

1 large head of cauliflower  
2 Tbsp canola oil  
2 large eggs, beaten  
2 Tbsp minced garlic  
1/2 cup thinly sliced onions  
1 cup carrots, peeled and diced  
1 cup broccoli, chopped  
1 cup cherry tomatoes  
2 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Add chopped cilantro on top for a nice garnish. You can chop the cauliflower by hand into a rice-like consistency instead of using a blender or food processor.

## NUTRITION

1/2 cup:

Calories: 138

Fat: 9g.

Saturated fat: 1g.

Sodium: 273mg.

Carbs: 13g.

Fiber: 4g.

Protein: 6g.

**PREP** 20 minutes | **COOK** 15 minutes | **SERVINGS** 6 (1/2 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Chop the cauliflower head into 1-inch florets and add into a blender or food processor.
2. Pulse the cauliflower until it has a rice-like appearance and set aside.
3. Heat a medium pan over high heat until water evaporates immediately in the pan. Add in 1 Tbsp of canola oil, coating the bottom completely. Add beaten eggs and cook, tilting to cover the surface in a thin layer to make an egg pancake.
4. When the pancake is just set, 30 seconds to 1 minute, flip using a metal spatula and allow it to set for about 5 seconds. Transfer to a cutting board and chop into bite-size pieces.
5. Add the other 1 Tbsp of oil into the pan. Add garlic and onions and stir-fry until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Add carrots and broccoli, reduce the heat to medium-high and stir-fry until the vegetables are nearly cooked through, about 2 minutes.
6. Add cauliflower “rice”, tomatoes, egg pieces, and soy sauce and cook until heated through or the cauliflower has reached the texture you desire. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

# APPLE CABBAGE SLAW

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar  
1 cup mayonnaise  
1/3 cup honey  
1/2 tsp salt  
1 tsp pepper  
1 medium cabbage, finely shredded  
4 large apples, peeled, cored, and cut into sticks  
2 large carrots, peeled and cut into sticks

## NOTES

Look for mayonnaise made with olive oil to increase healthy fats.

## NUTRITION

1 cup:

Calories :250

Fat: 20g.

Saturated Fat: 1g.

Sodium: 350mg.

Carbs: 16g.

Fiber: 1g.

Protein: 1g.

**PREP** 15 minutes | **COOK** 1 hour chill | **SERVINGS** 6 (1 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Add apple cider vinegar, mayonnaise, honey, salt and pepper in a bowl and mix until blended.
2. In a separate bowl, combine cabbage, apples, and carrots. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss until completely coated.
3. Refrigerate at least 1 hour before serving.

# CRISPY KALE CHIPS

## INGREDIENTS

1 head of kale, washed  
and dried  
2 Tbsp olive oil  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Add in any flavor  
or spice you want  
like garlic salt, ranch  
seasoning, and cayenne  
pepper.

## NUTRITION

1/2 cup:  
Calories: 90  
Fat: 6g  
Saturated Fat: 1g.  
Sodium: 310mg.  
Carbs: 7g.  
Fiber: 1g.  
Protein: 2g.

**PREP** 10 minutes | **COOK** 25 minutes | **SERVINGS** 4 (1/2 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 275° F.
2. Remove the stems from the kale leaves. Rip the leaves into 2-inch pieces or the desired size of chip.
3. Lay them flat on the baking sheet and cover both sides with olive oil, salt, and any additional seasoning of your choice.
4. Bake in the oven for about 20 to 25 minutes, rotating halfway through, or until crisp.

# HUMMUS

## INGREDIENTS

2-15 oz. can chickpeas,  
drained liquid reserved  
5 garlic cloves  
1/3 cup tahini  
5 Tbsp lemon juice  
2 Tbsp reserved  
chickpea liquid  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
Salt to taste

## NOTES

Enhance the flavor by  
adding in roasted red  
peppers, sun dried  
tomatoes, or jalapeños  
to add some spice.

## NUTRITION

1/4 cup:

Calories: 144

Fat: 7g.

Saturated Fat: 1g.

Sodium: 130mg.

Carbs: 16g.

Fiber: 5g.

Protein: 6g.

**PREP** 5 minutes | **COOK** 5 minutes | **SERVINGS** 10 (1/4 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Place all the ingredients except salt in the food processor.
2. Process mixture until coarsely pureed. Add salt to taste.
3. Serve at room temperature or cold.

# GREEK YOGURT FRENCH ONION DIP

## INGREDIENTS

3 Tbsp olive oil  
1 large onion, sliced  
1 Tbsp garlic, minced  
1/2 tsp paprika  
1 1/4 cup Greek yogurt  
1/2 cup reduced fat cream cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste

## NOTES

Greek yogurt helps reduce the calories and amount of saturated fat in this recipe.

## NUTRITION

1/4 cup:

Calories: 111

Fat: 9g.

Saturated Fat: 3g.

Sodium: 100mg.

Carbs: 4g.

Fiber: 2g.

Protein: 5g.

**PREP** 10 minutes | **COOK** 30 minutes | **SERVINGS** 8 (1/4 cup)



## DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the olive oil in a large, non-stick pan on medium heat.
2. Add in the sliced onion and coat in the oil. Cook until the onions are soft and deep golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 25 minutes. The trick is to let them sit long enough to brown, but not too long so that they burn. You may need to reduce the heat as they cook.
3. Once the onions are golden, stir in the garlic, paprika, and a pinch of salt. Reduce the heat if needed and cook an additional 5 minutes or so, until the garlic begins to brown.
4. Place the onions into a large bowl and roughly chop them. Add in the remaining ingredients and stir until well combined. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

*Adapted from FoodFaithFitness.com*

# VINAIGRETTE SALAD DRESSING

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup olive oil  
3 Tbsp vinegar  
(balsamic, red wine,  
white wine, etc)  
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard  
1 Tbsp sweetener  
(maple syrup, honey,  
agave)  
2 cloves garlic  
Salt & pepper to taste

## NOTES

Can be creative with  
different dried spices  
and vinegars.

## NUTRITION

*1 tablespoon:*

Calories: 83

Fat: 9g.

Saturated Fat: 1g.

Sodium: 34mg.

Carbs: 1g.

Protein: 0.5g.

**PREP** 5 minutes | **COOK** 0 minutes | **SERVINGS** 1 cup



## DIRECTIONS

Mix all ingredients together and enjoy!

# STOCKING YOUR PANTRY

---

## PANTRY

**Proteins:** canned tuna, salmon, or chicken; nuts; nut butters; canned beans; dried beans

**Grains:** rice, pasta, tortillas, couscous, oats, popcorn kernels

**Baking:** flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda

**Cooking:** oils, vinegars, dried spices, stock/bouillon

**Fruits and vegetables:** canned low sodium, no added sugar

## FREEZER

**Breads and baked goods:** can last another 6 months in the freezer

**Cooked vegetables:** like pureed squash

**Meat:** cooked or raw (not cold cuts) can last another 6 months when frozen

**Cooked grains and beans:** freeze into portions that work for you, so you can pull out just what you need and reheat as a side or main dish

**Fresh fruits:** like berries, peaches, and bananas (after freezing they're best for mixing into things like yogurt, smoothies, and pancakes)

**Uncooked vegetables:** like squash, carrots, and broccoli (they'll be best when used in cooking)

## DRIED BEANS

**Soaking:** Soaking your beans helps them cook faster and more evenly, and it can also make them easier to digest. If you add salt to the soaking water (in other words, make a brine), your beans will cook even faster; the salt helps break down their skins. Here are a few methods; choose the one that best fits your schedule.

**Overnight Soaking:** To soak beans the traditional way, cover them with water by 2 inches, add 2 tablespoons coarse kosher salt (or 1 tablespoon fine salt) per pound of beans, and let them soak for at least 4 hours or up to 12 hours. Drain them and rinse before using.

**Quick Soaking:** Another option is quick-soaking, which allows you to make a pot of beans within a few hours flat without sacrificing flavor or texture. Put the beans in a pot on the stove, cover with water by two inches, add salt if you like, and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and let them soak for an hour. Drain, rinse and proceed with your recipe.

## DRIED LENTILS

**Soaking:** You do not need to soak lentils.

**To Cook:** Cook on a stove top, using 3 cups of liquid (water, stock, etc) to 1 cup of dry lentils. Be sure to use a large enough saucepan as the lentils will double or triple in size. Bring to a boil, cover tightly, reduce heat and simmer until they are tender. For whole lentils, cook time is typically 15-20 minutes.

**Using Your Lentils:** They can be tossed into green and grain salads, used in sandwich wraps, added to soups and chilies, and even made into veggie burgers.

# The Flexible Pantry: A Food Bank Cookbook

by Osvaldina Rodrigues and Kristina Mullin,  
The Food Bank Nutrition Team

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is located in Hatfield and provides food and support to individuals facing hunger and leads communities towards long-term solutions to the problem of hunger in our region. In 2021, we served around 12 million meals to food insecure neighbors across Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties.

The Food Bank is the leading provider of emergency food to partner agencies and individuals in Western Massachusetts. We are committed to feeding our neighbors in need and leading the community to end hunger. The Food Bank seeks to make nutritious food affordable and accessible for all residents in our region.

If you need help finding resources or want to get involved in your community, visit [www.foodbankwma.org](http://www.foodbankwma.org) or call 413-247-9738.



## About the Food Bank Nutrition Team

Osvaldina Rodrigues (left) began working at The Food Bank in 2020 and graduated from UMass Amherst with a degree in Nutrition and Food Science. She is interested in a holistic lifestyle and enjoys preparing vibrant colorful dishes with her daughters.

Kristina (right) began working at The Food Bank since 2018 after graduating from Framingham State University with a degree in Food and Nutrition with a concentration in Dietetics. Before that, she worked in food service and loves cooking and trying new recipes in her free time.



[foodbankwma.org](http://foodbankwma.org)



A special thank you to the partner agencies, nutrition students, and volunteers that donated their time and expertise to help create and finish this cookbook and share their recipes with us.